

Gynecological Health And Wellness

Well Woman Exam

A woman's wellness visit with a primary care provider or gynecologist is an important step in ensuring reproductive health and wellness. It is recommended that most women should have a wellness visit once a year. During these visits, the physician will ask questions about your health and medical history, including asking about your menstrual cycle and sexual activity. Routine tests, such as a breast exam, Pap test (every 3–5 years), and pelvic exam, will also be performed.

A **pelvic exam** checks the shape and size of your female organs (including the vagina, cervix, uterus, and ovaries), as well as looks for masses, growths or other abnormalities.

Annual gynecological exams are important preventative care opportunities for maintaining your health and can help diagnose certain medical conditions early, making sure you get the treatment you need for any issues you have. If you have abnormal pain or bleeding, your health care provider may perform or order additional tests which could help diagnose the causes or determine that everything is normal.



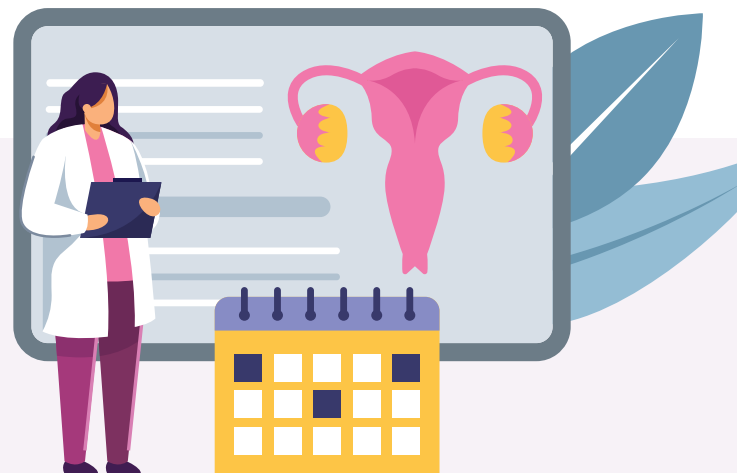
For women who are in the menopause transition or postmenopausal, the annual exam is a valuable opportunity to discuss your symptoms and post-reproductive health with your doctor.

Menstrual Health

During a woman's reproductive years, she experiences a monthly discharge of blood and uterine lining, or **menses**, also known as a period. Globally, more than **800 million** people are menstruating each day.

A “normal” period is not the same for every person. What's normal for you might be different than for your friends or family members. **It is not normal, however, for your period-related symptoms to significantly disrupt your life.**

Heavy menstrual bleeding (more than 1 soaked pad/tampon per hour), periods longer than 7 days, bleeding between periods, pelvic pressure, and pain with intercourse can be signs of uterine fibroids. Women with these symptoms are often unaware that they may be caused by gynecologic conditions such as fibroids. Dismissing these symptoms as a “normal expectation” of the menstrual cycle can play a significant role in delaying diagnosis and treatment for women with fibroids.



Keeping a Period Diary

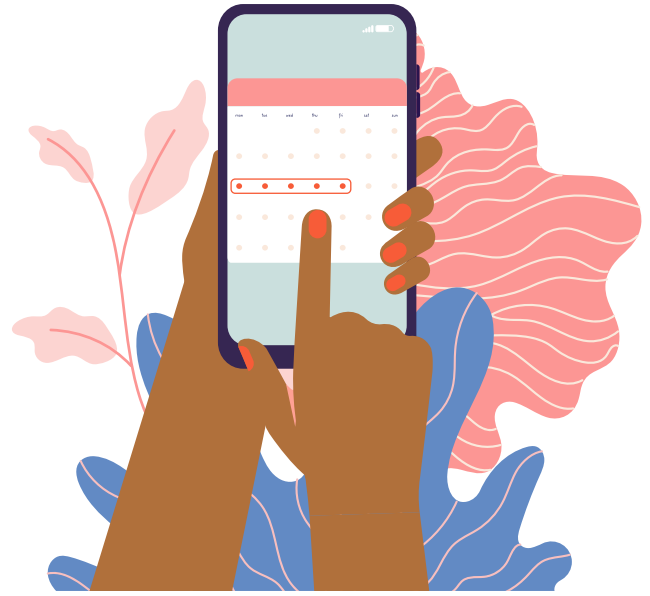
Tracking your **menstrual cycle** is a good way to figure out what is “normal” for you. It can also give your health care provider a more complete picture of your symptoms, their severity, and their impact on your daily life.

What to Track:

- Start and end date
- Flow — heaviness, changes from usual, how often you change menstrual products
- Cramping/pelvic pain, including severity and impact on ability to function
- Irregular bleeding between periods
- Late or missed periods
- Gastrointestinal symptoms such as constipation or diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, or pain with urination or bowel movements
- Any changes related to other symptoms like mood issues

Even your “normal” can change...

It is not uncommon for your period to change over the years. For example, cycles are commonly longer and more irregular in younger women, but might become shorter and more consistent as you get older.



Example Period Tracking Apps:

- [Clue](#)
- [Eve](#)
- [Flo](#)
- Period Tracker Period Calendar: [Apple Store](#) or [Google Play](#)
- [Spot On](#)

There are many health apps to choose from. The Federal Trade Commission provides [guidance to consumers](#) on how to select and use health apps while reducing privacy risks.

Consult Your Doctor If You Experience:

- Abnormal or persistent pelvic pain, even between periods
- Heavy menstrual bleeding (>1 pad/tampon every hour or two)
- Bleeding for longer than 7 days
- Spotting or bleeding between periods
- Frequent urination or difficulty emptying your bladder