

Part 3:

# What Happens at a Women's Wellness Exam





**Women's Wellness Exams** are an opportunity to review the overall health of a woman.

In the U.S., doctors recommend that women who have sex or who are over the age of 21 have a “Women’s Wellness Exam” every year.

Women’s wellness exams are an opportunity to review the overall health of a woman. This includes physical health, mental health, and social situation.



**Women's Wellness Exams** are an opportunity to review the overall health of your wife and other female family members.

MAY INCLUDE: Height and weight check, blood pressure and pulse check, vaccine review, or other tests

The physical exam may include a check of your wife's height and weight, blood pressure and pulse, a review of her vaccines and other tests based on how your wife or other female family members feel.

### **WOMEN'S WELLNESS EXAMS**

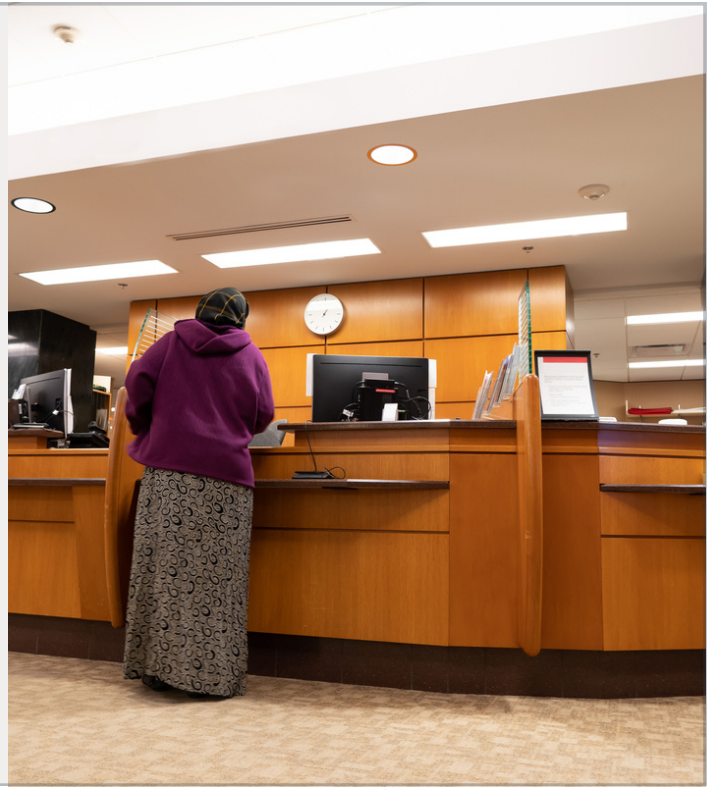
#### **USUALLY INCLUDE:**

- Breast exam
- Pelvic exam
- Pap test

These exams also usually include three things: a breast exam, a pelvic exam, and a pap test.

STEP 1

**Your wife or female  
family member  
checks in at the  
front desk**



The first thing that happens at a Women's Wellness Exam is checking in at the front desk.

This means your wife goes to the front desk and gives the staff her name so they know your wife has arrived.

STEP 2

## Your wife & female family members out necessary paperwork



The staff may give your wife paperwork to fill out with questions about your family medical history, any medications she is taking, general demographic information, her menstrual cycle, whether or not she has had sex, and if she has been pregnant before.



**REMEMBER:** Your wife or female family members must ask for an interpreter if they need one—their medical provider is required to provide care your wife understands.

If your wife needs help reading and filling out the paperwork in your language, an interpreter should be able to help her.

If an interpreter is not there in person or needs to be called over the phone, she holds onto the paperwork until the interpreter is on the phone.

STEP 3

**Your wife or  
female family  
member waits in  
the lobby for  
their turn**



After checking in, your wife will wait in the lobby for her name to be called.

When her name is called, a medical assistant or nurse will accompany her into the exam area of the clinic...



STEP 4

## Have their vital signs checked



... and take your wife's height, weight, and blood pressure.

They will also ask your wife about her health concerns, her medical history, and your family's medical history.

This information will be given to the medical provider.

STEP 5

**Your wife or female  
family member  
changes into a  
medical gown**



Before the examination, the medical assistant or nurse will provide your wife with a medical gown to change into.

They will leave the room to give your wife privacy while she changes. Once she is ready, she can sit and wait on the exam table.

STEP 5

**She changes into  
a medical gown**



**PAPER SHEET**



There is often a paper sheet on the exam table, which she can unfold and place over her lap for more privacy.

STEP 6

## She talks with her doctor



When the medical provider comes in, they will first go over the information that has been given to them and talk to your wife about any health concerns she may have.

STEP 6

## She talks with her doctor



**YOUR WIFE'S DOCTOR MAY ASK:**

1. When was your wife's last period?
2. Is your wife sexually active?
3. Is your wife using birth control?
4. Does your wife think she might be pregnant?

They may ask a few questions such as:

When was your wife's last period?

Is your wife sexually active?

Is your wife using any type of birth control?

Does your wife think she might be pregnant?

These questions will help your wife's medical provider provide the care that is best for her.

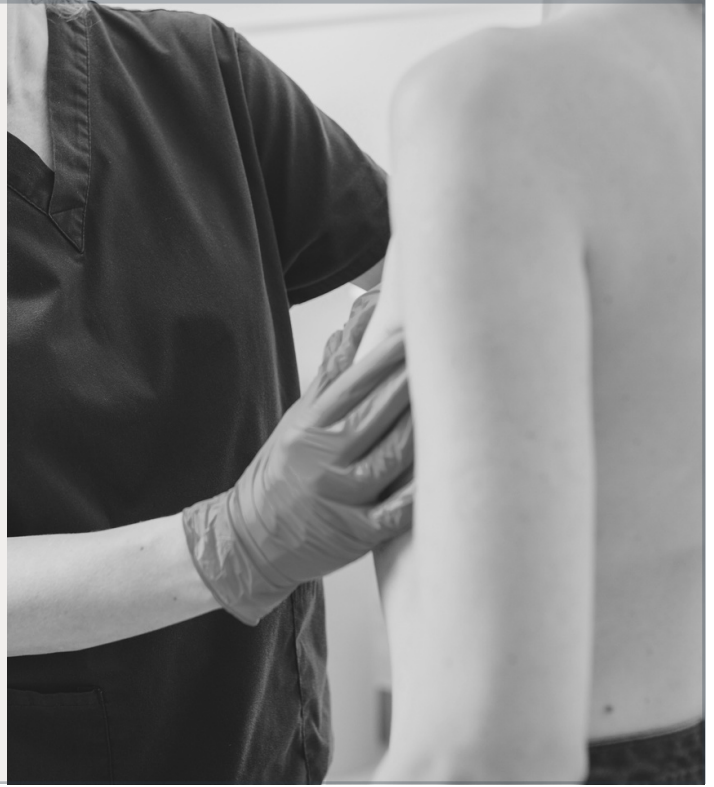
It is important that your wife has a medical provider that she can trust.

If your wife does not feel comfortable with her medical provider, consider switching to a different provider that she feels comfortable with.



STEP 7

## Your wife undergoes the breast exam



After that, the medical provider will usually do a breast exam.

This exam is done to check for any abnormalities, including lumps or changes that might require more testing.

Breast examinations are one of the most important ways to detect breast cancer. The earlier that breast cancer is found, the easier it can be to treat.

During this exam, the medical provider may ask your wife to lie back on the exam table or ask that she remain sitting upright.

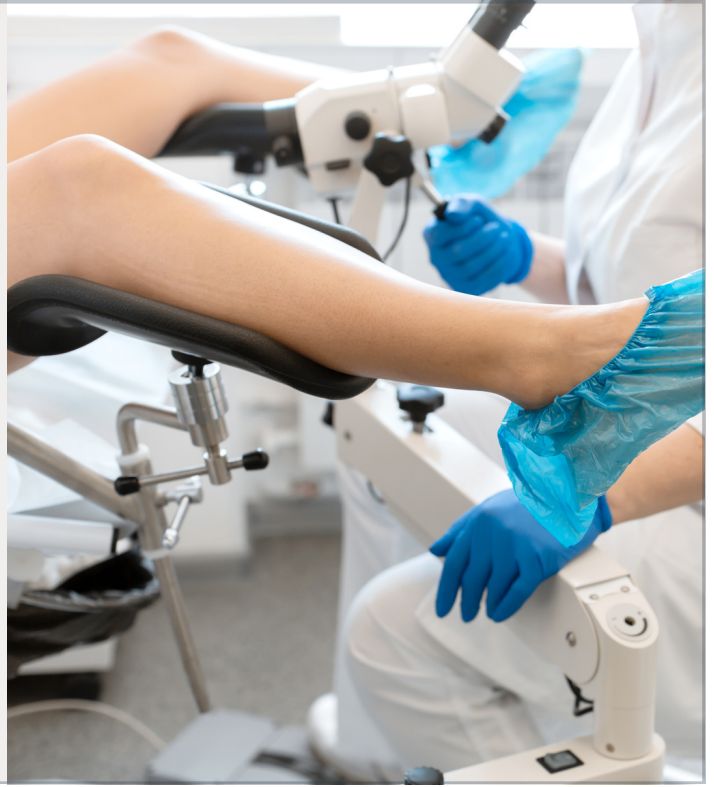
They will then remove the top half of the gown to expose the breasts. Your wife will be asked to either raise her arms, let them hang by her sides, or place her hands on her hips.

These different positions help the medical provider examine the breasts thoroughly.

Using just their hands, the medical provider will press and feel the breasts, nipples, and armpit region for abnormalities in shape, texture, or color.

STEP 8

## Your wife undergoes the pelvic exam and pap test



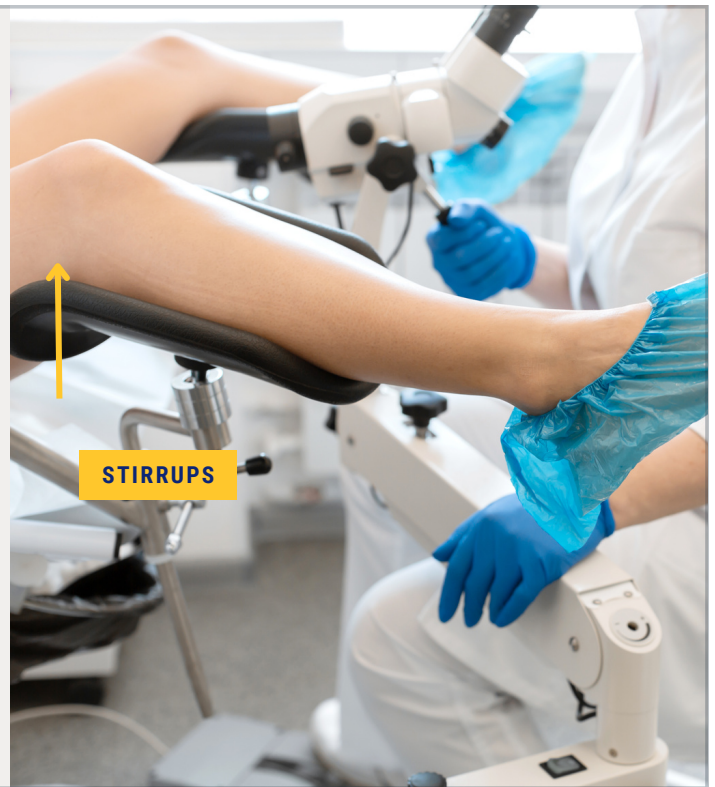
After the breast exam, the medical provider will likely conduct a pelvic exam and a pap test.

A pelvic exam is a regular part of the women's wellness exam, where the medical provider checks the health of a woman's reproductive organs.

During the pelvic exam, the medical provider may conduct a pap test to see if there are any abnormal cell changes on her cervix that could lead to cervical cancer.

STEP 8

## Your wife undergoes the pelvic exam and pap test



Your wife will be asked to lie back on the exam table and place her feet in foot supports known as stirrups.

This allows the medical provider to view the pelvic region.

The medical provider will explain all the procedure step by step to your wife so she understands it.



STEP 8

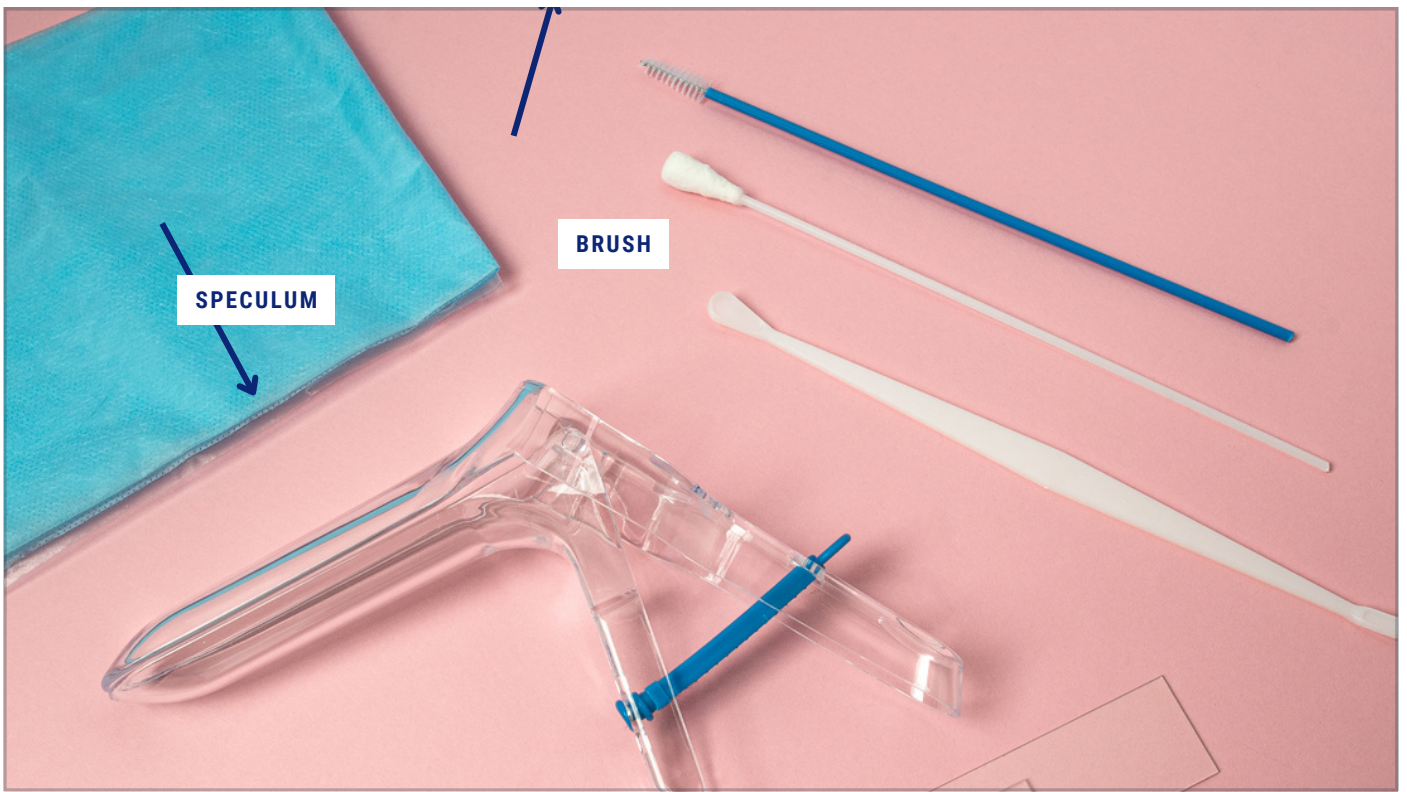
## **Your wife undergoes the pelvic exam and pap test**



When the medical provider examines the reproductive organs



The medical provider will examine the vagina and the cervix, check for abnormal growths, or take samples for testing.



For the pap test, the medical provider will use a small brush to gently remove a sample from the cervix and back of the vagina.

This sample is sent to a lab to be examined.

During this time, they may also test your wife for any infections.

STEP 8

## Your wife undergoes the pelvic exam and pap test



While your wife is in the same position, the medical provider will examine the pelvic region for abnormalities.

Because the pelvic organs such as the uterus and ovaries can't be seen from outside the body, the provider will use their hands to feel the stomach area and pelvis.

This helps check for the size and shape of the uterus and ovaries and to check for any tender areas or abnormal growths.



**YOUR WIFE MUST REMEMBER:**

- Your wife has the right to ask her doctor questions
- Your wife should express any discomfort or hesitation so that her doctor can give her the best care possible

The medical provider should explain the different procedures in the exam to your wife.

Your wife can also ask questions at any time during her appointment, even in the middle of a procedure.

This is also true of expressing discomfort or hesitation about the procedures.

Your wife's comfort is very important and letting her medical provider know her questions or concerns helps them give her the best care possible.



STEP 9

**Discuss** your wife's  
results and next  
steps



After the exams are done, the medical provider will give your wife any information that can be shared immediately.

If they took any samples, they will tell your wife when she can expect the results. As the appointment comes to an end, the medical provider will talk about what to do next.

This can include following specific instructions at home, scheduling a second appointment, or seeing a different doctor.

They will then leave the room so your wife can get dressed in private.

The medical provider may also discuss contraceptive options and the various modes of contraception available for your wife.

It is your wife's choice to have this conversation or accept the recommendations for contraception.



**You did it! You took an important step to detecting health concerns early and taking care of your wife's and other female family members' overall health.**

Having a women's wellness exam every year is important for detecting health concerns early.

By doing this, these concerns may be easier to cure or manage. It is also an important and private time to talk to a medical provider about your wife's health worries or to ask questions so your wife has the information she needs to take care of your wife's health.

Thank you for watching this series on Women's Wellness Exams!