

The First “Gynecologic” Appointment for a Teen

The right time for a Teen’s first Gynecologist appointment could be upon you, keeping in mind that the best approach to upholding good health is being proactive. If a Teen is experiencing something out of the ordinary such as severe cramps, issues with a period, unusual discharge, or if the Teen becomes sexually active, it is important to come in for the first Gynecologic appointment as soon as possible. Guidelines by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists mentions girls having their first Gynecologic appointment between the ages of 13 and 15 years old, even if it’s only an introduction with the doctor. As a young woman, the latest you should schedule your first visit is by twenty-one years of age.

It’s normal to be a little worried about your first Ob-Gyn visit. You can do something about that anxiety though, simply by learning about your appointment in advance and knowing what to expect. Also, you may want to choose whether your first appointment should be with a female doctor or a male doctor - whoever makes you feel most comfortable. As you learn more about us as your Ob-Gyn practice, you will begin to feel less uncertain and even more comfortable. You can also take comfort in knowing that your Gynecologic visit is a natural time for you to learn more about your body and to take more control of your own health.

Your first visit is very important for several reasons. First of all, you’ll be able to learn substantially about the health of your reproductive system and being prepared with questions is a great way to accomplish that. You may also be making your first appointment for preventative reasons with regard to pregnancy, STDs (sexually-transmitted-diseases), or to stay physically fit at a healthy weight. In some cases, you will be visiting the doctor to figure out what is going on with your body along with a course of treatment for a certain issue or a problem you are having.

In a typical appointment, there will a discussion about your menstrual cycle and how it affects your life, school, and other activities. Your appointment may also include a standard exam and a conversation about your breasts, the thyroid, your heart and lungs, as well as your stomach area. In some cases you will want to know more about a problem you have been experiencing such as severe cramps, for which a pelvic ultra-sound could be helpful while a physical exam may not be necessary. If you have other symptoms such as a feeling of pain, issues with your period - for example missing one or an unusual pattern, an unusual discharge, or perhaps an unexpected color or texture, it will be in your interest to diagnose the cause. It’s important to find out if there is an infection somewhere or if there is something affecting how you have been developing physically. If you are experiencing an issue or if you have been sexually active, then there will be a physical exam of your pelvic area – but rest assured that this is very normal and will take only a few moments.

Confidentiality is very important in your Gynecologic appointments. You can feel confident in this new relationship and for that reason you should speak openly with your doctor or nurse practitioner - especially because your health is between you and the doctor or nurse practitioner, and not with your parents or guardian in the middle. This is the start of a really important relationship in your life as a young woman, since it’s time to create a pattern of looking out for your health – and what better way to do so than to start a trusting relationship with your Gynecologist or nurse practitioner.

This article is provided as informational and not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Only your doctor is qualified to diagnose and treat your symptoms, so please be sure to contact us at the Center for Women’s Health about the latest treatment options and how to work together for your success. You may contact CFWH with any questions, concerns, or to make an appointment by email at info@lansdalewomenshealth.com.

