

The Women's Guide to Student Health Services



The clinic geared towards women is offered by Student Health Services and is located in the Student Services Building. It provides educational and clinical services for females seeking assistance with issues of reproductive health, including contraception.

Health Services for Women

Services available for women include contraception, counseling and management, pelvic exams, pap smears, sexually transmitted infection screening, breast exams, problems related to menstrual cycle (dysmenorrhea, painful menstruation), premenstrual syndrome (PMS), pregnancy tests, condoms, post abortion check ups, colposcopy (a service to further evaluate the cervix), and cryocautery (a procedure where the outer layer of abnormal cells of the cervix are frozen).

Women's Health Exam

The annual women's health exam consists of a general physical and a complete pelvic exam. The following is a brief description of each component.

General Physical Exam: This includes a check of weight, blood pressure, mouth, throat, lymph nodes, thyroid, lungs, heart, abdomen, and breasts.

Pelvic Exam: There are three parts to this exam.

1. The health care provider will conduct an external examinations to check for sores and/or lesions in the genital and groin area.
2. The health care provider then checks for sores and/or lesions internally and may perform screening tests for sexually transmitted infections (STI's), or other possible infections. The screening tests may also include a pap smear, with cell samples taken from the vaginal and cervical areas.

3. **Bimanual Exam:** This is a simultaneous external and internal exam of your reproductive organs. The examiner uses one hand to press downward on the abdomen while concurrently using one or two fingers from the other hand to internally check on either side of the cervix outlining the uterus. This exam will help determine the size, mobility, position, consistency, and contour of your uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries.

Three Month Exam for Hormonal Contraceptive Users

The three month exam is for women who have chosen the birth control pill, Nuva Ring, Ortho Evra Patch, or Depo Provera injection as a contraceptive method and have not taken this method previously. This one time visit is scheduled after the first three cycles of birth control or when the second Depo Provera injection is due. Weight and blood pressure are checked and side effects are reviewed to assure no health problems have developed. If no problems have developed the prescription is renewed for nine more months.

Annual Examination for all Clinic Patients

All clinic patients on prescription contraceptives will need to be seen annually for recheck of blood pressure, weight, and medical review. A full women's health exam on a yearly basis is strongly recommended.

Protect Yourself from Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STI's) are infections spread by close physical contact during vaginal, oral, or anal/rectal sex. Birth control does not prevent STIs, only pregnancy! Many men and women use a condom along with another method of birth control to provide additional protection against pregnancy while protecting themselves and their partners from STIs. Here are some helpful tips to consider for protection against STIs:

- *Always use a latex condom for vaginal, anal/rectal, and oral sex.
- *Use a water based lubricant for vaginal and anal/rectal sex. Condoms with spermicidal lubricant may increase vulnerability to STIs.
- *Use a Dental Dam for oral/vaginal or oral/anal sex to prevent the spread of an STI from the anus or genitals to the mouth, and vice versa.
- *Know the signs and symptoms of STI's and get regular checkups. **Remember, many women don't have symptoms!**
- *Limit your partners. The more partners you have, the greater the risk.

Many couples become pregnant without really thinking or

Protect Yourself from Unplanned Pregnancy

talking about it. So if you're having sex, and don't want a child right now, you need a birth control plan.

- *Learn all you can about the various methods.
- *Choose a method you will use every time and not forget.
- *Choose a method that works with your health, values, and lifestyles.
- *Make a commitment to yourself that you will not have sex without using birth control.

Talk with Your Partner

You can decide together how you are going to keep from getting pregnant.

You'll have more choices if you decided on a method together.

You can choose a method that will work best for both of you.

A Note About Withdrawal, Rhythm, and Douching

The withdrawal method can fail due to the presence of sperm in pre-ejaculatory fluid, or the couple misjudging when the man should withdraw. Couples who use the rhythm method abstain from intercourse during the fertile time in the woman's menstrual cycle. This method can fail because it is possible for a woman to ovulate at any time during her cycle, even while menstruating. The Fertility Awareness method combines charting of a woman's cycle with other fertility indicators to provide more complete information about when ovulation occurs. Douching after intercourse is not an effective method of birth control because some sperm can reach a woman's uterus almost immediately after ejaculation. In addition, douching may push sperm toward the uterus and increase the likelihood of pregnancy.

ELIGIBILITY

Any ISU student who has paid the Student Health Services fee may participate in the Women's Health Clinic.

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT

To schedule an appointment, call Student Health Services appointment number at 438-APPT (2778), during hours of clinic operation. Check our website (www.shs.ilstu.edu) for current hours, days of operation. You should schedule your appointment at least four weeks ahead of time for your three month and annual examinations.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Health Promotion Office 438-5948 (SSB 3rd Floor, room 310)
Information about birth control and sexuality issues.

- Workshops and presentations by Health Educators on sexuality issues and by Peer Educators on "Safer Sex" (Call at least 2 weeks ahead of time to schedule).
- Appointments are available for individuals or couples to talk about sexuality issues with a Sexual Health Educator.
- Latex condoms also available.

Pharmacy 438-8713 (SSB 2nd Floor, room 293)

Call for current prices of contraceptives.

Health Stop Resource Center 438-5613 (SSB 2nd floor, room 228)

- Information about birth control and sexuality issues (videos and books are available for check out).
- Pamphlets, info sheets, condoms, dental dams, water-based lubricants, and other materials available.
- The G-Spot at www.shs.ilstu.edu/HPO

Nurse Consult 438-7676 (RNRN)

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Student Health Services
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This document is available in alternative formats upon request by contacting the Health Promotion Office at 438-5948.

