

A gynecological (GYN) well-woman visit is a regular checkup focused on a woman's sexual and reproductive health, as well as general preventive care. It is designed to screen for chronic diseases and catch health problems early.

Here is a summary of what you can generally expect during a well-woman exam:

1. Detailed Consultation

The visit typically begins with a detailed conversation with your healthcare provider. Topics may include:

- **Medical History** – Reviewing your personal and family medical history to determine risk factors.
- **Menstrual Cycle** – Discussing any irregularities, pain, or unexpected bleeding.
- **Health Concerns** – Addressing any recent concerns about your sexual, reproductive, mental, or overall physical health.
- **Other Topics** – Discussion about family planning/birth control, menopause, or sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

2. Physical Examination Components

The core of the well-woman visit includes several exams:

- **Clinical Breast Exam**
 - The provider will look at and manually feel your breasts and armpit area for any lumps, thickening, discharge, or other changes.
 - They may also teach you how to perform a personal breast self-exam.
 - Depending on your age and risk factors, a mammogram (an X-ray of the breast) may be recommended.
- **Pelvic Exam**
 - **External Visual Exam:** The provider visually checks the vulva and labia for any irritation, swelling, cysts, or signs of STIs.
 - **Internal Visual Exam (Speculum Exam):** A speculum is gently inserted to hold the vaginal walls open, allowing the provider to visually examine the vagina and cervix.
 - **Bimanual Exam:** After the speculum is removed, the provider inserts one or two lubricated, gloved fingers into the vagina while pressing on your abdomen with the other hand. This allows them to feel the size and shape of internal organs such as the uterus and ovaries to detect abnormalities.

3. Screenings and Tests

Which tests you receive depends on your age, health history, and overall health.

- **Cervical Cancer Screening**
 - **Pap Test (or Pap Smear):** A quick procedure done during the speculum exam where a sample of cells is taken from the cervix to check for precancerous or cancerous cell changes.
 - **HPV Test:** May be done at the same time as a Pap test to look for the types of Human Papillomavirus that can cause cervical cancer.
- **Other Potential Screenings**
 - You may be asked to provide a urine sample to check for kidney health, infections, or pregnancy.
 - Depending on age, you may also be screened for issues like colon cancer or osteoporosis.