

## WELL-WOMAN EXAMINATION

### **What is a well-woman exam?**

An annual well-woman exam is a preventive care method for reviewing all elements of female reproductive health. The exam includes a variety of tests and an in-depth discussion with your doctor. It's your chance to voice any concerns and update your doctor on your medical history. You'll also have a pelvic exam and a physical exam. During the exam, your doctor can check for early signs of chronic disease, abnormal cells, discuss if your contraception is working for you, and more.

### **What can I expect during my well-woman exam?**

The first step of your well-woman exam is usually a physical exam, in which your doctor examines you:

- General health
- Weight
- Breasts
- Thyroid gland
- Blood pressure

In some cases, you might have a urine test to check for infection or a blood test to check for anemia. We offer also screening for cholesterol, kidney and liver functions, blood sugar and more. Your clinical breast exam is an integral part of your well-woman care where your doctor can check for lumps and abnormalities in your breasts. During your pelvic exam, your doctor will assess your outer sex organs. When indicated, a special instrument called a speculum may be inserted into your vagina, to allow your doctor to view your cervix and check for any abnormal signs. A Pap smear involves scraping your cervix using a tiny instrument to test some of your cells for abnormalities such as precancerous cells. Your doctor will let you know when a Pap smear is indicated as part of your well woman exam. You can also be tested for sexually transmitted diseases in the same way. For women over 40, a mammogram is advisable. Your doctor may also perform a hemoccult test which is a colon cancer screening test. If you are menopausal, bone density scans to check for osteoporosis and weakened bones are recommended at specific intervals.

### **What are the benefits of a well-woman exam?**

A well-woman exam is a crucial part of your preventive care and involves screenings to test for cancer. It can detect cancer early, while it is still easily treatable. Some sexually transmitted diseases have no symptoms and can go unnoticed. Your well-woman exam is a way for your doctor to check for signs of disease. We can also monitor if your birth control is working for you and if you're happy with your choice of contraception. Your well-woman exam is your chance to discuss all of your intimate or female health concerns.