

AT 21

A Guide to Taking Care of Your Pelvic Health

For People with a Cervix

Before 21

BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH A PROVIDER

Habif clinicians are dedicated to providing you the best care possible.

ANNUAL PREVENTIVE HEALTH VISITS

These appointments are focused on prevention, and include talking about your well-being and answering any questions you may have.

THE HPV VACCINE

HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is the most common STI and is spread by skin-to-skin contact. The vaccine protects against most strains of HPV that can cause genital warts or increase the risk of certain cancers, like cervical, head, and neck cancers. People of all genders can get the HPV vaccine.

WashU students up to age 45 who are enrolled in the student health insurance plan can receive the HPV vaccine for free.* This may be true for other insurance providers as well. Check your policy to verify coverage.

*Student healthcare plans change over time. Check your current policy to verify coverage.

SEXUAL HEALTH

If you are sexually active, get yourself screened for STIs/HIV at least annually and talk to your partner(s) about sexual health. Use barriers like condoms and oral dams to reduce your risk for STIs. Free condoms, oral dams, and lube are available via Habif's Bare Mail program.

Email wellness@wustl.edu for more info.

At 21

GET A PAP TEST

For people who have a cervix, preventive health visits may include a screening at age 21, regardless of sexual activity. This is sometimes called a Pap test.

Pap tests are performed to detect changes in cells on the cervix. If abnormal cells are found, this is referred to as cervical dysplasia. These cellular changes are mostly caused by HPV. Cervical dysplasia is not cancer, but in some cases, can develop into cancer.

WHO NEEDS A PAP TEST?

At the age of 21, it is recommended that anyone with a cervix get a Pap test, regardless of sexual activity. After 21, it is recommended every 3 years unless you are told otherwise by a provider.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A PAP TEST

You do not need to do anything special to prepare. Pap smears can be performed even if you have had sex recently, used a lubricant, or while you are on your period. If your bleeding is very heavy, you might want to reschedule.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING A PAP TEST

If you're nervous, that's okay! Let your provider know how you're feeling. Habif clinicians prioritize your comfort and accommodate you in any way they can. You will be asked to undress from the waist down and lie on your back on the exam table. The provider will insert a speculum (an object that looks like a slender duck bill) and collect a sample of cells from the cervix using a small brush. The provider may also insert one or two fingers into the vagina and keep their other hand on the lower abdomen in order to feel for cysts on the ovaries - this is called a bimanual exam. Pap tests only take a few minutes. Tests may be uncomfortable, but they should not hurt. Let your provider know if you experience pain during the test.

It is Habif's policy that a clinical assistant is present during a pap test in addition to the primary provider. They may assist with equipment and specimen handling, and are present to help enhance the patient's comfort, safety, security, and dignity during a sensitive procedure.

After 21

CONTINUE PRACTICING PREVENTION

Caring for your sexual health and receiving annual preventative health visits are also important aspects of caring for your pelvic health.



TIPS AND RESOURCES



Habif Health and
Wellness Center

STUDENT AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Pelvic Health Tips & Resources

Tips for Pelvic Care

KNOW YOUR VULVA

Every vulva is different, even when it comes to scent. If you notice your vulva smells different than usual or doesn't feel right, talk to your provider.

AVOID DOUCHING

The vagina cleans itself. Douching can cause irritation and eliminate good bacteria. Wash your vulva daily with water and unscented soap, and avoid internal cleaning.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

Replace pads and tampons at least every 4 hours, and wash menstrual cups every 12 hours.

Habif Services

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Preventative care
- STI & HIV screening
- PrEP navigation
- Contraceptive counseling

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Individual and couples counseling

GENDER IDENTITY CONSULTATIONS

HORMONE THERAPY REFERRALS

**For an
appointment call
(314) 935-6677**

Community Resources

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF THE ST. LOUIS REGION AND SOUTHWEST MISSOURI

Provides, protects, and supports reproductive and sexual health.

Visit plannedparenthood.org for more info.

(314) 531-7526

CONTRACEPTIVE CHOICE CENTER

Provides gender-inclusive sexual health and contraceptive services for adolescents and adults.

Visit c3.wustl.edu for more info.

METRO TRANS UMBRELLA GROUP (MTUG)

Fosters unity among the transgender community in the St. Louis metro area.

Visit stlmetrotrans.org for more info.

THE SPOT

Provides services for people 24 and under:

- STI & HIV screening (limited hours)
- STI treatment
- PrEP navigation
- Contraceptive refills & Plan B

Visit thespot.wustl.edu for more info.

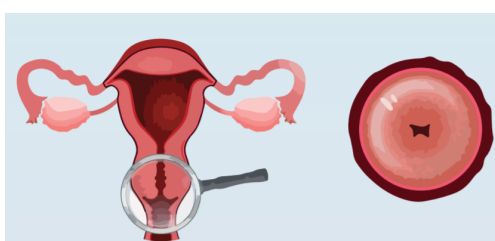
WASHU TRANSGENDER CENTER

Provides:

- Primary care, hormone therapy, and specialty care
- Behavioral health and social work services

Visit wuphysicians.wustl.edu for more info.

CERVIX LOCATION:



Habif Health and
Wellness Center

STUDENT AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY