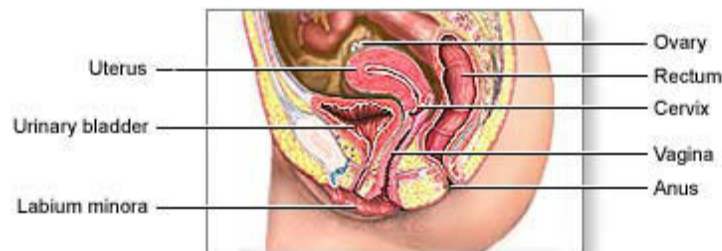


What can I expect during the pelvic exam?

After your breasts have been examined, you will be placing your feet in the footrests at the end of the table. You will need to slide your hips down to the edge of the table, and relax your abdominal and buttock muscles as much as possible. If you breathe slowly and deeply with your mouth open, and let your stomach muscles go soft, the exam will be more comfortable for you. If you want to see what is going on, and/or know what your cervix and vagina look like, a mirror is available for this purpose.



Initially, the clinician will visually examine the external genital area, and check for signs of irritation, discharge, genital warts, cysts, or other conditions. She will then insert a plastic, lubricated speculum into the vagina. You may feel some slight pressure or mild discomfort when the speculum is inserted and opened. The clinician can then check for any growth, irritation, or unusual discharge from the cervix. They may take a few extra samples of the cervical mucus on a cotton swab, to test for sexually transmitted infections, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, or trichomonas. Unless the clinician sees abnormalities, these tests will not be taken unless you have requested them, or have symptoms or concerns.



What is a pap test and why do I need it?

A Pap test consists of gently collecting cells from the cervix, by using a small spatula or tiny, soft brush. The cells are then examined for abnormalities- either precancerous or cancerous cells. If you have a Pap test as often as your provider recommends, small problems can be found long before they become precancer or cancer. The Pap test is thought of as the best cancer screening test ever invented. It is not unusual to have some spotting or bleeding after a sample is taken. This sample is then sent to a laboratory, and you will be informed of your results by a letter in 1-2 weeks after the test. Your UCR insurance covers a yearly pap—otherwise it costs \$30.65. If other tests were performed, you will be asked to return to the clinic for your results. Always be sure we have your correct phone number and address.



After the sample is taken, the provider will do a bimanual exam, which involves using gloved lubricated fingers inserted into the vagina. The other hand presses down on the lower abdomen. The clinician is then able to examine the internal organs between the abdomen and the vagina. The provider will be checking for the shape, size, and position of the uterus, any tenderness or enlargement of the uterus, and cysts or tumors of the ovaries. If indicated, occasionally, the provider will do a rectal exam to check for any abnormalities.

The provider may also examine your abdomen, your thyroid gland in the neck, your heart and lungs. A blood test to check for anemia might also be done, if indicated. If you are having any urinary symptoms, a sample of urine may be sent to the lab.