

**I'm Pregnant,
Not Sick!
So Why Go to the Doctor?**



*Early doctor's care can help keep
you and your baby* **HEALTHY**



Make your first doctors visit as soon as you **THINK** you are pregnant. All of your doctor appointments are important for you and your baby.

Visits to your doctor may prevent early birth, low birthweight and infant death.

After you call for your appointment, start to write down any questions you think of that you want to ask the doctor or nurse. Take these questions with you to your first visit.



At your *FIRST VISIT*, you will be asked a lot of questions.

- What is your age ?
- When was the first day of your last period ?
- How long are your periods ?
- How old were you when your periods started ?
- Have you been pregnant before ?
- Did you ever have an abortion ?
- Did you ever have a miscarriage ?
- Do you have any children ?
What are their ages ?

This is important so the doctor can tell when the baby is due.



This tells the doctor how other pregnancies have been for you and what might happen this time.

Do you have any health problems ?

- High blood pressure ?
- Allergies ?
- Diabetes ?
- Any blood transfusions ?
- Epilepsy ?
- Sickle-cell anemia ?

Does anyone in your family (mother, sister, brother) have any of these problems ?

Does the baby's father have any of these problems, or any others you can think of ?

Have you had shots for measles and mumps ?

Have you ever been in the hospital ? Why ? When ?

Do you take any medicine ?

Tell the doctor of any changes you have been feeling.

- Throwing up or upset stomach
- Headache
- Not able to sleep
- Bleeding or cramps

Your Examination

A blood test will be done. It will show:



- your blood type, if you are Rh negative
- if you have enough red blood cells
- if you have any sexually transmitted diseases

You may be asked if you want an AIDS test

You will be asked to undress and put on a gown.
Be sure it opens in the front.

You will be asked to go to the bathroom and urinate in a cup.
The urine will be tested for signs of:

- infection
- sugar
- protein

Any of these things are a sign of danger to you and your baby.



As you wait for the doctor, breathe slowly with your mouth open. This will help you relax. Sit in a comfortable way.



Your height and weight will be taken.



Your neck will be felt for swelling or lumps.



Your eyes are checked for any illness.



Your nose is looked at.



Your lungs are checked.
The heart rate is taken.



Blood pressure is taken.



Your breasts are checked for lumps and to be sure they are changing as they should.



The doctor feels your liver, spleen, and kidneys by pushing on your stomach.

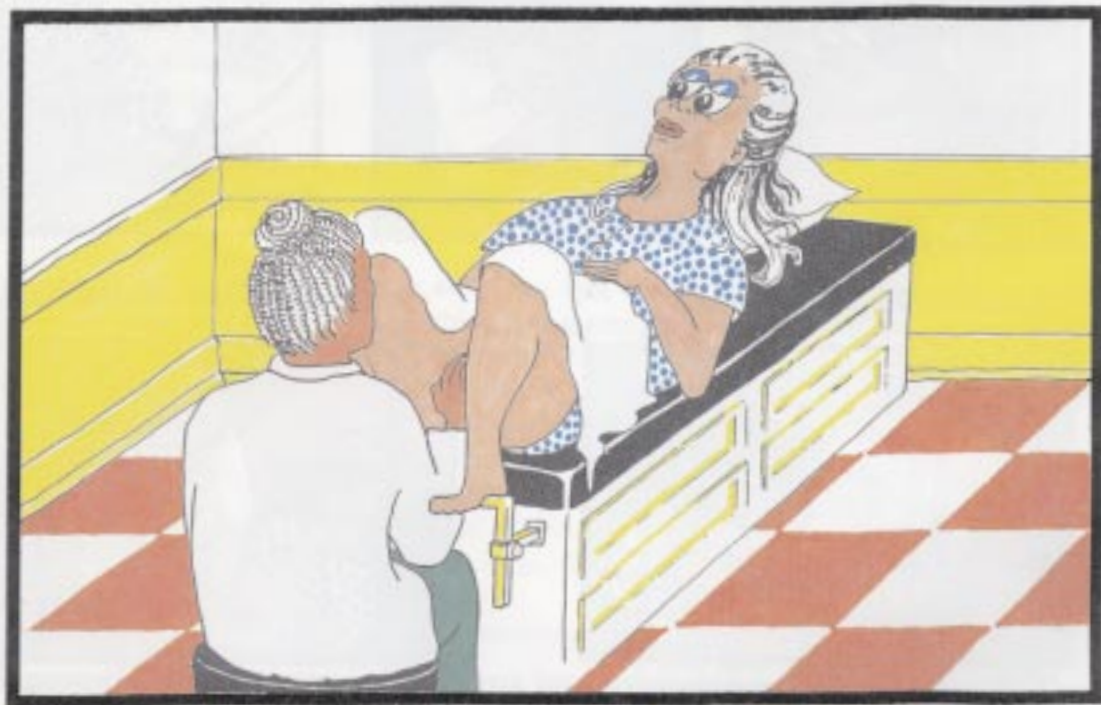


If the doctor sees any signs of problems, treatment can begin before you or your baby are harmed.

Pelvic Exam

Lie down on the exam table and slide all the way to the end. Your feet will be placed in metal cups (stirrups), and your body will be covered with a sheet. Rest your hands on your breasts or at your side - breathe deeply. Spread your knees as far apart as you can. The doctor will look at the outside of your organs and look for:

- swelling
- lumps
- redness
- discharge
- warts
- rashes
- hemorrhoids



The doctor will feel and gently stretch the vaginal opening. A metal or plastic tool (speculum) will be put in your opening. The doctor can then see inside to be sure the cervix is healthy. A small amount of tissue is taken and tested for gonorrhea and a pap test. After the tool is taken out, the doctor will put one or two fingers into your vagina to feel for lumps.

The doctor will push up in your opening as he or she is pushing down on your stomach. This is to be sure your uterus, the place where the baby grows, is healthy and can support your baby.

The doctor also feels the ovaries where the eggs grow by pushing up with one hand and down with the other.

Sometimes the doctor puts a finger in your rectum to check other organs.

The doctor will feel where your legs and body meet (groin) for lumps and your heartbeat.

Your reflexes will be tested with a small hammer that will make your arm and leg jump.

If you have any questions, ask as the doctor is examining you.

Your understanding of these tests is very important to you and your growing baby.

Your first check-up will be longer than your other check-ups.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY



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