

**Patient Information:****Women's Clinic Gynecology Services**

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**PAP TESTS**

The Pap test detects changes in cervical cells that might suggest a precancerous condition. Guidelines for pap testing have changed recently. Paps should start at age 21. Women age 21-29 should have pap testing every 3 years unless they have had an abnormal pap. Women age 30-65 may be screened every 3 years or if they would like to lengthen the screening interval they may have HPV screening with the pap. If both are negative and they have no high risk factors they may have the pap test every 5 years.

The Human Papilloma Virus is responsible for almost all cellular changes found on a Pap test. If your Pap test is abnormal, it does not mean that you have cervical cancer. Your practitioner will discuss the meaning of any abnormal Pap test results with you

**ANNUAL EXAMS**

**Annual gynecological exams at the Women's Clinic include** blood pressure weight measurement, and a physical exam of the abdomen, breasts, heart, lungs, lymph nodes, thyroid gland and a pelvic exam.

**THE PELVIC EXAM**

The pelvic exam is one of the most important female health measures and it should not be confused with the Pap Test. A pelvic exam is part of any yearly routine annual exam even if a Pap test is not necessary. During your exam your practitioner will palpate (check) your external genital area, vaginal walls, cervix, uterus, ovaries, and sometimes the rectum. The pelvic exam might feel slightly uncomfortable, but should not be painful.

**Preparing for Your Exam**

If you plan to have a Pap test, make your appointment for a time when you will be in the middle of your menstrual cycle if possible. Don't put anything in the vagina for 3-4 days before your appointment-no douches, tampons, medications, spermicides, diaphragms, fingers, intercourse or oral sex. Any foreign cells or outside products can interfere with the Pap test.

If you are having a problem, try not to schedule your appointment after you have used any vaginal medications or soon after having sex. Vaginal medications make it impossible to visualize the discharge or vaginal tissue. Intercourse acts like a douche and makes the discharge difficult to see or collect for testing.

**Important Numbers**

**Women's Clinic .....540-231-6569**  
**Health Ed Office .....540-231-3070**  
**Pharmacy .....540-231-8103**  
**Billing Questions .....540-231-6608**  
**Online Appointments:**  
<http://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/>

# How to Obtain Prescription Contraception

## Step 1: Explore your options

Use the tools on the Women's Clinic website, **Method Match** and/or **Choosing Wisely**, to help decide which method of birth control might be right for you.

If you prefer to talk with a health professional, please visit [www.healthcenter.vt.edu/contraclass.htm](http://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/contraclass.htm) for information about scheduling an appointment with a health educator. Each type of birth control is described under contraceptives on the Women's Clinic website if you would like more in depth information about a particular method. Be sure to read the information on the particular type of birth control you choose.

## STEP 2: Make an appointment

Call the Women's Clinic (540-231-6569) to make an appointment or make an on-line appointment at <https://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/osh>.

## Step 3: Complete the Gynecology History Form

This form is found on the Women's Clinic website [http://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/services/womens\\_clinic/index.html](http://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/services/womens_clinic/index.html). Bring this with you to your appointment. It helps the practitioner and nurses determine quickly what testing you need and what birth control might be most appropriate.

## STEP 4: See your practitioner

Try to arrive 10-15 minutes before the start of your appointment. When you arrive at SHC, check in at the *Women's Clinic*.

## STEP 5: Have your prescription filled

## Pharmacy Options

The Affordable Health Care Act made it so insurance covers all FDA approved methods of birth control usually without a co-pay. Most insurances cover three cycles of a generic birth control pill without a co-pay. They usually do not cover brand name birth control pills. Outside pharmacies will accept 3 cycles of birth control with 3 refills. This is only 12 cycles which may not make a full year. The pharmacy will fax the healthcare provider and ask for enough birth control to complete the year. You will need to take your insurance card or information to the pharmacy with you.

If you do not have insurance or do not want to use your insurance you may use the Schiffert Health Center Pharmacy. It carries several types of birth control at reasonable costs. We do not take insurance directly at this time. The pharmacy will give you an itemized bill to turn into your insurance if you ask. If you have the Aetna student insurance it may be better for you to get your birth control from Schiffert and let Aetna reimburse you. Check with the insurance office to see what is best for you. One advantage of using Schiffert Health's Pharmacy, besides convenience, is that you can purchase as many cycles of birth control as you need at any time. If you are studying abroad this may help you get the number of cycles you will need while away. You may also take what you need for the summer or take all 13 cycles with you when you graduate. Prescriptions may be transferred between pharmacies by having the receiving pharmacy call the transferring pharmacy for the prescription. Refills may be lost with transfers.

## Sexually Transmitted Infection Screening

- Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HIV and Syphilis testing is recommended for women who are sexually active and at risk.
- Chlamydia and Gonorrhea tests are available with the annual exam or as part of STI screening.
- Chlamydia and Gonorrhea testing may be done by the traditional swab method or by a urinalysis for both women and men. The urine test is more expensive than the swab test. **2 weeks** should have passed since any suspicious contact to ensure accuracy.
- Testing is optional unless you are seen for a problem for which the testing is necessary to determine the cause of the problem.
- Syphilis testing involves drawing blood and is available for a small charge. This may be requested at any appointment and may be done with any other blood work.
- Two types of HIV testing are available. One is a regular blood test and the results take several days. There is a charge for this test and the results are included in your medical chart. This may be requested at any appointment.
- The second type of HIV test is an oral swab and the results are available immediately. There is no cost and the results are not included in your medical chart. This testing is done on certain Tuesdays at student health from 9 AM to 4:30 PM. This appointment may be scheduled by calling 540-353-9888 or e-mailing [maryc@councilofcommunityservices.org](mailto:maryc@councilofcommunityservices.org)
- Women over the age of 30 may wish to include a test for high risk HPV-DNA to their pap test. Doing both tests together has been shown to be more accurate in determining the absence of disease than the Pap test alone. If both tests are negative and there are no other risk factors a woman may go 5 years between paps in the above 30 age group.

- Herpes culture may be done if there are painful lesions in the genital area and it has not been longer than 72 hours since the lesion(s) first developed.
- Herpes blood testing may be done to determine the presence or absence of antibodies. This type of testing does not indicate the site of the virus if it is positive. In order for the test to be accurate, 12-16 weeks must have passed from any possible exposure.
- Type I Herpes is no longer found only in the oral area and Type II Herpes is no longer found only in the genital area. This is because the virus has been transmitted through oral sex.

## Payment Options

Any charges will automatically be billed to your student account. They are labeled either medical clinic charges or pharmacy charges and do not indicate what the charges represent.

You may pay with cash, check or Hokie Passport upstairs in the administration section of SHC anytime after the visit until the following Monday at 5 PM. If you choose this method, no transactions are posted to your student account.

Hokie Passport may be used in the pharmacy. Itemized bills are available upon request to turn into insurance for reimbursement.

## HPV Vaccines

- Gardasil and Cervarix are vaccines against HPV. They are both a series of 3 vaccines given at certain time intervals.
- SHC has Gardasil available through the Allergy/Immunization clinic. Appointments may be made by calling 540-231-7621.
- Gardasil is available to men and women up to age 26.
- SHC will provide an itemized bill to turn into insurance. Check with your insurance company first. If you are not insured ask about options.
- The vaccines are also available at most GYN or primary care offices.

## Obtaining Test Results

- The Women's Clinic will call your cell phone number if any test result is positive. Contact will be initiated only if the test results are positive.
- Copies of test results may be requested at medical records.
- No test results are given over the phone.
- Appointments are scheduled to discuss any abnormal test results.
- A secure message system through the Hokie Portal may be used to communicate results if contact is unsuccessful by cell phone.
- To transfer from SHC pharmacy, request the receiving pharmacy's pharmacist call 540-231-8103 to verify the prescription.
- Frequently refills are lost with transfers.

## Pregnancy Testing

- Urine pregnancy tests are accurate to within 10 days of any unprotected intercourse.
- First morning specimens yield the most accurate results.
- If an appointment cannot be made early in the day, a specimen cup may be picked up in the Women's Clinic so the specimen may be collected early in the morning. The urine may be dropped off in the SHC lab or refrigerated until appointment time if needed.
- Blood tests may be done for a small charge but are usually only necessary if the length of the pregnancy is an issue.

## Feminine Hygiene Prevention Strategies

- Condoms, condoms, condoms.
- Female condoms provide more coverage and prevent any genital contact thus providing more protection against sexually transmitted infections.
- Urinate after each episode of sex within about 30 minutes to help prevent urinary tract infections.
- Urinate when the urge arises. Holding urine can promote urinary tract infections.
- Clean genital and anal area before sex especially if urinary tract infections have been a frequent problem.
- Wipe from front to back to prevent the spread of bacteria from the anal area.
- Get out of wet clothes after exercise or sweating and get into something dry. Moisture promotes yeast infections.
- Sleep without underwear so moisture is not an issue. This is the one time of day clothes are not necessary.
- Don't wear mini-pads or panty liners on a daily basis to catch a vaginal discharge. This promotes moisture and increases the discharge.
- Don't douche. It washes away good bacteria and can promote vaginal infections.