

# Know the **BIG 5** and Thrive



## Well-woman exams and discussing gynecological cancers with your provider

A well-woman exam is recommended annually and focuses on a woman's sexual, reproductive, and overall health. It may include a physical, clinical breast exam, mammogram (40 or older), pelvic exam, Pap smear, and HPV test (if applicable).

### Have your first Pap test when you are 21:

- If your test results are normal, you can wait three years for your next Pap test.
- HPV tests are not recommended for women under age 30.

### When you turn 30 you have your choice:

- If your test results are normal, get a Pap every three years.
- Get both a Pap and HPV test every five years.

### You can stop screening if:

- You're older than 65 and have had normal Pap test results for many years.
- Your cervix was removed during surgery for a non-cancerous condition, like fibroids.



A well-woman's exam provides an opportunity for you and your provider to talk about any concerning changes, screening options, birth control, planning for pregnancy, health goals, and more. **If you need additional support during your visit, please talk to your primary care team to find what options are available to you.**

**Before your appointment it may be helpful to note and list any physical changes such as the following:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Changes in breast tissue               | <input type="radio"/> Pelvic or abdominal pain                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Changes in bowel movements             | <input type="radio"/> Nausea  |
| <input type="radio"/> Abnormal vaginal discharge or bleeding | <input type="radio"/> Changes in appetite                           |
| <input type="radio"/> Pain with urination or sex             | <input type="radio"/> Increased body hair growth or scalp hair loss |

*Be ready to describe what your symptoms feel like, when they started and what makes them better or worse.*

**Here are some example questions you can ask your provider during your appointment:**

- My period is or has been irregular/painful/very heavy, this seems unusual, what could be causing this?
- I have a family history of cancer and/or genetic mutations (BRCA 1, BRCA 2), do I need to start screening earlier than what is recommended, and would genetic counseling be appropriate for me?
- What screenings should I have during this visit?
- I have noticed some physical changes that are out of the ordinary for me, can we talk more about this?