*Widewaters Gynecology*

Women’s Health Services

Adolescent Gynecologic Care

At Widewaters Gynecology, we offer gynecological services to young girls. Our doctors are experienced and know the extra sensitivity that is required in treating them. The reason for these visits can be for a general preventive exam or to treat a gynecologic problem. Some problems found in young patients can include congenital malformations, vulvovaginitis, pelvic pain and puberty disorder. The first annual exam is recommended for women between the ages of 15-17. Most often their first visit is a "meet & greet" to help acquaint younger women with the basic exam and is based on their gynecological needs, especially if they are not sexually active.

At Widewaters Gynecology, our doctors and nurses take special care of our younger patients and adhere to a strict confidentiality policy.

Gynecologic exams can be a bit overwhelming for young women who may be reluctant to come forward with any issues they face or to ask questions about their changing bodies. We know this is a delicate field and our doctors are very sensitive to the needs of our young patients, developing a trust early on that lasts throughout their lives. Our patient's first visit includes a confidential consultation where many questions about their bodies, menstrual cycles or developmental problems will be discussed with sensitivity and patience and as candidly as the young woman desires.

Breast Cancer Screening

Breast cancer is a serious disease that unfortunately affects a large number of women each year. It is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women and affects one in every eight women in the United States. Screening for breast cancer can be done by the patient at home and during regular doctor's visits. A breast self-exam should be performed every month to identify any changes or abnormalities. You should look and feel around your entire breast for any signs of a lump, swelling, irritation or pain. Any of these symptoms or other abnormalities should be discussed with your doctor immediately.

It is recommended to perform monthly breast exams when you reach the age of 20. You should also schedule a breast exam with your doctor every three years. Women over 40 should have a clinical exam and mammogram every year. Talk to your doctor about how you can screen and prevent breast cancer.

Annual Gynecologic Exams

Yearly pelvic exams and Pap smears are important in monitoring your gynecologic health and screening for infection, inflammation or other abnormal cells that may indicate disease. Early detection is important in treating any disease and especially important for cervical cancer and other potentially life-threatening diseases.

Annual exams with pap smear are recommended for women who are sexually active or over the age of 21. During the exam, the doctor will examine your breasts and pelvic organs for any abnormalities or changes. An annual exam is one of the most important steps you can take in preventing disorders of the pelvic organs.

**Contraceptive Care & Counseling**

Talking with your doctor is an important step in figuring out which birth control method will be most effective for you based on your lifestyle and health.

At Widewaters Gynecology, we will provide you with information on the types of contraceptives available, their usage and effectiveness. The decision is ultimately your own. Our job is to help you make the right choice based on your age, health and any previous experiences.

An open conversation with your doctor that includes what you want and what you’re willing to do will help your doctor recommend the best options. Remember, the best way to discover what contraceptive works for you is to work with someone you trust.

**Urogynecology- Pelvic prolapse and Incontinence**

Urogynecology involves pelvic floor disorders. The pelvic floor includes the muscles, ligaments, connective tissue and nerves that support and help control the bladder, vagina, uterus and rectum. Some common pelvic floor disorders are

* Leakage of urine (incontinence)
* Overactive bladder (OAB), including frequent need to urinate, waking at night to urinate (nocturia), strong urge to urinate (urgency)
* Bulging, sagging or falling of pelvic organs (prolapse)
* Painful urination (dysuria)
* Difficulty urinating or having bowel movements (emptying disorders)

These and other problems can result from childbirth, aging, disease, surgery, chronic constipation, medications, repeated heavy lifting or other causes. A medical history, physical examination and tests will help us determine the cause of your problem and help you decide on an appropriate treatment.

**Treatment for Pelvic Relaxation**

Pelvic relaxation affects over 30 million women in the US as a result of childbirth, aging or a combination of these and other factors that cause the pelvic floor to weaken, sag and no longer support the organs in the area. Depending on which organs are affected, patients may experience feelings of heaviness or fullness in the vagina, incontinence, abnormal bowel movements or a protuberance through the vaginal opening in more severe cases.

Our doctors provide a wide range of nonsurgical and surgical options for the treatment of pelvic relaxation to help patients return to a more comfortable lifestyle. Mild cases of pelvic relaxation can often be relieved through Kegel exercises, which aim to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. Topical estrogen therapies or a vaginal pessary may also be recommended by your doctor to relieve symptoms and restore pelvic floor support.

Surgery for pelvic relaxation may be performed through vaginal and abdomen via minimally invasive techniques such as laparoscopy and robotic-assisted surgery in order to restore the displaced organs back to their original position with less pain and shorter recovery times. More traditional surgical procedures such as hysterectomy may also be performed.

**Colposcopy**

Colposcopy is a procedure used to magnify certain areas of the body and help diagnose abnormalities. The procedure is done with a colposcope, a microscope that can help identify lesions. It is usually performed as a follow-up procedure to an abnormal pap smear. The exam itself is similar to a pap smear in that a speculum is inserted and the cervix may be cleaned. The colposcope is then placed to view the area at 10 to 40 times its normal size. If any abnormal cells are noticed, a biopsy of the tissue may be done. A colposcopy is a very safe procedure with few complications. Light bleeding or discharge for up to a week after the exam is normal.