

Taking *Care* of you...

Many women today have busy, demanding lives between work, family, and other matters. In most families women are the healthcare decision-makers, but too often they are so busy taking care of others that they overlook their own health needs. The choices we make about our own personal health and well-being are perhaps the most important decisions affecting our lives. Remember - *YOU are important! Take care of yourself for you and for those you love.*

Take control of your health!

CHS embraces a holistic approach to the life-long health and wellness of women. This approach begins with you and your doctor discussing healthy behaviors to prevent and manage the multitude of health conditions that can affect you. Healthy behaviors include being physically active and eating a healthy diet; making safe sexual choices, obtaining preconception care and adequate prenatal care; having regular GYN exams and mammograms and checking your blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

We know that having a family history of certain diseases is a part of your health that you cannot control. The good news is that there are many ways that your health that can be positively influenced by things you do have control over. Some risks be reduced by following key preventive steps such as scheduling the regular checkups and other health screenings as recommended by your health care provider. Early detection of heart disease, diabetes, or breast or cervical cancer can make all the difference in survival rates – so be sure to get screened – *don't put it off!*

How we can help

CHS' Women's Health Department provides a wider range of services than any other health center in the state. We emphasize preventive care, and all of our services are provided whether or not you have insurance. We even have special programs for free breast and pelvic exams for women who qualify. Our doctors are linked with Hartford Hospital and manage deliveries and complete follow-up on newborns. We are experienced in dealing with high-risk pregnancies and reducing the risk of premature births.

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This is
the place
where **all**
women
can get
health care.



A Special Note For Women of Color

Women of color have higher rates of many illnesses and diseases including cardiovascular (heart and blood vessel) disease, lupus, certain types of cancer, and diabetes, hepatitis, and AIDS. Infant mortality (if a baby dies before age 1) and maternal mortality (death during childbirth) are highest in the African American and Hispanic communities. If you are a woman of color, take steps to reduce your risk factors.

Gynecological (GYN) Exams

GYN or pelvic examinations and Pap Smears are important for all women as part of their regular care. Through regular Pap tests and pelvic exams, your health care provider can find and treat infections and abnormal cells in the cervix before they turn into cancer. A Pap smear can save your life.

STDs & HIV/AIDS

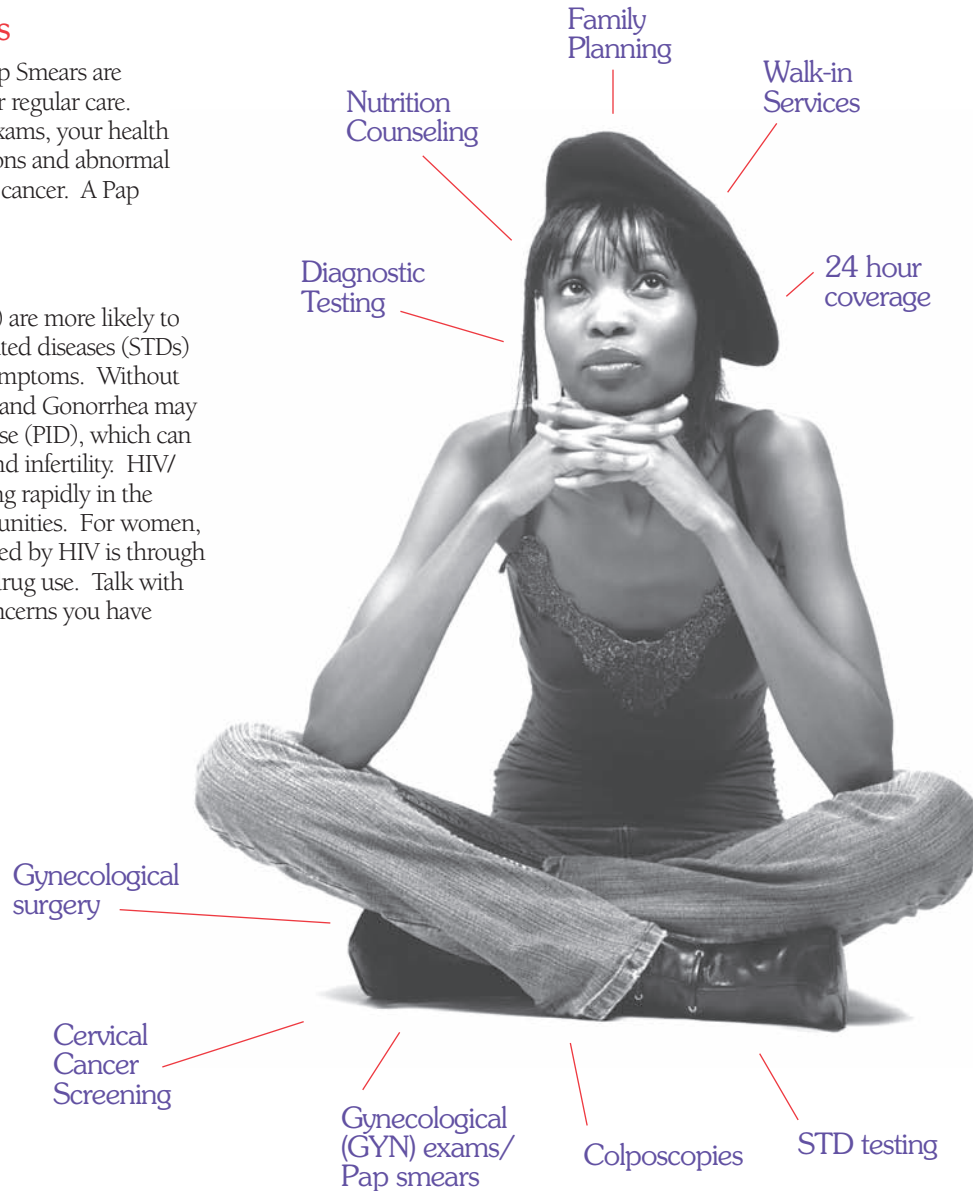
Women (especially younger women) are more likely to become infected with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) but they are less likely to experience symptoms. Without treatment, diseases such as Chlamydia and Gonorrhea may develop into pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which can lead to complications including pain and infertility. HIV/AIDS rates among women are increasing rapidly in the African-American and Hispanic communities. For women, the most common ways of being infected by HIV is through heterosexual contact and intravenous drug use. Talk with your healthcare provider about any concerns you have or to see if you are at risk.

Menopause

Your health is important at all stages of life. While many older women believe that regular GYN exams are no longer necessary, this is precisely the point in life when they are at higher risk for cervical and breast cancer, and other health problems. Talk with your health care provider about other treatments available to help you manage menopause.

Breast Health

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in women, with older women at greater risk. Most women who develop breast cancer have no special risk factors for the disease, so it is critical to do what you can to detect cancer early, and have a healthy lifestyle. By getting mammograms, breast cancer can be found earlier, when it is more treatable.



Cardiovascular Health

Nearly twice as many women die of heart disease and stroke as from all types of cancer combined. More than one woman in five has some form of major heart or blood vessel (cardiovascular) disease in this country. **Heart disease is the number one killer of American women**, while stroke is the third leading cause of death. The older a woman gets, the more likely she is to develop cardiovascular disease, but women of all ages should be concerned about it and take steps to prevent it.

Family Planning

While motherhood is a major part of life for many women, for some the choice to not to become pregnant is equally important. Whether you are planning to have your first baby or space out babies one and two, CHS staff can discuss with you the many options available to help you choose if and when to start or grow your family.

Prenatal Care

Having a healthy baby begins even before you get pregnant. That new life growing inside you will depend on you to make good choices about your health. Prenatal care is essential since doctors can spot health problems early when they see mothers regularly. Early treatment can cure many problems and prevent others.

