



# Guide to Pap Testing

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This package was created by Healthy U: Peer Health & Wellness at the University of Manitoba. We are a group of trained, non-judgmental, and confidential student health and wellness leaders on campus.

We provide outreach activities, workshops, and one-on-one support for our fellow students on a variety of health and well-being topics. Feel free to drop in to chat or pick up more information packages.

If you would like to request or attend one of our workshops or events, check out our website for details.



# All you need to know about Pap Testing

## What is a pap test?

A pap test checks for changes in the cells of your cervix, which could indicate cancer. Your health care provider will take a sample of these cells and send them to the lab for testing. You will be notified if there are any irregularities.

## Do I need one?

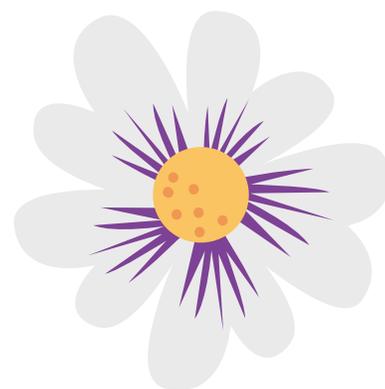
If you are sexually active, have a cervix, and are 21 or older, it is recommended that you get a pap test once every 3 years.

## How to Prepare

Try to plan your appointment for a day you will not be on your period.  
Don't douche or use contraceptive creams or jellies for 24 hours before your test.  
Don't have sex for 24 hours before your test.

## Do I still need regular pap testing if...

I feel healthy and have no symptoms? YES  
I am no longer sexually active? YES  
I have only ever had one partner? YES  
I am in a same-sex relationship? YES  
I have gone through menopause? YES  
I have no family history of cervical cancer? YES



# What to expect from your first Pelvic Exam

Many people are afraid to get a pelvic exam because they are worried it will be embarrassing or painful.

## Why should I get it done?

To check that your pelvic organs are healthy and in the right place/position, to detect infections, and to check if your cervix has any abnormalities.

## Will it hurt?

You will feel pressure, like someone squeezing hard, but it shouldn't hurt.

## What happens in the exam?

First you will be asked questions such as the date of your last menstrual period, if you are sexually active, and if you are on birth control. You will get a chance to change into a gown and talk about any concerns. You may be given a physical exam to check your general health. Next they will ask you to lie down on the table with your feet apart and knees bent. They will inspect your vulva first, then insert the speculum. This is a small metal instrument used to give the health care provider a better view. The more you relax, the less uncomfortable this part will be. Next a pap test will be done by gently collecting cells from the surface of your cervix. A Q-tip may also be used to check for infections. Lastly, the health care provider will insert a gloved finger to feel your reproductive organs, checking their shape, size, and position. They will press on your abdomen and may use lubricating jelly. Again, you may feel pressure, but shouldn't feel pain. If you do experience pain it is important to let the health care provider know.

And that's it, it's done!

## Where can I get a Pap Test?

You can either go to your family physician or another clinic in Winnipeg that offers pap testing. These include Klinik, Women's Health Clinic, and several others throughout the community.

Women's Health Clinic offers a free pap testing clinic once per month. Call 204-947-1517 to find out when their next one is.

To find a clinic that offers pap testing near you, visit [getcheckedmanitoba.ca](http://getcheckedmanitoba.ca)



When and how will I find out my results?

Will I be notified either way, or just if there are abnormalities?

What happens if my results show abnormalities?

Can I also be tested for STI's during this appointment?

How can I reduce my risks for cervical cancer?

## Questions to ask your Health Care Provider

