

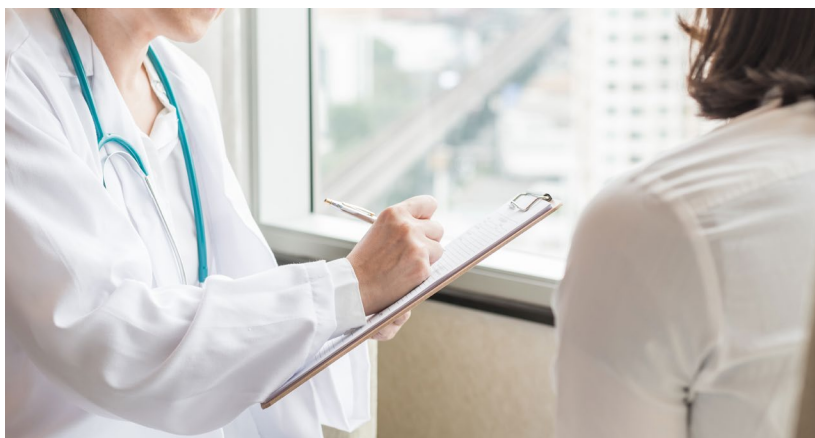
Prepping to See Your Gynecologist

Guide for a Successful Visit

Goal: Find a practitioner with an accessible office and the knowledge and compassion to assess your sexual and reproductive health

Before the visit, call and confirm the following with the front desk:

- Is the parking lot accessible?
- Can I get into and around the clinic (ramp to front door, width of office)?
- Can the exam table be raised and lowered? If not, ask whether the office has a procedure room with a more accessible chair that can be used. Be explicit about your transfer needs.
- Has the provider worked with patients with a spinal cord injury before?



When you arrive:

- Remind the front desk staff that you may need help with transfer (they may not be the same person who made your appointment).

During the visit:

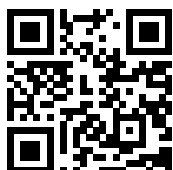
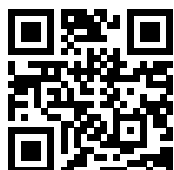
- The more you share with your provider, the better care you will receive.
- Be specific about your medical history, including your bladder and bowel programs, and your sexual history.
- Educate them about your autonomic dysreflexia (AD) triggers. Ask for them to warm the speculum prior to insertion.
- Be brave and bring up any sexual concerns. Don't let provider assumptions get in the way of your care.
- Ensure that you are receiving a complete GYN exam, including preventative screenings (mammogram, pap exam, breast exam).

Remember: You are the expert on you. Don't be afraid to teach your provider; it will improve your care.

Additional resources:

This guide was adapted in part from: Wheelchair Barbie Goes to the Gynecologist: A podcast by Cody Unser

Sexuality & Reproductive Health after Paralysis – Booklet from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation



International Center for Spinal Cord Injury
at Kennedy Krieger Institute
Research. Restoration. Recovery.