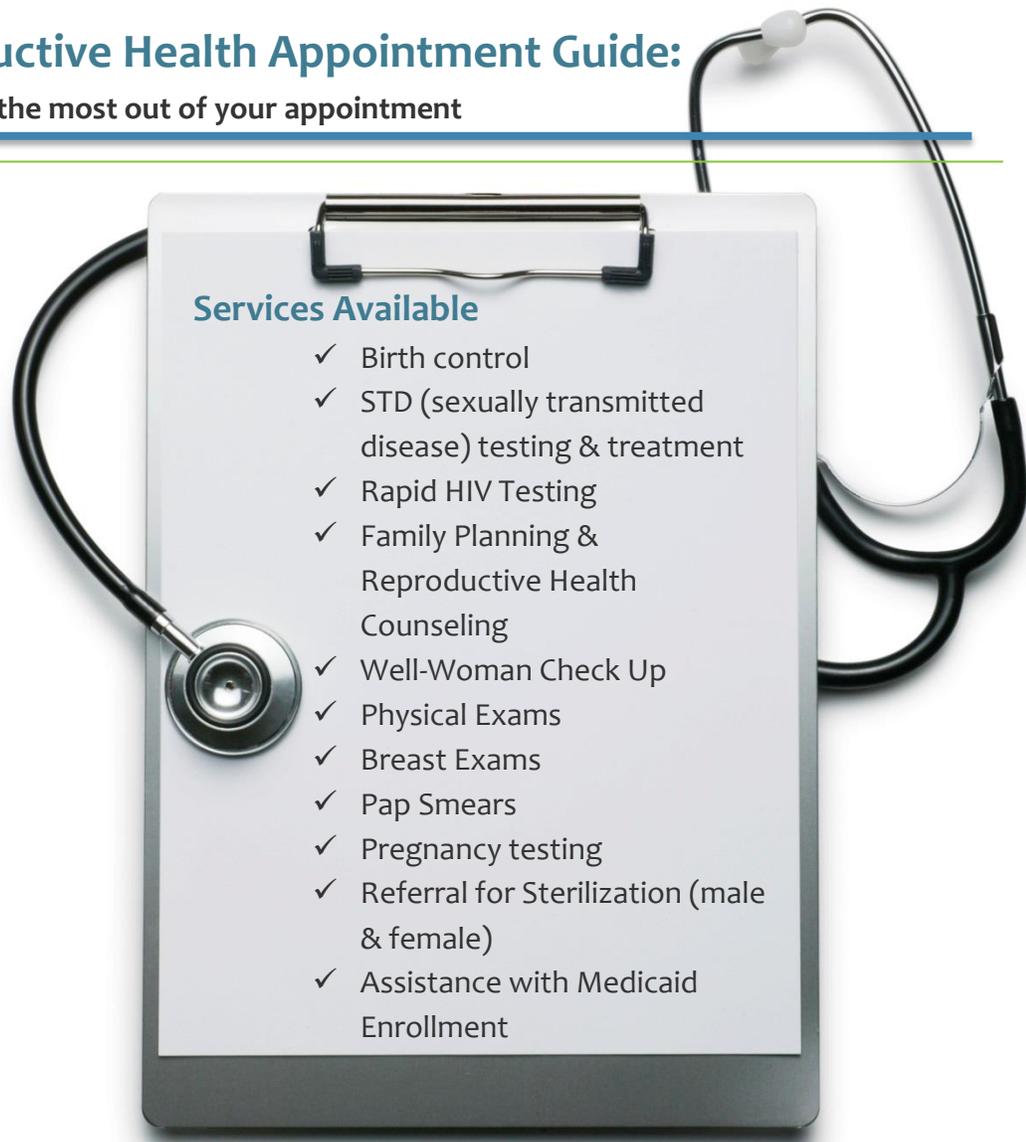


# Reproductive Health Appointment Guide:

How to get the most out of your appointment

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## Services Available

- ✓ Birth control
- ✓ STD (sexually transmitted disease) testing & treatment
- ✓ Rapid HIV Testing
- ✓ Family Planning & Reproductive Health Counseling
- ✓ Well-Woman Check Up
- ✓ Physical Exams
- ✓ Breast Exams
- ✓ Pap Smears
- ✓ Pregnancy testing
- ✓ Referral for Sterilization (male & female)
- ✓ Assistance with Medicaid Enrollment

## How to Make an Appointment

1. Download the clinic directory or use the handy clinic locator on the Reproductive Health Program page ([PlanAheadLA.org](http://PlanAheadLA.org)) to find the clinic nearest you.
2. Call the clinic and ask to schedule an appointment for a family planning visit.
3. On the day of your visit, bring as many of the items listed in the section below as you can.
4. **If for any reason you cannot keep your appointment, call the clinic and let them know so that someone else can be seen during that time slot. Please try to give the clinic 24 hours' notice- but even if it is less than that it is still important that you call.**

## What You Will Need to Bring With You

- ✓ Identification
- ✓ Proof of Insurance or Proof of Income
- ✓ A list of any medications you are currently taking

## What to Expect at Your Appointment

- If it's your first time, you will be asked to fill out some paperwork and provide information about your income and any health insurance coverage you have. If you do not have insurance, we can help you find out if you are eligible for coverage through Medicaid or Take Charge, and even help you apply.
- All services are confidential. That means we take your privacy very seriously.



- After you have been checked in a nurse will see you in a private exam room. You will be asked some personal questions about your health and sexual activity. This may feel uncomfortable at first, but it is important to be honest so that they can provide you with the best care possible.
- For some services, you may be asked to provide a urine sample, meaning you will need to pee in a cup. Or you may be given a physical exam. Everything that happens will be explained to you as the appointment goes on.
- This is also a time when you can ask any questions you have about your body, your health, birth control, condoms, sex, STIs, or about family planning- like what to do to prepare for pregnancy or how long to wait in between pregnancies.
- If you feel unsure or do not understand anything that happens during the visit, just ask the nurse to explain- they are here to help!

## Some Tips for your Visit

### 1. Be honest.

There are no *wrong answers* to the questions that the nurse will ask you. Our staff is trained to provide high quality health counseling and services, but it is important that they have all the information so that they can do their job.

### 2. Ask Questions.

We want you to feel safe to ask about anything you do not understand or are worried about. It is your right to understand your body, your birth control options, and your health.

### 3. Find what's right for you.

Everyone is different, that's why there are so many amazing birth control options today! We want to help you come up with the best plan for you- that fits with your life plan, your body, and your relationships.

### 4. If you are nervous, ask a trusted family member or friend to come with you.

There's nothing to be scared about, but sometimes having your parent, older sibling, aunt, or bestie there can be helpful.

## Questions to Ask Your Provider

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You should feel free to ask your provider about *anything* during your visit, and everyone will have different concerns. Going to the clinic can make a lot of people nervous, but asking even simple questions can make you feel a lot better- and help you to take better care of yourself! Remember, there are no dumb questions when it comes to understanding your body and your health. **It is your right as a patient to receive the information you need and to take an active role in your care.**

Here are some suggestions to get you started. You can bring this list with you to help you remember which questions you need to ask.

### General Questions about the Appointment

- What is this test for?
- When will I get the results?
- Why do I need this treatment or medication?
- Are there any side effects that I should expect?
- How do you spell the name of that medication?
- Will this medicine interact with anything else that I'm already taking?
- Ask about any changes in your health that you're unsure about, including pain, discharge, discomfort, itching, or general health questions.
- I didn't understand what you just said about \_\_\_\_\_. Could you explain it to me in a different way?

### Your Menstrual Cycle

- My periods are painful or irregular. What should I do?
- What is the difference between normal PMS and severe PMS? What can we do to make my severe PMS symptoms better?
- What do I need to know about birth control methods that reduce the number of periods that I have each year, or stop them altogether? Should I be considering those methods?
- Am I at more risk of getting pregnant at certain times in my cycle?

## **Birth Control**

- I keep hearing about IUDs and implants? Can you tell me more about those birth control options?
- Should I be using a more reliable birth control method?
- What are my best contraceptive options?
- How and when should I adjust my birth control if I decide I want to get pregnant in the near future?

## **STDs (or STIs)**

- Am I at risk for getting an STD?
- How can I protect myself?
- How often should I get tested?

## **Screenings & Prevention**

- What screenings, exams, or tests do I need to get each year?
- How often should I get a pap smear?
- Should I get the HPV vaccine? (Or should my daughter, granddaughter, or niece?)
- How do I prevent yeast infections and urinary tract infections (UTI)?  
What do I do if I get one of them?
- When should I get my first mammogram?
- How do I perform a breast self-exam?

## **Sexual Issues**

- I'm never in the mood. What might be causing this? Is there anything I can do to affect my sex drive?
- It hurts when I have sex. What can I do to help the situation?
- I'm not sure if I want to start having sex with my current partner. How can I start a conversation with him or her, or with my parents about making important relationship decisions?