

### I have the right to ...

- bring an advocate, friend or family member with me and decide if I want them to stay with me or not.
- ask how long the wait is and reschedule if it is too long.
- decline or ask to see another provider if the one I was scheduled to see is unavailable/running late.
- have time alone with the provider regardless if I or the provider has another person with them/me.
- know what the charges are for tests, exams or procedures prior to having them.
- tell my story in full or not.
- have a deciding voice in my treatment plan or not.

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### For procedures or exams, I can ..

- hear music played.
- use aromatherapy.
- use homeopathics, herbs, etc.
- have my body in a comfortable position.
- have the room at a comfortable temperature for me.
- change my mind at the last minute.
- not be strapped down while awake.
- ask for an explanation and alternatives when my requests are declined.
- choose to go elsewhere for care for any reason or no reason.
- request a second opinion and not be treated poorly because I did.
- request anti-anxiety medication and try it at home first if I prefer.

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### I have the right to ...

- decline or accept a pap smear or other tests.
- a warm speculum and gel.
- change into a robe/gown when I am ready.
- wear my own clothes.
- have the exam table be adjusted to my body shape, size and ability.

WomanSafeHealth  
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## Gynecological Services Empowerment Pocket Guide

Elizabeth Shadigian, MD  
Gynecology and WomanCare



## Gynecological Services Empowerment Pocket Guide

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**For annual gynecological visits,  
I have the right to . . .**

- accept or decline vital signs.
- accept or decline answering any questions.
- have a chaperone present or not.
- understand the parts of the pelvic exam (looking at the outside/vulva, looking on the inside/vagina with a speculum, bimanual, and/or rectal).
- accept or decline some or the entire exam.
- ask for a single digit (finger) exam and a smaller speculum for comfort.
- ask to have only the area of my body being examined exposed.
- cry, talk, laugh or be silent if I feel like it during the exam.

**For office gynecological procedures,  
I have the right to . . .**

- have all my questions answered in detail prior to the procedure.
- full informed consent, both oral and written, performed by the person doing the procedure, while I am fully dressed.
- choices for pre-procedure and procedural pain medication.
- the option of numbing cream prior to injections.
- have a support person of my choice in the procedure with me.
- know the credentials and experience of the person performing the procedure.

**My special requests are:**

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**Going to the operating room (OR),  
I have the right to . . .**

- ask for my anesthesia options prior to the procedure.
- ask for numbing cream before blood draws and/or IV starts.
- see my surgeon prior to the OR.
- meet all health care personnel who will be in the OR for my surgery.
- decline or accept medical students' presence, questions, or participation in surgery on me.
- have a support person with me while waiting for the procedure.
- a private room for a pelvic exam.
- wear my underwear to the OR.
- request catheters or more IV's be placed before or after anesthesia.

**When staying overnight,  
I have the right to . . .**

- ask for a private room and know the costs ahead of time.
- wear my own clothes.
- bring my own drinks and food to eat, depending on my procedure.
- decline any personnel I choose.
- ask for female care providers.
- ask for a chaperone for all exams.
- ask to change roommates in a non-private room.
- ask for quiet inside and outside my room.
- know where my call button is.
- call my nurse whenever I want.
- speak to a doctor familiar with my medical care if I have questions.

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