

## Annual Examination Q&A

### *What is a routine examination?*

The foundation of good gynaecological care is the annual examination. The focus of this examination relates to conditions of the breast as well as to the pelvic and reproductive health of the patient. (but is not limited to these areas)

### *What happens during a routine examination?*

Your examination includes a general physical examination and a complete review of your medical history. You will be asked about:

- Previous illnesses
- Immunizations
- Allergies or reactions to foods or other substances
- Previous injuries
- Previous hospitalization
- Any previous surgery
- Medications you are currently using or have used in the past.
- Your family history of diseases or other health problems
- You will also be asked regarding your lifestyle, as habits and life circumstances may affect your well-being.

### *You may expect questions, such as:*

- Do you get regular exercise?  
Do you use alcohol, smoke, or use recreational drugs?  
Are you experiencing a significant life event, such as getting married or divorced?  
Are you experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression?
- This is a good time to inform your doctor regarding any issues that you have been experiencing, or any changes that you have noticed in your body or regarding your menstrual cycle.
- If you are considering pregnancy in the near future, your doctor may recommend pre-pregnancy counselling or an infertility assessment. On the other hand, if you would like to avoid becoming pregnant, your doctor will discuss in detail a comprehensive range of contraceptive options.

### *Will I have a physical examination?*

A physical examination is a routine part of your examination. Your doctor typically asks you to undress from the waist down or to remove all your clothing. A clean gown will be supplied for you to wear during the examination. Your doctor will then perform certain preventive screening procedures to check for cervical cancer and other abnormalities. You may undergo a:

- Breast examination
- Pelvic examination
- Pap smear
- A vaginal or abdominal pelvic ultrasound
- Depending on your age, and whether there is a family history of breast cancer, your doctor may recommend a routine mammogram.