

# Sexual Health Care

Grades 9 and 10, Lesson #29

## **Time Needed**

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one class period

## **Student Learning Objectives**

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To be able to...

1. Explain the reasons for examinations (self and/or professional) of the breast, cervix and testes.
2. Identify who should perform (or seek) each of these, and when.
3. Describe how a breast self-exam (BSE) and a testicular self-exam (TSE) are done and list at least 2 abnormalities the person looks for in an exam.
4. Recognize that an abnormality should be checked immediately by a health care provider.

## **Agenda**

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1. Explain the lesson's purpose.
2. Use the Transparencies (or PowerPoint slides) and/ or AV tools and models to teach the concepts: why each kind of exam is important, who needs it, when it should be done, how it is done, and what the individual or health care professional looks for.
3. Summarize the lesson and assign homework.

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**Materials Needed**

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**Classroom Materials (one to reuse with each class):**

*Sexual Health Care Transparencies 1-11*  
(or PowerPoint slides of the same ... see  
[www.metrokc.gov/health/famplan/flash/](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/famplan/flash/) after January 2007)

**Student Materials (one per student):**

*Individual Homework Exercise: Sexual Health Care*

**Other Visual Aids, optional:**

BSE ...

Free **online video** about BSE from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation: <http://www.komen.org/bse/> (English, Spanish, multi-ethnic, multi-age ... if you use this tool, include the section entitled “variations”)

**BSE for Teens** video from Lange Productions (better quality than the online videos, \$75., 7 minutes, 1-888-LANGE-88.

TSE ...

Very edgy, funny free online **MTV footage** singer Tom Green (who had testicular cancer) about the importance of self-exam: <http://www.usrf.org/tomgreen.shtml>

BSE & TSE ...

**BSE/TSE Shower Cards** (to hang in the shower as reminders) are available in English and Spanish from Health Edco: <http://www.healthedco.com/>

**Soft breast and testicular models** (with lumps for teaching purposes) may be available on loan from the education department of your local Planned Parenthood or your local office of the American Cancer Society

PELVIC EXAM ...

**Your First Pelvic Exam** video from Lange Productions (\$100., 5 minutes, 1-888-LANGE-88)

**NOTE:** If you use videos/DVD and/or clinical models, which are by their nature more explicit, we recommend that this lesson be done in same sex groups, for the sake of students' comfort.

## Logistics

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Some teachers (principals, districts) may prefer that this particular lesson be done in single-gender groups. There are teachers (and some groups of students) who may find this more comfortable and conducive to discussion.

On the other hand, it is important not to undo the sense of mutual respect and co-ed comfort you have spent a whole unit developing. After all, we want to model that men and women, fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, doctors (of either gender) and patients can communicate about sexuality. Thus, the logistics of the lesson are a judgment call.

We would, however, recommend if you decide to use the videos/DVDs and clinical models that you use single-gender groups. (Videos/DVDs and 3-dimensional models are more explicit than the transparencies or PowerPoint slides.) **If the sexes are separated, each group should receive the same information and see the same audio-visuals.** With this said, you know your students best. It may be in the students' best interest to have a mixed-gender group. It is really up to you to decide.

Single-gender groups are generally inconvenient to manage in a high-school setting, which is why we've provided the line-drawing transparencies as a perfectly acceptable co-ed alternative. If you want to try to arrange separate sessions, there are a couple of ways to do so:

- » Send the girls to the library to study for the unit post-test one day, while you work with the boys, and reverse the process the second day. The advantage of this alternative is that, by the end of this unit, you have built up a rapport and comfort level with your students ... which a guest speaker has not. The disadvantage is taking two days in an already-crowded schedule.
- » or invite guest speakers and arrange for concurrent sessions in separate rooms (trading videos/DVDs midway through the period). Possible speakers include your school nurse and/or an educator from the American Cancer Society, the Public Health Department, Planned Parenthood or, in the Seattle area, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. However, be advised that, by law, a certificated teacher **must be present** at all times. Thus, if concurrent classes are taught, both presenters (or an observing teacher in each room) should be certificated.

## Activities

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1. Explain the lesson's relevance and purpose:  
Today, we're going to study three kinds of check-ups for cancer:  
(Write these three on the blackboard.)
  - **the Pap test,**
  - **testicular self-exam or TSE and**
  - **breast self-exam or "BSE."**

*Why learn about those check-ups?*

*Because finding cancers early, when they are most treatable and curable, saves lives. Yes, a lot of people, including some teens, **die as a result of ignorance, fear and embarrassment** (not directly, of course). It's just that they may not know how important these check-ups are, or how they're done ... or else they are so **scared** of cancer that they don't **want to find out** if they have it ... or else they're too **embarrassed** about their private parts to see a doctor.*

*Why should guys learn about girls' checkups and vice versa?*

*because you all have friends and family members, and many of you will have children, whose health you can help to protect! If one person here saves his or her own life **or someone else's**, because of something you learn today, I will have done my job.*

*By the end of this class, you'll know: (Write the first word of each of these on the blackboard.)*

***what** each of these body parts looks like when it's healthy,  
**why** each test is so important,  
**how** each part is examined,  
**what you look for**, if you're examining your own self,  
**who** should be getting these checkups, and  
**when** they should get them.*

2. Teach the essentials of Pap tests, BSE and TSE. First, show and discuss the first three Sexual Health Care Transparencies (about Pap tests). Then, there are two ways to teach about the self-exams. You can:
  - use videos and soft 3-dimensional models of breasts and testes, with actual lumps students can feel,
  - use the remaining Transparencies (4-11).

The following notes may help as you show the Transparencies:

### **TRANSPARENCY 1: THE CERVIX**

The cervix is the opening to the uterus. It is almost completely closed unless a baby is in the process of being born. It usually looks kind of like a tiny pinkish doughnut, with a dimple (a tiny hole) in the middle.

### **TRANSPARENCY 2: THE PAP TEST: WHY? WHO? WHEN?**

**Why?** A doctor or nurse practitioner can find changes in the cells of the cervix, even before they become cancer. About 13,000 women are diagnosed with cancer of the cervix in the U.S. each year; about one-third die as a result. But, Pap tests can detect early cell changes that would eventually *become* cancer. If these changes are discovered *before* they become cancer or in its early stages, many lives can be saved. This type of cancer usually grows slowly, so most of the deaths are preventable.

Some day the Pap Test may be less crucial – because nearly all women will have been vaccinated. Remember that the majority of cervical cancer is caused by a sexually transmitted disease (STD), Human Papillomavirus, or HPV. The hope is that all preteen girls and teenage women will receive this vaccine. However, it is too early (as we go to press) to know if this will occur. Someday, too, Pap Tests may be less critical if your generation becomes the first in which nearly everybody uses condoms correctly and consistently. Until that day, even those who DO use condoms and get vaccinated will need Pap Tests, because HPV will continue to be widespread in the population, putting anyone who has sex at risk.

**Who and How Often?** A young woman should have a Pap Test once a year starting 3 years after her first vaginal intercourse or by age 21, whichever comes first. Pap tests are particularly important for women who began having intercourse before age 18 and those who have had sex with many different partners; since these women have a higher risk of developing cancer of the cervix.

Also, if there is any unusual bleeding, a Pap test is needed. Then, after age 30, if all her Pap Tests have been negative, and she's otherwise at low risk, her health care provider may suggest less frequent Pap Tests than once a year.

Keep in mind that this is about receiving a Pap test only. A female's first *pelvic* exam should occur within 6 months of becoming sexually active and/or if she's on hormonal contraceptives, then yearly after that.

The best time for a Pap Test is halfway between her periods. She should avoid sex, douching, using spermicides or putting anything in the vagina (finger, diaphragm, etc.) for 48 hours beforehand, to get an accurate test.

(Douching, incidentally, is never necessary unless prescribed by a doctor, and can increase the risk of infections. All the same, some young women will douche despite our advice; they should at least learn not to do so before a Pap test.)

### **TRANSPARENCY 3: THE PAP TEST: HOW?**

A Pap test is done by a doctor or nurse practitioner during a "pelvic exam." The patient lies on a special exam table with her feet in little contraptions called "stirrups." The person examining her, checks the outside of her reproductive system first, for any sores or other unusual appearance. Then, she puts a device called "speculum" inside the woman's vagina to gently push the walls of the vagina apart.

To do the actual Pap test, the doctor or nurse practitioner uses an instrument like a long tongue depressor to wipe some cells from the cervix onto a slide. Then, the cells are examined under a microscope to see whether they are normal or pre-cancerous.

After the Pap test, the doctor usually removes the speculum and puts two gloved fingers in the vagina, and a hand on the patient's abdomen, in order to feel the uterus and ovaries. This is an important part of the exam, but it has nothing to do with the Pap test, per se.

Some young women feel very nervous about having a pelvic exam, especially if it's their first time. Any time you feel tense, it helps to try to relax and breathe deeply. Some people bring a friend or family member to hold their hand during the exam. Some women are most comfortable if they continue to chat with the person doing the exam, during the exam; others prefer to postpone conversation and questions until later, when they are seated face-to-face.

Eventually, most women get fairly used to these check-ups ... and they may describe them as "uncomfortable" or "awkward," but not "painful." In fact, if it hurts, even though she is trying to relax the muscles, the patient really needs to tell the doctor or nurse practitioner. There could be an infection or other physical problem causing her discomfort. A pelvic exam shouldn't hurt. If the person examining her seems particularly rough or insensitive, she may want to try a different health care provider. If woman feels uncomfortable for any reason, she can request to stop the exam (or take a break) at ANY TIME.

#### **TRANSPARENCY 4: THE TESTICLES**

The testicles or "testes" produce sperm (to start pregnancies) and the male hormone "testosterone" (to give the man hair on his face, broader shoulders, and so forth). Notice that, in the back of the scrotum, behind each testicle, is a bunch of coiled tubes called the "epididymis." This is where sperm go, for two or three months, after they leave the testes, while they are maturing. These tubes are naturally lumpy.

#### **TRANSPARENCY 5: TESTICULAR SELF-EXAM: WHY? HOW?**

**Why?** There are three reasons testicular Self-exam or "TSE" is so important. First, although cancer of the testes is fairly rare, (about 8,000 cases per year in the United States) it is one of the most common cancers in guys your age ... 15 to 34 years old. Second, if it's found early enough it is often curable. Third, TSE only takes three minutes, in the privacy of your own home! The rate of Testicular cancer has doubled in the past 40 years. It is not clear why, although early screening and detection may be one reason.

#### **How?**

1. He **looks** at his scrotum in the mirror, to find changes.
2. He gently feels each testicle, rolling it between the fingers and thumb of both hands. The index and middle fingers go underneath the testicle, with the thumb on top of it.

#### **TRANSPARENCY 6: TSE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

He looks for any of these changes:

- » an unusual, painless lump  
"Unusual" means that he has to be careful not to confuse the normal lumpiness of the epididymis, with a lump (usually on the side or front of the testicle) that shouldn't be there. "Painless" means that a cancerous lump probably won't hurt; so even a lump that doesn't hurt should be checked by a doctor right away ... even a lump the size of a pea.
- » a heavy, dragging feeling in the testes

- » a dull ache in the groin

This is different from a sudden, sharp pain. That should also be seen right away by a health care provider, but it is probably not cancer. (Sharp, sudden pain is more likely to be a sign of “testicular torsion,” where the testicle twists on the vas and cuts off its own blood supply.)

- » a change in the size of one testicle

Many men have testes of two different sizes or one that hangs lower than the other, and they are just fine. But if the size of one testicle **changes (gets bigger OR smaller)**, if one becomes swollen, he needs to see the doctor. That is why you need to do TSE (or BSE) regularly, to get to know what your body is like, **normally**, so you can **notice** a change.

- » a sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum

- » blood in urine

This could be caused by any number of things, including a urinary tract infection. So it is important to get it checked out.

### **TRANSPARENCY 7: TSE: WHO? WHEN?**

**Who?** Every guy over 14 years old should be doing TSE. Guys who were born with an “undescended testicle” which didn’t descend into the scrotum until they were over 6 years old (or one which still hasn’t dropped down into the scrotum) or who have had surgery to have a testicle lowered, need to be especially careful to do TSE; their risk of testicular cancer is higher.

**When?** TSE should be done once a month. The best time is during or after a shower or bath. The warmth causes the skin of the scrotum to relax so that lumps are easier to find. Some people find that soapy fingers help, too.

### **TRANSPARENCY 8: THE BREAST**

The breast contains milk glands and ducts or tubes, along with fatty tissue. The darker part, on the outside, around the nipple, is called the areola, in males as well as females.

### **TRANSPARENCY 9: The Breast Self Exam (BSE): WHO? WHEN?**

**Who?** Everybody should do BSE, teens and adults, male and female. It is especially important for women over the age of 35 (your Mom, perhaps? stepmother? grandmother?) and for women who have a close family history of breast cancer ... on their biological mother’s side. Women 40 and over also need a mammogram every year. This is a special X—ray for detecting cancer of the breast.

**When?** Once a month, a few days after the end of the menstrual cycle when the breasts are less naturally lumpy or swollen. People who don’t menstruate or don’t menstruate regularly (including guys) can just pick a day, like the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.

**TRANSPARENCY 10: BREAST SELF-EXAM; WHY? HOW?**

**Why?** Breast Self-exam or “BSE” is really important because breast cancer is extremely common (over 211,000 cases per year in the United States). One out of seven girls and women will develop breast cancer sometime in their lives. Occasionally, guys get “breast” cancer, too, so it wouldn’t hurt for them to do BSE, as well.

**How?**

1. In the shower, she **feels** the left breast with the flat pads of the fingers of her right hand, and vice versa. She needs to be careful to gently check every part of the breast, including the armpit.
2. Next, in front of a mirror, she **looks** at the breasts, with her arms down at her sides. She raises them over her head. Then with her hands on her hips, she pushes down, flexes her chest muscles, and watches for changes.
3. Then, she lies down with a pillow behind one shoulder, and **feels** that breast with the fingers of the opposite hand. She needs to remember to feel every part of the breast. Finally, she gently squeezes the nipple, to see if there is any discharge.

**TRANSPARENCY 11: BSE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

She (or he) looks for any changes, especially...

- » an unusual, painless lump

Just as with TSE, it’s important not to confuse normal lumpiness (the ribs, for instance, or the ridge she may have along the lower edge of the breast) with problem lumps. Problem lumps usually aren’t sore, the way the normal lumpiness right before the menstrual period may feel sore. Even problem lumps, incidentally, are almost never cancerous. They are usually benign tumors or cysts. Still, a health care professional should be contacted right away if a woman finds an abnormal lump.

- » a change in the shape of the breast

Women often have breasts of two different sizes or shapes. That’s why it’s important to check them every month; to learn how hers usually look. Then, if one suddenly changes, she’ll want to see a doctor.

- » discharge (liquid) from the nipple (unless she’s breastfeeding), especially if it’s pink, red or brown
- » change in the direction one nipple is pointing
- » a dimple, tuck or pucker in the skin that wasn’t there before
- » redness or scaliness



3. Summarize the lesson's key concepts:

***Early detection of cancers saves lives. Part: of becoming an adult is beginning to take responsibility for your own health, and for educating those you love. You folks can save lives.***

## **Homework**

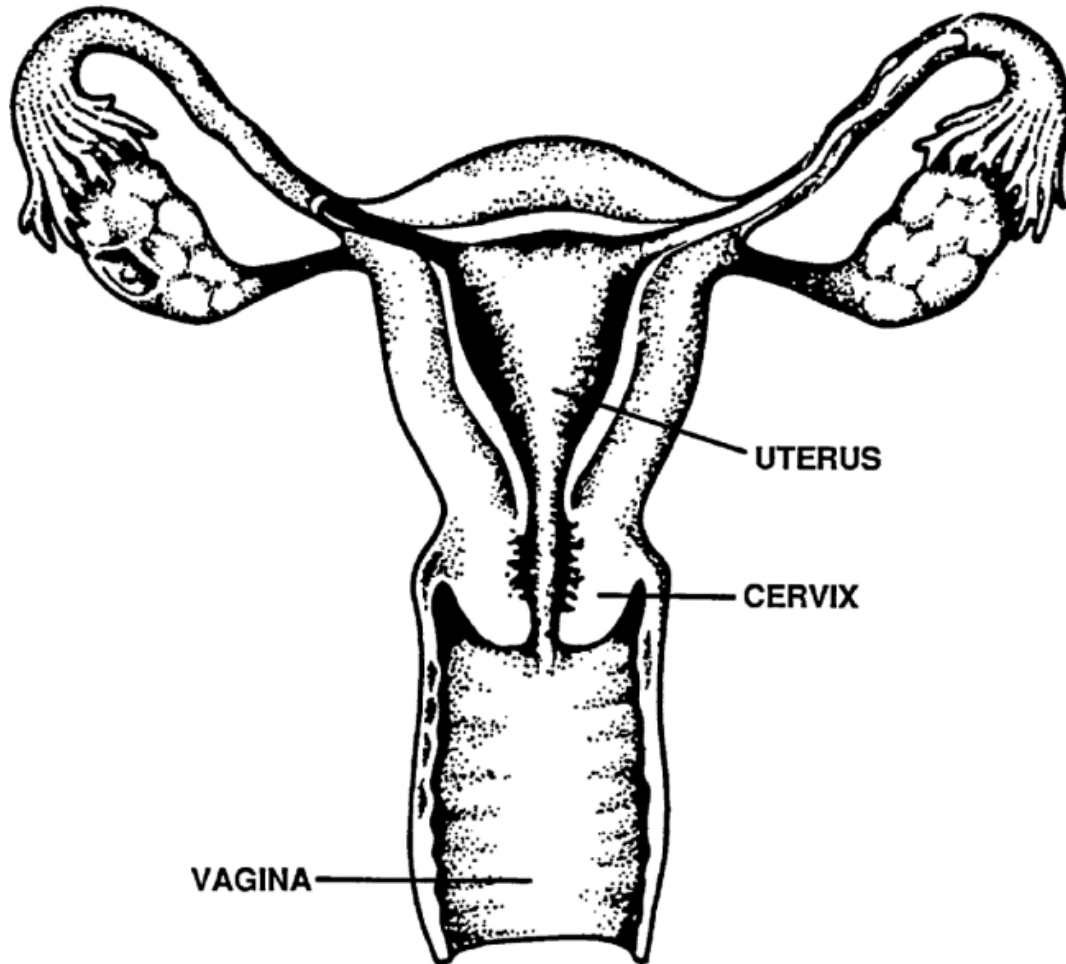
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*Individual Homework Exercise: Sexual Health Care.*

NOTE: It is ***due tomorrow!***

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 1: The Cervix

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*Cervix*: the bottom part  
(the opening) of the uterus

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 2: The Pap Test

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## WHY?

to check for pre-cancer  
changes in the cervix

## WHO?

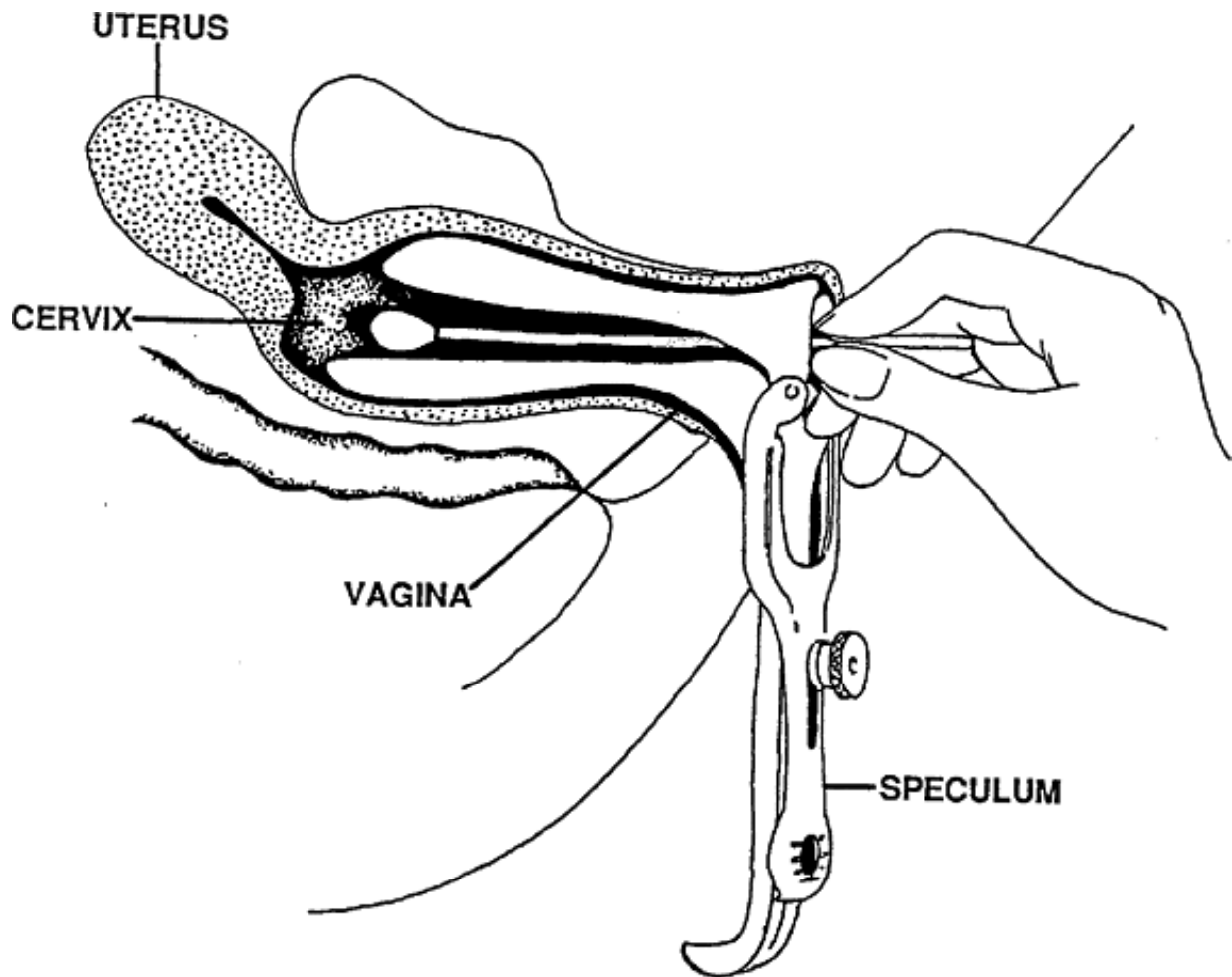
women ... anyone with a cervix

## WHEN?

every year,  
starting 3 years after her first vaginal  
intercourse or by age 21,  
whichever comes first

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 3: The Pap Test

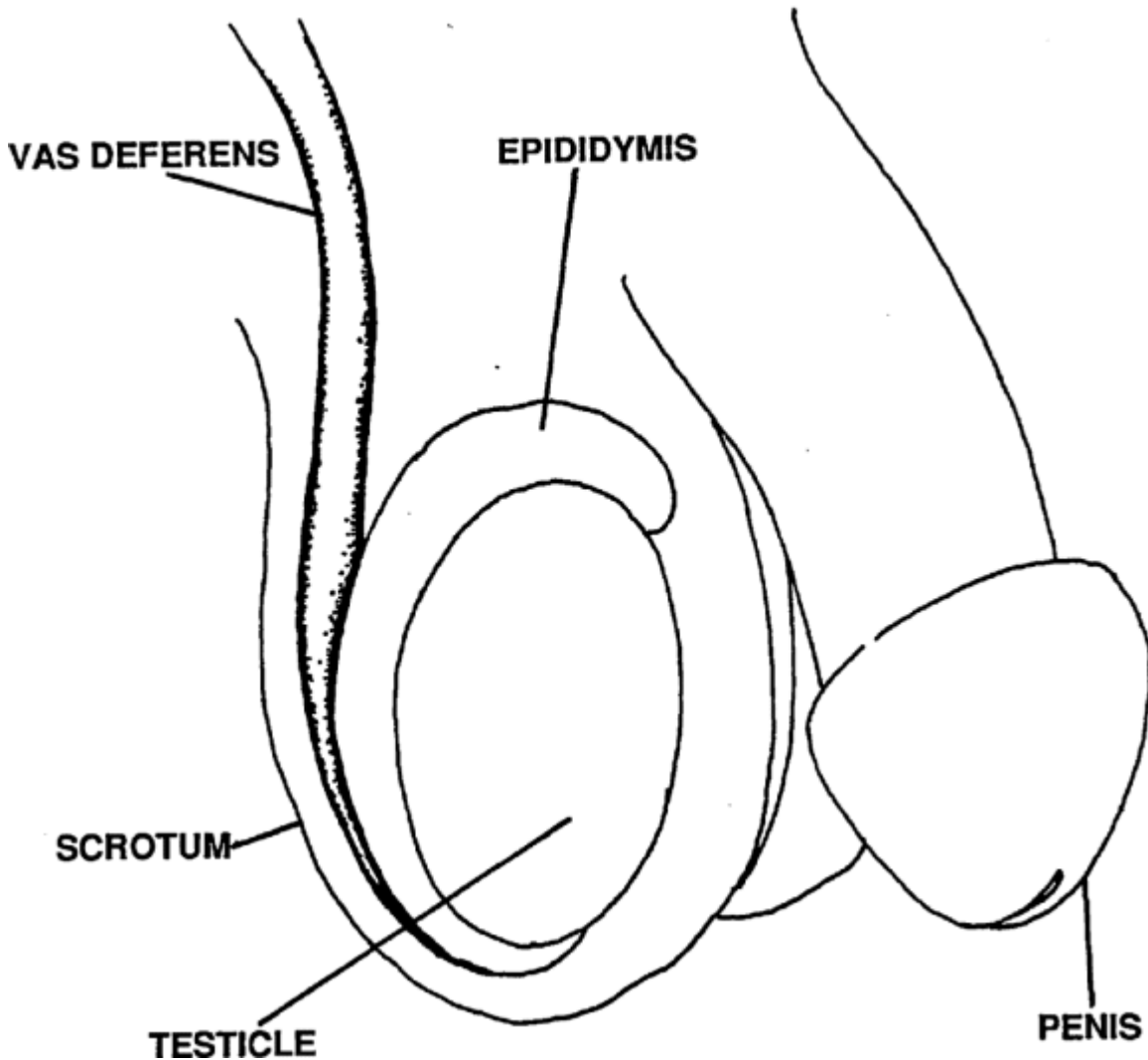
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It's part of a Pelvic Exam.

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 4: The Testicles

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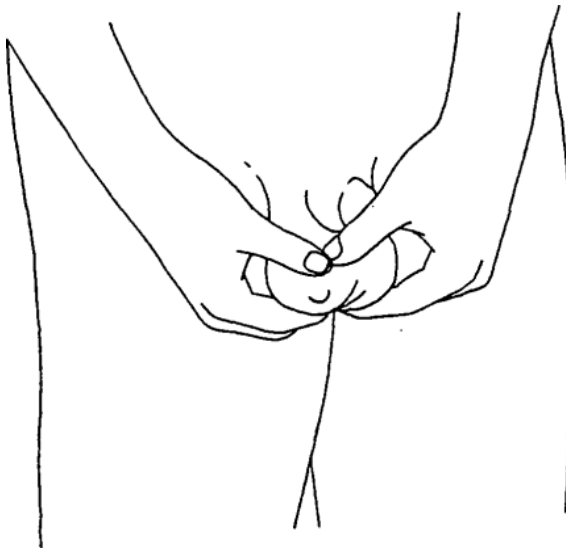


*Testicles:* the organs which make sperm and male hormones

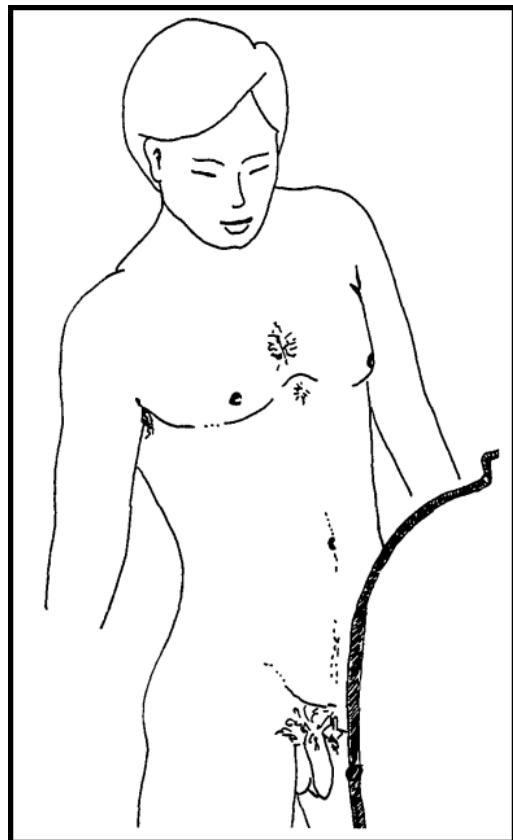
# Sexual Health Care Transparency 5: Testicular Self-Exam or TSE

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ROLL EACH TESTICLE



LOOK IN THE MIRROR



**WHY?**

because you may save  
your own life!

## Sexual Health Care Transparency 6: TSE, What to Look For

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- an unusual, painless lump
- a heavy, dragging feeling in the testes
- a dull ache in the groin
- a change in the size of one testicle
- sudden collection of fluid in scrotum
- blood in urine

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 7: Testicular Self-Exam

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## WHO?

young men 14-35 years old  
... people with testicles

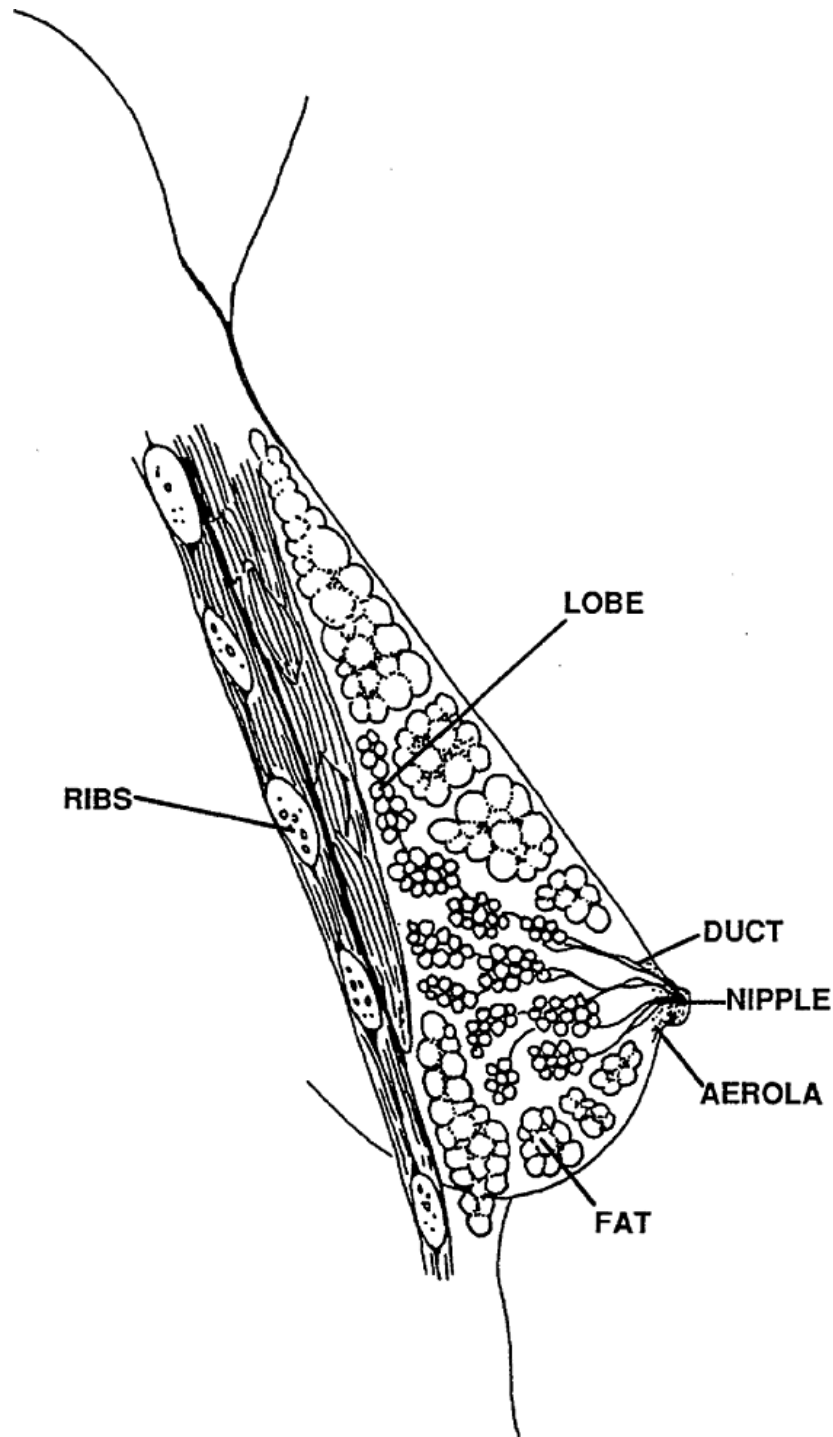
## WHEN?

once a month,  
during or after a bath or shower



# Sexual Health Care Transparency 8: The Breast

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# Sexual Health Care Transparency 9: Breast Self-Exam or BSE

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## WHO?

everybody,  
male and female,  
and especially women over 35,  
and women with a  
family history of breast cancer

## WHEN?

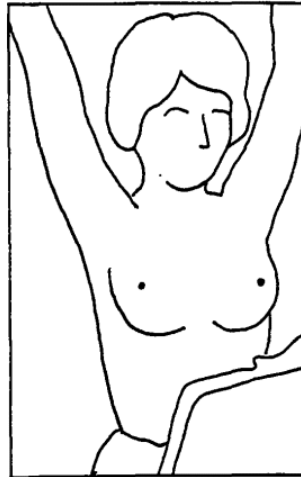
once a month,  
after menstruation  
(for those who have periods)

# Sexual Health Care Transparency 10

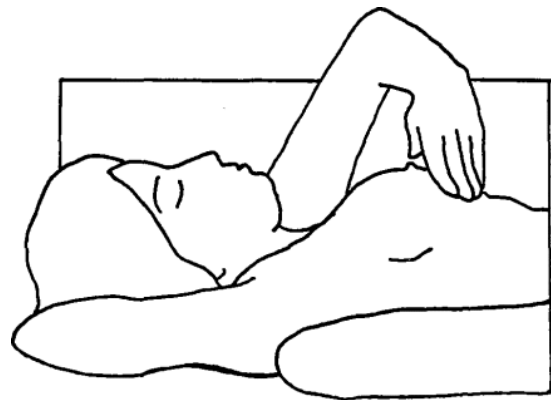


IN THE SHOWER

IN FRONT OF A MIRROR



LYING DOWN



another way to save  
your own life

## Sexual Health Care Transparency 11: BSE, What to Look For

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- an unusual, painless lump
- changes in the shape of the breast (such as swelling or dimples)
- discharge (liquid) from the nipple
- change in the direction one nipple is pointing
- redness or scaliness

# Individual Homework Exercise: Sexual Health Care

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

Why should people do **BREAST** and **TESTICULAR SELF-EXAMS**? Why should they get **PAP TESTS**? Because the sooner you find cancers, the more likely they are to be curable! **Exams save lives.**

1. Who should do **BREAST SELF-EXAM (BSE)**? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  everyone
- b.  only females
- c.  especially women over 40 years old (they should also get routine mammograms -- breast X-rays)
- d.  especially women with a family history of breast cancer
- e.  people you care about

2. What should you look for when you do BSE? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  all lumps
- b.  unusual, painless lumps
- c.  one breast being a different size from the other
- d.  one breast being a different size or shape from how it usually is
- e.  a change in the direction a nipple is pointing
- f.  discharge (liquid) from the nipple
- g.  redness or scaliness

There are three steps in BSE. The person should...

Feel each breast with soapy fingers, in the shower. It is important to check the entire area, even the armpits.

1

In the shower:



2

In front  
of a mirror



Look at the breasts in the mirror ... first with hands down at the side, then raising them over the head, and finally pressing down on the hips (to flex the chest muscles).

Lie down, with a pillow under the shoulder, to examine each breast. Use the flat parts of the fingers ... and press down firmly.

3

Lying down:



3. When should BSE be done? *Check all the correct answers.*
- once a month
  - once a week
  - after every meal
  - right before the menstrual period, in people who have periods, when the breasts are the most lumpy and may be sore
  - after the menstrual period, when they are not usually as lumpy or sore
4. Who should do **TESTICULAR SELF-EXAM (TSE)**? *Check all the correct answers.*
- everyone
  - only males
  - men aged 14 - 35
  - men who have a testicle that didn't descend (drop down) into the scrotum until they were 6 years old or older
  - people you care about
5. What changes could be signs of testicular cancer? *Check all the correct answers.*
- unusual, painless lumps
  - only lumps as big as a grape
  - even lumps as small as a pea
  - a heavy, dragging feeling in the testes
  - a sudden sharp pain
  - a dull ache
  - a change in the size of one testicle
  - collection of fluid in the scrotum
  - blood in urine

There are two steps in TSE. The person should...

1

In front of a mirror:



Look at the scrotum in a mirror.

Gently roll each testicle between the fingers and thumbs of both hands, remembering not to confuse the epididymis with an abnormal lump.

2

In the shower:



6. When should **TSE** be done? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  once a year
- b.  once a month
- c.  Wednesdays at 4 a.m.
- d.  after a hot shower or bath, when the skin of the scrotum is relaxed
- e.  before every math test

It is important to remember that, in TSE *and* BSE, lumps and other changes **DO NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THE PERSON HAS CANCER**. Only a doctor can tell; the person should see a doctor right away if she or he finds any changes in the breast, chest, testicles, or scrotum.

7. A **PAP TEST** is a test for cancer of what part of the body? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  the ovaries
- b.  the bladder
- c.  the elbow
- d.  the cervix

8. Who should have **PAP TESTS**? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  everyone
- b.  every young woman who is 21 or older
- c.  every young woman has been having intercourse for at least 3 years, even if she's under 21
- d.  only females
- e.  people you care about

9. When should **PAP TESTS** be done? *Check all the correct answers.*

- a.  once a month
- b.  once a year
- c.  less often after age 30, with health care provider's approval
- d.  during her menstrual period
- e.  when she is not having her period
- f.  if she has an unusually long or heavy menstrual period (for her) or any unusual bleeding or spotting or any other changes she's worried about

A **PAP TEST** is done during a pelvic exam, by a doctor or nurse practitioner. It was named after the doctor who developed it, Dr. Papanicolaou. It is a simple, painless

test that takes less than a minute. (The whole pelvic exam may take four or five minutes and a woman may need a pelvic exam even if she doesn't need a Pap Test.)

10. If you care about someone who should be having PAP TESTS, but who is nervous about it, what could you do to help?

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If you have questions about cancer  
(these kinds or any kind) call:

National Cancer Institute  
1-800-4-CANCER  
website: [www.nci.nih.gov](http://www.nci.nih.gov)

OR

American Cancer Society  
1-800-ACS-2345  
Website: [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Both of these numbers are toll free.

REMEMBER:

***Not all sexual health problems are STDs or cancers***  
but ***all*** sexual health problems  
even if they ***aren't*** sexually transmitted or cancerous  
ought to be taken seriously.

So, take care of yourself and the people you care about ... today.  
Health begins with you.

**NOTE: This homework is due tomorrow.**