

## Boulder Gynecology Policies on Preventive Screening Tests

In this women's health practice, we follow evidence-based guidelines for periodic screening tests. Such guidelines are published by authoritative organizations such as the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, the US Preventive Services Task Force, the American Cancer Society, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They were developed by expert consensus after reviewing the published medical literature. The purpose of the guidelines is to strike a balance between overuse of medical tests where they are not of value and could potentially result in harm, and inadequate screening where early, treatable diseases are missed.

The recommended screening tests in women's health are as follows:

Pap smear screening: Initial Pap test is at the age of 21. For low risk women, the Pap is then repeated every three years, but it may be done more frequently for higher risk women. After the age of 30, Pap screening can be extended to every three years as long as there have been no recent abnormal Pap results. HPV testing after age 30 can also add to the sensitivity of cervical screening. Women who choose to have co-testing of HPV with their Pap can safely extend the screening interval to every 5 years, provided both tests are normal. After age 65, Pap smear screening can be discontinued among women who have had three or more consecutive negative Pap results and no abnormal results in the preceding 10 years.

Sexually transmitted infection screening: Because infections with *Chlamydia* and *gonorrhea* can go without symptoms and can lead to devastating consequences such as pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and chronic pelvic pain, it is recommended that sexually active women younger than the age of 26 be screened for these bacterial STIs annually.

Mammography: There has been some recent controversy about mammogram screening. The American Cancer Society recommends that women over the age of 40 have annual mammograms. The US Preventive Services Task Force has recently advocated that mammogram screening start at the age of 50 instead of 40, and that it can occur every two years rather than every year. Because taking menopausal hormones mildly increases the risk of breast cancer, we feel it is important for any woman on hormones to have an annual mammogram.

As your health care provider, Dr. Lepine is in a partnership with you to maximize your health. If you choose not to abide by these guidelines, then our practice is not a good fit for you and you should seek care elsewhere.

I agree to follow the evidenced-based guideline and undergo the preventive health screenings as prescribed above.

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Patient signature

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Printed name

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Date