oklahoma women's health collective

THE RIGHT APPOINTMENT

a simple guide to help you decide what kind of care you may need and which provider could be the best place to start.



WELCOME

This guide is one small piece of a much larger mission. The Oklahoma Women's Health Collective was created to make trusted women's health education more accessible, approachable, and empowering — because figuring out where to turn for care should not feel confusing, overwhelming, or out of reach.

We believe more productive healthcare conversations start with better information, practical tools, and the confidence to recognize when something deserves attention. Sometimes the hardest part is simply knowing where to begin: primary care, an OB-GYN, urgent care, therapy, pelvic-floor physical therapy, emergency care, or a specialist.

This guide was designed to help you better understand which type of provider may be the right place to start based on what you are experiencing. It can also help you prepare for more informed conversations with your healthcare team and feel more confident navigating next steps.

Not sure where to start?

Primary care or an OB-GYN can often evaluate your symptoms, order initial testing, and help determine whether you need a specialist.

This guide is for general education and is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace personalized medical or mental health care.

For questions about your individual health, symptoms, or care plan, please consult a licensed healthcare professional. Seek emergency care when symptoms are severe, sudden, or feel unsafe.

We are so glad you are here.

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Before choosing an appointment, take a moment to think about what you are experiencing and how quickly you may need care.

How Urgent Does This Feel?

Seek emergency care now when symptoms are severe, sudden, or feel unsafe — including chest pain, difficulty breathing, signs of a stroke, fainting, severe bleeding, sudden severe pelvic or abdominal pain, a possible pregnancy emergency, or thoughts of harming yourself or someone else.

Consider urgent care when you need to be seen soon, your regular provider is unavailable, and the concern is not life-threatening.

Schedule a routine appointment when symptoms are ongoing, recurring, gradually changing, or affecting your daily life — even if they do not feel urgent.

What Are You Noticing?

Consider whether your concern is primarily related to:

- ★ Your periods, hormones, pelvic health, breasts, sexual health, pregnancy, perimenopause, or menopause
- ★ Fatigue, sleep, weight changes, headaches, mood, medications, thyroid concerns, or overall health
- ★ Anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, stress, relationships, or difficulty coping
- ★ Bladder leakage, pelvic pressure, constipation, pelvic pain, pain with sex, or recovery after pregnancy or pelvic surgery
- ★ A persistent, complex, or previously diagnosed condition that may require specialized care

A Few Details Can Help You Decide Where To Start

Before scheduling, it may be helpful to note:

- ★ When the concern began
- ★ Whether it is new, recurring, or worsening
- ★ How often it happens
- ★ What makes it better or worse
- ★ Whether it affects sleep, work, movement, intimacy, or daily activities
- ★ Any recent medication, cycle, pregnancy, surgery, or health changes

You do not have to have the perfect words or know exactly what is wrong before asking for help.
Your only job is to notice what is happening and share what you know. Your provider can help determine next steps.

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Type of Care	A Good Place to Start When...	Common Reasons to Schedule
Primary Care	You need routine care, have a new non-emergency concern, or are unsure where to begin.	Annual checkups, fatigue, headaches, sleep concerns, blood pressure, thyroid concerns, weight changes, mood changes, recurring infections, medication questions, general screenings, chronic conditions, or symptoms that may involve more than one body system
OB-GYN	Your concern involves your periods, hormones, reproductive organs, breasts, sexual health, pregnancy, perimenopause, or menopause.	Irregular, heavy, or painful periods; bleeding between periods or after sex; pelvic pain; painful sex; vaginal dryness, itching, discharge, or odor; birth control; fertility concerns; pregnancy concerns; breast changes; urinary symptoms; low libido; perimenopause; menopause; or cervical cancer screening
Urgent Care	You need care soon, but the problem is not life-threatening and cannot wait for a regular appointment.	Possible urinary tract infection, vaginal irritation or infection symptoms, sudden worsening pelvic discomfort, minor injuries, fever, persistent vomiting, dehydration, painful urination, rashes, respiratory illness, sprains, or minor cuts
Emergency Care	Symptoms are severe, sudden, or potentially life-threatening.	Chest pain, difficulty breathing, signs of stroke, fainting, severe bleeding, very heavy vaginal bleeding, severe pelvic or abdominal pain, possible ectopic pregnancy, pregnancy-related emergencies, serious injury, sudden confusion, or thoughts of harming yourself or someone else
Therapy	Emotions, thoughts, stress, relationships, or past experiences are affecting your daily life or ability to cope.	Anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, burnout, relationship concerns, body-image struggles, infertility or pregnancy loss, postpartum emotional changes, caregiver stress, sexual concerns, major life transitions, or difficulty adjusting to chronic illness, perimenopause, or menopause
Pelvic-Floor Physical Therapy	You have symptoms involving the pelvic muscles, bladder, bowel, pelvic support, movement, or intimacy.	Leaking urine, urinary urgency or frequency, pelvic pressure or heaviness, constipation, pain with sex, pelvic pain, difficulty using tampons, postpartum recovery, scar discomfort, pain after pelvic surgery, pelvic organ prolapse symptoms, or difficulty tightening or relaxing the pelvic floor
A Specialist	A concern requires more focused testing, treatment, or expertise than primary care or an OB-GYN can provide.	Persistent or complex symptoms, abnormal test results, fertility concerns, endometriosis, pelvic pain, autoimmune conditions, heart symptoms, breast concerns, hormone or thyroid disorders, gastrointestinal symptoms, urinary conditions, bone-health concerns, cancer evaluation, or symptoms that have not improved with initial treatment

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Created by women, for women.

Stay connected to trusted health education, meaningful events, local provider resources, and thoughtfully curated content designed to support you at every stage.

You Belong Here.