

Initial reproductive health visit suggested at age 13 to 15 years

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(HealthDay)—An initial visit for screening and provision of reproductive preventive health care services is recommended between the ages of 13 to 15 years, according to a Committee Opinion published in the May issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Researchers from the Committee on Adolescent Health Care from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists discuss the initial [reproductive health](#) visits for screening and provision of reproductive preventive [health care](#) services and guidance.

The Committee notes that the initial visit should take place between the ages of 13 and 15 years. The initial visit provides an opportunity to initiate a physician-patient relationship, build trust, and provide counseling for patients and parents relating to healthy behavior. Factors such as the patient's individual needs, medical history, physical and

emotional development, and the level of care from other health providers will determine the scope of the initial reproductive health visit. In general, an internal pelvic examination is unnecessary during the initial visit, but may be appropriate based on issues identified within the medical history; a general exam, visual breast exam, and external pelvic examination may be indicated. Familiarity with state and local laws relating to the rights of minors to consent to [health care services](#), and federal and state laws relating to confidentiality is necessary for health care providers and office staff.

"The initial reproductive health visit provides an excellent opportunity for the obstetrician-gynecologist to start a patient-physician relationship, build trust, and counsel patients and parents regarding healthy behavior while dispelling myths and fears," the authors write.

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