

## U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Screening for Gynecologic Conditions With Pelvic Examination

*Task Force finds evidence insufficient to recommend for or against performing pelvic exams in asymptomatic adult women*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – June 28, 2016 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted for public comment a draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review on screening for gynecologic conditions with pelvic examination in women without symptoms. After reviewing the evidence, the Task Force concluded that there is not enough evidence to determine the benefits or harms of performing screening pelvic exams in asymptomatic, nonpregnant adult women. This is an **I statement**.

A pelvic examination is a check of a woman's pelvic organs that clinicians may use to look for multiple gynecologic conditions and examine the vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries.

### Grade in this recommendation:

**I:** The balance of benefits and harms cannot be determined.

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“The Task Force is calling for more research to better understand the benefits and harms of performing screening pelvic exams in women without any complaints or symptoms,” says Task Force member Francisco García, M.D., M.P.H.

“There is not enough evidence to make a determination on screening pelvic exam in asymptomatic women for conditions other than cervical cancer screening, gonorrhea and chlamydia,” says Task Force member Maureen G. Phipps, M.D., M.P.H. “Women with gynecologic symptoms or concerns should discuss them with their clinicians.”

This is the first time that the Task Force has reviewed the evidence on screening for gynecologic conditions with pelvic examination. This new draft statement applies to women ages 18 and older who do not have any signs or symptoms of gynecologic conditions, are not at increased risk for these conditions, and who are not pregnant. This draft statement does not address screening for cervical cancer (i.e. Pap smears), chlamydia and gonorrhea, which is already recommended by the Task Force using other methods and tests.

The Task Force’s draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review have been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org). Comments can be submitted from June 28 to July 25 at [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/tfcomment.htm](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/tfcomment.htm). A fact sheet that explains the recommendation statement is also available.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Dr. Phipps is the department chair and Chace-Joukowsky professor of obstetrics and gynecology and assistant dean for teaching and research on women's health at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. She is also a professor of epidemiology in the School of Public Health at Brown University. In addition, she is the chief of obstetrics and gynecology at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island and the executive chief of obstetrics and gynecology at Care New England.

Dr. García is the director and chief medical officer of the Pima County Department of Health in Tucson, AZ. Pima County. He is also the distinguished outreach professor of public health at the University of Arizona where he previously served as the director of the University of Arizona Center of Excellence in Women's Health. He is a fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and a diplomat of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and previously served on the Institute of Medicine Committee on Preventive Services for Women, National Institutes of Health Advisory Committee for Research on Women's Health, and the American Cancer Society Gynecologic Cancer Advisory Committee.

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