**Women’s Health Glossary Of Terms**

**Abstinence**—having no vaginal, anal, or oral sex

**Anal Intercourse**—sex that involves penetration of the anus

**Basal Body Temperature Method**—a method to determine fertile days based on body temperature

**Bimanual Exam**—examination of the vagina and internal genital organs using two fingers in the vagina and the other hand over the lower abdomen allowing the examiner to feel the structures between the two hands.

**BV—bacterial vaginosis**—An inflammation of the vagina usually due to Gardinerella vaginalis

**Calendar method**—a natural family planning method utilizing a calendar to track fertile days in a woman’s cycle

**Candida**—a form of yeast

**Cervix**—the visible portion of the end of the uterus at the back of the vagina. The cervix opens into the uterus.

**Chlamydia**—or Chlamydia trachomatis, a sexually transmitted organism that causes infection of the male and female genital tract.

**Clinician**—a nurse practitioner, physicians assistant, or doctor

**Clitoris**—a part of the female genitalia located at the anterior junction of the labia

**Combined Oral Contraceptives**—a combination of progestin and estrogen in pill form taken to prevent pregnancy

**Condom (male)**—a sheath made of latex, polyurethane or animal skin that fits over the penis. Used during intercourse to prevent sperm from entering the vagina and to help prevent transmission of sexually transmitted diseases

**Consensual, consenting**—an adult who agrees to participate in sexual activity. Consent can not be given if the adult is under the influence of any substance or drug or with undue pressure from another individual

**Contraception**—prevention of pregnancy

**Dental Dam**—a thin flexible barrier placed over the vulva during oral sex to help decrease transmission of STI’s

**Depo-Provera**—a progestin only injection primarily used to prevent pregnancy

**Diaphragm**—a latex or silicone dome shaped barrier used during intercourse to prevent sperm from getting to the cervix

**Douche**—vaginal—a stream of liquid directed into the vagina
**Ejaculation**—ejection of the seminal fluid from the male urethra. The sensations associated with ejaculation constitute the male orgasm

**Emergency Contraception**—generally a hormonal contraceptive used when the primary contraceptive method fails

**Erection**—a state of enlargement and stiffness of the penis from sexual excitement

**Estrogen**—female sex hormone

**Fallopian Tube**—tube that extends from the uterus to the ovary

**Female Condom**—polyurethane sheath inserted into the vagina that acts as a barrier during sexual intercourse

**The Femcap**—a barrier contraceptive

**Genitalia**—general term referring to male and female reproductive organs

**Gonorrhea**—an infection caused by Neisseria gonorrhoeae. It primarily affects the genital mucus membranes of both men and women but can affect other organs also

**Gynecology**—study of diseases and issues pertinent to women

**HBV**—hepatitis B virus, a virus passed through blood and body fluid that infects the liver

**HIV**—human immunodeficiency virus, the virus that causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome or AIDS

**Hormonal Contraceptives**—synthetic hormones primarily taken to prevent pregnancy

**HPV**—Human Papilloma Virus, virus spread through sexual contact that can cause inflammation of the cervical cells and is associated with cervical cancer

**HSV**—Herpes Simplex Virus, causes a vesicular or blister-like rash. HSV Type two is usually spread through sexual contact and affects the genital area, but can be anywhere in the boxer shorts area

**IUD**—intrauterine device. A contraceptive method involving surgical insertion of a device into the uterus

**Labia Majora**—a part of the female external genitalia, consists of folds of tissue that lie on either side of the vaginal opening and form the border of the vulva

**Labia Minora**—a part of the female external genitalia, consists of thin layer of skin that lies between the vaginal opening and the labia majora

**Lea’s Shield**—a barrier contraceptive

**Menstrual Cycle**—the recurrent cycle the female body goes through in response to
changes occurring in the uterus, ovaries, cervix, and vagina

**Menstrual Flow**—flow of bloody fluid from the vagina resulting from the uterus shedding its lining

**NuvaRing**—a flexible contraceptive ring inserted into the vagina which slowly releases hormones to prevent pregnancy

**Oral Contraceptives**—a form of contraception using a combination of hormones taken by mouth to prevent pregnancy

**Oral Sex**—using the mouth and tongue to stimulate your partner's sexual organs

**Ovary**—almond shaped, lies on each side of the lower female pelvis and produces the ovum (or egg), estrogen, and progesterone

**Ovulation**—refers to the periodic development and discharge of the ovum, or egg, from the ovary

**Ovulation-Method**—a natural family planning method based on assessment of cervical mucus to determine fertile days

**Pelvic Exam**—an exam of the internal and external structures of the female reproductive organs

**Perfect Use**—term used to describe effectiveness of a method when it is used 100% correctly, 100% of the time

**The Pill**—a combined hormonal contraceptive pill taken orally to prevent pregnancy

**Pre-ejaculate**—fluid released from the penis before ejaculation

**Progestosterone**—female sex hormone

**Pubic Lice**—infestation principally in the pubic region by a small wingless parasitic insect

**Safer Sex**—sexual practices that decrease the risk of sexually transmitted infections

**Scabies**—a highly contagious skin disease caused by Sarcoptes scabiei, a mite. It is spread through direct skin contact with the infected person

**Semen**—a thick fluid, produced by several glands, that contains sperm and is discharged through the urethra at the tip of the penis at the height of sexual excitement or orgasm

**Seminal Fluid**—see semen

**Sexually Transmitted Infections**—STI’s, are infections transmitted through sexual contact

**The Shot**—an injectable progestin only contraceptive primarily used for pregnancy prevention
**Speculum**—long narrow device inserted into the vagina allowing for visualization of the vaginal walls and cervix

**Spermicides**—products that destroy or kill sperm

**Standard Days Method**—a natural family planning that employs Cycle Beads to help track the fertile window

**STD**—sexually transmitted disease, see Sexually Transmitted Infection

**Symptothermal Method**—a natural family planning method that monitors several indicators of fertility to determine fertile days

**Syphilis**—an infectious disease, caused by Treponema pallidum, that enters the body through skin or any mucus membrane. It can cause lesions in any organ or tissue and if untreated becomes chronic

**Today Sponge**—a barrier contraceptive with spermicide

**Typical Use**—refers to how well a method works when you take into account human errors that occur for the average person

**Uterus**—a hollow pear shaped reproductive organ that receives the fertilized egg and nourishes the fetus until time of delivery

**UTI**—Urinary Tract Infection, an infection of the lower urinary tract or bladder

**Vagina**—a muscular passageway lined with mucus membranes that connects the cervix to the vulva

**Vaginal Intercourse**—sex that involves penetration of the vagina

**Vulva**—exterior portion of the female genitalia that includes the labia majora, labia minora, clitoris, and vaginal opening

**Withdrawal**—removing the penis from the vagina before ejaculation takes place