

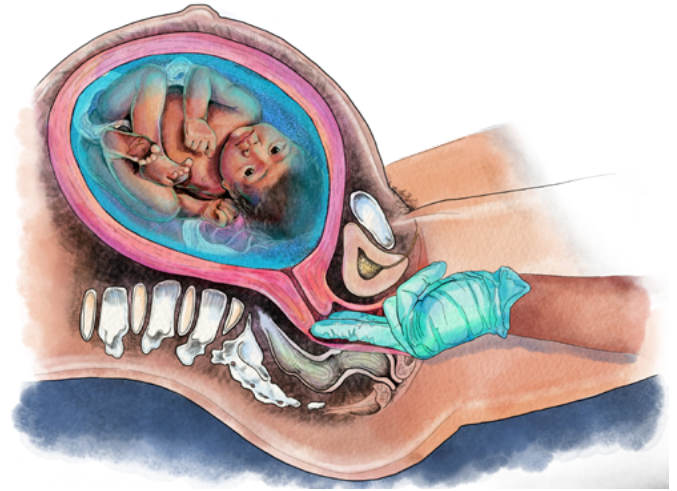


WHAT IS A CERVICAL EXAM?

Internal, vaginal exam of your cervix, the bottom of the womb between vagina and baby..

REASONS TO DO AN EXAM

- *Did we go to the place of birth too early?*
- *Do we need to consider speeding labor along?*
- *Do we need more information about baby's position?*
- *Is there any cervix left before we start pushing?*
- *Should I consider pain medication or am I close enough to having my baby?*
- *Can you tell if my pushes are bringing baby's head down?*



WHAT AN EXAM CAN SHOW YOU

- Dilation (how open)
- Effacement (how thin)
- Consistency (soft/hard)
- Position of cervix (forward/back)
- Position of baby (are they turned facing your front or your back)
- Baby's Station (how high/low the presenting part of the baby)
- If the bag of waters is intact (sometimes can tell)
- If the cervix is off to one side (sometimes means baby's in an odd position)

WHAT AN EXAM CAN'T SHOW YOU

- How fast your cervix will dilate moving forward
- How much labor you have left
- How soon your baby will be born
- Whether or not you'll have a vaginal birth
- How intense your labor will be
- How big your baby is



PROVIDER QUESTIONS

- *How often do you prefer to check my cervix in pregnancy?*
- *How often do you prefer to check my cervix during labor?*
- *How would you feel if I didn't want my cervix checked unless I needed to make a decision?*
- *I have a history with sexual assault. How can you best support me?*

PARTNER TIPS

- Hold their hand if they want.
- Encourage them, especially if they're not as far along as they'd like.
- Remind them that it's all temporary