

Healthcare Clinic Hours

Monday-Wednesday, Friday

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Phone: (334) 263-8470

Fax: (334) 263-8670

Pharmacy Hours

Monday-Wednesday, Friday

7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Phone: (334) 263-8460

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Image Source: <http://www.thyroidawareness.com/>

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Thyroid Awareness: What You Should Know

The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland at the base of the neck. While tiny, the thyroid has a significant impact on the speed at which our cells function. The speed, or lack thereof in some instances, is determined by the amount of thyroid hormone secreted. There are two thyroid hormones, **T3** and **T4**, and they are made out of iodine from the foods that we eat. The amount made and released of both hormones is based on the **Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone (TSH)** released from the pituitary gland in your brain.^{1,2}

Out of Sync?^{1,2}

Sometimes due to outside influences (eg. disease), your thyroid can begin producing too little or too much T4. If your thyroid begins making too much T4, you can feel irritable, overheated, or have trouble sleeping. You can also lose weight, your heart can beat fast, and you can become anxious or nervous.

Running Low?^{1,2}

Too little T4 can cause you to feel cold, tired, and depressed. You can also gain weight in spite of not feeling hungry.

The Bad News:^{1,2}

Unfortunately thyroid problems are fairly common, and can often remain undiagnosed for years. It is estimated that more than 12% of adults in the US have thyroid disease, but 60% remain undiagnosed. If left untreated, thyroid disease can lead to higher cholesterol levels, heart disease, infertility, and osteoporosis.

What Can You Do?

Learn about the symptoms and risk factors of thyroid disease. Do a [Thyroid Neck Check](#). If you think you may have something wrong with your thyroid, or if thyroid disease runs in your family, ask your doctor about doing a simple blood test to check your TSH levels.

Reasons to Consider a Thyroid Check:

1. **Family History:** It often runs in the family. If you have a close relative (parent, sibling, or child) with thyroid disease then you should get evaluated.
2. If you are taking **lithium** or **amiodarone**, you should consider getting your thyroid checked.
3. If you've had **radiation therapy** to the head or neck, then you should think about getting your thyroid evaluated.

Different Types of HPV^{5,7,9}

HPV is a group of more than 150 related viruses. Some HPV types can cause warts, while other types have been linked to cancers of the cervix, vulva, vagina, penis, anus, mouth, and throat.

What is the HPV vaccine and who should get it?^{4,5}

Gardasil 9[®] is the HPV vaccine available in the U.S. It covers 9 strains of HPV, including the two types known to cause 70% of all cervical cancers, as well as cancers of the anus, penis, vulva, vagina, and throat. HPV vaccine produces the strongest response in preteens. To work best, the vaccine series should be given at age 11 or 12, but can be given as early as age 9. It is recommended to be given to females from age 13 to 26 years, and for males from age 13 to 21 years. Males 22 to 26 years old may also be vaccinated.

Signs and symptoms of cervical cancer:^{4,6}

Women with early cervical cancers and pre-cancers usually have no symptoms. Symptoms often do not appear until the cancer becomes invasive and metastasizes. When this happens, the most common symptoms are:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding and discharge
- Pain during sexual activity

If you have these symptoms, see a healthcare professional right away.

Women between the ages of 21 and 65 should be screened regularly, as this is key to preventing cervical cancer.^{4,5}



Image Source: <https://www.northclinic.com/blog/january-is-cervical-health-awareness-month>

January is Cervical Health Awareness month! This month we want to raise awareness for cervical cancer, and encourage women to get screened and vaccinated to prevent cervical cancer.

Each year, nearly 13,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in the United States, and it occurs most often in women over age 30.^{3,4} The good news is that cervical cancer can usually be prevented by performing a simple screening and getting vaccinated.^{4,5}

What is cervical cancer?^{4,6}

Cervical cancer occurs when abnormal cells begin to grow in the cervix, the lower part of the uterus (womb). These cancer cells can eventually spread (metastasize) to distant sites such as the lymph nodes, lungs, bones, or liver.

What are the risk factors of cervical cancer?^{4,5}

Human papilloma virus (HPV) is a major risk factor of cervical cancer. HPV can be passed from one person to another during skin-to-skin contact with an infected area, especially during sexual activity. HPV is very common, and it will mostly go away on its own within a year or two. However, if it does not, it can eventually lead to cancer. HPV can be detected by the HPV test conducted during your pelvic exam/screening.

Other factors that can increase your risk of cervical cancer are:^{4,5}

- Smoking
- Having HIV/AIDS
- Taking drugs that lower the immune system
- Past or current chlamydia infection
- Being overweight
- Long-term use of birth control pills (>5 years)
- Having multiple full-term pregnancies (more than 3 children) or being younger than 17 at your first full-term pregnancy
- Family history of cervical cancer

What can I do to reduce my risk of cervical cancer?^{4,5}

- Screening tests: Pap test and HPV test
- Getting the HPV vaccine
- Quit smoking or never start smoking

What are Pap and HPV tests?^{4,5,8}

The Pap test is a procedure used to collect cells from the cervix so that they can be examined under a microscope to look for cancerous or pre-cancerous cells. These cells can also be used for HPV testing, which only checks for the HPV virus, not cell changes. Both tests can be done during a pelvic exam. Talk with your doctor or nurse regarding how often you should receive these tests.



Image Source: <http://hamptonroadsmessenger.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Eye-Michigan-Glaucoma-Awareness-January-2016-800x445.jpg>

Glaucoma Awareness

January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month, an important time to spread the word about the leading cause of irreversible blindness in the USA.¹⁰

What is glaucoma?^{10,11}

Glaucoma is a disease that affects the eyes, and causes damage to the optic nerve, which sends visual signals from the eyes to the brain. This is most commonly due to a buildup of fluid in the eyes, which increases the amount of pressure and strain our eyes are under. Over time this damage can lead to permanent vision loss.

Who is at risk?¹¹

Everyone is at risk for developing glaucoma, but some groups are at greater risk than others, including:

- African Americans, Asians or people of Hispanic descent
- People over age 60
- Family members of those with glaucoma
- Previous injury to the eye
- High blood pressure
- Steroid users
- People with severe nearsightedness

What are the symptoms of glaucoma?^{10,11}

The most common form of glaucoma, open-angle glaucoma, accounts for over 90% of cases and does not cause any symptoms. It is known as the “silent thief of vision” because permanent vision loss does not occur until the very late stages. Without treatment, people with glaucoma will slowly lose peripheral (side) vision. As the disease continues to go untreated, it can lead to permanent loss of central (straight-ahead) vision.

How can glaucoma be prevented?¹¹

The best way to prevent vision loss from glaucoma is to have regular eye exams with an ophthalmologist in order to detect the disease as early as possible. Anyone at high risk should be tested every year or two after age 35. Walking or jogging at least 3 times per week can also help to decrease pressure in the eyes.

Glaucoma Facts^{10,11}

1. Over 1.5 million Americans have undiagnosed glaucoma.
2. There is no cure for glaucoma at this time.
3. Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in African Americans.
4. There is no way to reverse vision loss caused by glaucoma.
5. People with acute angle-closure glaucoma can have symptoms including severe pain, nausea, redness of the eye and blurred vision.*
***If you have these symptoms, seek medical treatment immediately.**

Glaucoma Treatment¹⁰

Treating glaucoma early on can help delay progression of the disease. Current treatment options include:

1. **Eyedrops or pills.** This is the most common treatment offered. It also helps to reduce pressure in the eye.
2. **Laser treatment.** This treatment method drains fluid from the eye, but the effects can wear off over time.
3. **Surgery.** Surgery is typically the last treatment option.



State Wellness Center

101 S. Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

The State Wellness Center and Pharmacy is a healthcare facility conveniently located in downtown Montgomery offering a variety of services to state and local government employees and their covered dependents, ages 12 and older. Our mission is to provide a convenient, economical source of urgent care and preventative care services when you are unable to see your primary healthcare provider. Our team of medical professionals is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care and excellent service while also encouraging a continued relationship with your own personal physician.

State Wellness Center Services

- Treat minor illnesses
- Provide health education & monitoring
- Check health progress between appointments
- Share information with your physician
- Monitor efficacy & safety of every medication
- Evaluate out-of-pocket medication expense
- Smoking cessation & weight loss services
- Diabetes education program
- Anticoagulation monitoring services
- Immunizations & injectable medications administration
- Develop a personalized medication plan
- Monitor control of chronic illnesses
- Medication check-ups
- Medication therapy management
- Sports physicals (ages 12 and up)

CALL FOR AN
APPOINTMENT TODAY!
(334) 263-8470

State Wellness Center and Pharmacy Issue 1 January 2019

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