



WOMEN'S HEALTH

CANCER SCREENING, FERTILITY, PREGNANCY & MORE

Women have unique healthcare needs, and there are a few things that women should be doing to look after their health and wellbeing. In this edusheet, we're going to explore some of the key ways women can ensure a long and happy life, from screening for cervical and breast cancer, to ensuring a healthy pregnancy.



UNJANI CLINIC



CERVICAL CANCER

What is it?

Cervical cancer is a cancer of the cervix – the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina. This is a slow-growing cancer, so with regular screening, you can identify and treat the disease before it causes serious problems or spreads to other parts of the body.

What causes cervical cancer?

While the exact causes aren't clear, the medical community knows that HPV plays a role in cervical cancer, as well as certain lifestyle choices and environmental factors.

What are the symptoms of cervical cancer?

In its early stage, cervical cancer doesn't generally show signs or symptoms. This makes regular check-ups extra important to catch the disease early. Advanced cervical cancer may present the following symptoms:



Vaginal bleeding after sex, between periods, after menopause or after a pelvic exam



Watery, bloody vaginal discharge that may be heavy and smell bad



Pelvic pain or pain during sex

How is cervical cancer diagnosed?

At Unjani Clinic, we use Pap smears and cervical cytology to test for cervical cancer. In these tests, cells collected from the surface of your cervix are examined under a microscope. If any unusual cells are found, a biopsy may need to be performed. A biopsy is a procedure in which a small piece of tissue is removed so it can be tested in a laboratory.

How do I minimise my risk of cervical cancer?

- ✓ Get vaccinated against HPV
- ✓ Get tested regularly – starting at age 21 and repeating every few years
- ✓ Practice safe sex – especially with partners whose sexual health status you are unsure of
- ✓ Don't smoke

Find out more about cervical cancer in this detailed edusheet, including treatments, myths, facts & more





BREAST CANCER

What is it?

Breast cancer is a cancer of the breast. The disease can start in different parts of the breast, and can spread to other parts of the body through blood and lymph vessels.

What causes breast cancer?

Research has shown that various factors play a role in your risk of breast cancer:



Genes – people with a family history of breast cancer are 5-10% more likely to develop the disease



Age – you are more likely to get cancer as you grow older



Radiation exposure – women who have had radiation treatment on their chest are more likely to develop the disease



Weight – obesity increases your risk of breast cancer



Starting your period early – women who began menstruating before the age of 13 have a higher risk



No children – women who choose not to have children, or who have their first child after the age of 30, have an increased risk of breast cancer



Post-menopause – your risk increases after menopause, especially if you're undergoing hormone treatment



Alcohol – regular drinking may slightly increase your risk

What are the symptoms of breast cancer?

There are various symptoms to look out for, including lumps, thick areas, dimples and more.

How is breast cancer diagnosed?

Unjani Clinic Nurses are trained to deliver breast examinations to pick up any signs of breast cancer, before they become a serious risk to your health. Visit your nearest Unjani Clinic to get screened today.

How do I minimise my risk of breast cancer?



Go for regular screening – women over 40 or who have some or all of the above risk factors should be screened once a year



Conduct regular self-examinations



Make healthy lifestyle choices, like not smoking, exercising often, maintaining a healthy weight and eating a balanced diet

Find out more about breast cancer, symptoms, self-examinations & more with these detailed edusheets





FERTILITY & INFERTILITY

What is fertility?

Fertility is the natural ability for a woman to fall pregnant. Several factors are required for fertility in women, such as healthy egg production, a high-quality embryo (fertilised egg) and more.

If just one of these factors is not working properly, you may struggle to have a child due to 'infertility'.

What is infertility?

Infertility is the opposite of fertility – so if you are infertile, that means that you will not be able to have a child. Luckily, there are various ways you can increase your chances of falling pregnant.

How can I increase my chances of falling pregnant?

- ✓ Make healthy life choices, such as quitting smoking and drinking as little alcohol as possible
- ✓ Maintain a healthy body weight
- ✓ Ask your Unjani Clinic Nurse about our 3-month fertility programme

Find out more about fertility & infertility in this detailed edusheet





ANTENATAL CARE

What is antenatal care?

Antenatal care is the special healthcare a woman receives when she is pregnant. Pregnant women should visit their nearest Unjani Clinic at least 4 times during their pregnancy, going more often as your pregnancy develops to ensure a healthy pregnancy, birth and baby.

What does antenatal care look like?

Antenatal care with Unjani Clinic involves regular clinic visits to check up on the health of you and your baby. These visits will usually involve tests and scans, and your nurse will give you some practical guidelines to ensure a healthy pregnancy, such as lifestyle changes you can make, getting the right nutrition with prenatal vitamins, and warning signs to look out for.

Find out more about antenatal care
at Unjani Clinic



Whatever your healthcare needs,
Unjani Clinic is always here for you –
visit your nearest Unjani Clinic today!

