Reproductive Health Care for Women with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities include developmental delay, intellectual and learning impairments, autism spectrum disorders, Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy, and communication impairments. Women with developmental disabilities need the same basic and reproductive health care as women without disabilities.

- Most women with developmental disabilities live independently and direct their own lives. They are often experts on their bodies. Respect and use this input.
- Basic health care must include pap smears, mammograms, and all other regular exams.
- Accessible medical equipment, such as adjustable exam tables, enable quality health care.
- Reproductive health care for developmentally disabled women must address sex, birth control choices, AIDS and other STDs, pregnancy, motherhood, and menopause.
- Sexual problems or concerns may or may not be related to disability. Think flexibly and together with your patient.
- Watch out for and report signs of abuse. Women and teens with developmental disabilities experience a higher rate of sexual abuse and sexual assault.
- We need you to be trained in the social and personal issues of disability.
- We need providers and facilities to accept Medicaid.

Learn more:
- Center for Research on Women with Disabilities www.bcm.edu/crowd
- The Center for Disability Issues and the Health Professions www.cdihp.org
- Importance of Accessible Examination Tables, Chairs and Weight Scales www.cdihp.org/products.html
- Sexuality and Disability www.springer.com/psychology/community+psychology/journal/11195
- Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health for Persons with Disabilities www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/general/9789241598682/en/
- Women with Disabilities Center, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago www.ric.org/conditions/community/women-disabilities-center/index.aspx

Adjustable Exam Table

MAP to Access

World Institute of Disability
3075 Adeline St #280
Berkeley, CA 94703
510-225-6400
www.wid.org/map