Much like dentistry, gynecology is an area of health care that, while essential to maintaining a healthy body image, is often unnecessarily met with unease and apprehension by patients. Just as a lack of routine dental care is likely to lead to cavities or even gum disease later in life, neglecting to regularly care for the female body’s reproductive system may eventually lead to what are in many cases preventable problems. The earlier any irregularities or symptoms of an underlying medical condition are caught, the more effectively the condition can be treated. When a young woman first begins her monthly menstrual cycle between the ages of 13 to 15, or when she first becomes sexually active—whichever comes first—it is recommended by the American College of Obstetrician and Gynecologists that she makes her first visit to a gynecologist to discuss birth control options, and begin her yearly pelvic and breast exam.

When it comes to deciding upon a qualified gynecologist, there are a few important factors to consider, according to Dana Humes Goff, Certified Nurse Midwife with Boyd OB/GYN in Peoria: (1) the physician or health care provider’s ability to make eye contact and willingness to listen to the patient, (2) a gentle touch, and (3) a strong willingness of the physician or health care provider to follow-up with patients. Board certification, organizational involvement and participation in continuing education are also vital, as new information and technology are constantly advancing.

Visiting a gynecologist at least once every two years is important for three main reasons: (1) the gynecologist is able to provide information and answers to questions women may have regarding sex and the changing body (2) the gynecologist provides regular testing and expertise, assisting in the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and (3) he or she provides treatment options for reproductive problems.

Some doctors are gynecologists while others are obstetrician-gynecologists. One of the benefits of choosing an obstetrician-gynecologist (OB/GYN) to meet one’s health care needs is that the physician has an expertise in two areas as opposed to just one. Obstetrics deals with pregnancy and childbirth while gynecology specializes in issues of the female reproduction system.

**Boyd OB/GYN and Staff**

Boyd Obstetrics and Gynecology, located at 900 Main St. in Peoria, offers an experienced staff and full range of gynecological services to women in Central Illinois. Dr. W. Marc Boyd has been in private practice in Peoria since 1994. Today he is a leader in obstetric and gynecological treatments, serving as Medical Director of the Methodist Medical Center OB/GYN department and holding privileges at OSF St. Francis Medical Center and Peoria Day Surgery Center.

Boyd Obstetrics and Gynecology offers experienced female mid-level care providers who perform the majority of women’s care on a day-to-day basis and understand the value of women’s health. This staff includes Certified Nurse-Midwife Dana Humes Goff, and wom-
en’s health nurse practitioners, Lindsey M. Fritz and Kim Cheek. Each woman maintains her own area of expertise and is able to meet with patients on a one-on-one basis, much like a regular physician. Goff oversees the majority of gynecological care for Boyd OB/GYN including sonograms, circumcisions, and high-risk pregnancies, while Fritz specializes in urodynamics and BRCA analysis, and Cheek confers with patients on dietary issues.

Also present in the office one day per week are Certified Nurse Midwife Sonia Reeves and Dr. James Crane, obstetrician. Dr. Boyd is often called in to area hospitals when emergency C-Sections are necessary, and also specializes in high-risk pregnancies and robotic hysterectomies, which make up approximately 20 percent of his cases.

Procedures
Boyd OB/GYN offers a number of services and procedures for women, some of which may even be performed in the office. The most up-to-date treatments offered through Boyd OB/GYN include:

• The latest treatments in birth control, including the Essure procedure, which is to-date the first and only FDA-approved permanent birth control procedure to result in zero pregnancies in clinical studies. Found to be 99.8 percent effective, the Essure procedure is covered by a majority of health insurance plans and may be conducted in a doctor’s office under minimal anesthesia.

• Robotic hysterectomy, a common treatment that may be performed on women suffering from either cancerous or non-cancerous conditions of the reproductive system, including chronic pain, heavy bleeding, fibroids, endometriosis and prolapse.

Paula Clark, Practice Administrator and Dr. Boyd discuss topics for an office staff meeting.

Lindsey Fritz, WHNP reviews BRCA Analysis results with a patient.
Robotic procedures are preferred by Dr. Boyd, because unlike other treatment options, the majority of these procedures enable women to be in-and-out of the hospital the same day and to return to work the following week. Dr. Boyd understands the important role that women play in the home saying it starts in his home, with his wife and children. Likewise, the speedy recovery time associated with various robotic procedures is beneficial to independent women and working moms, many being the main breadwinner for their family.

- Thermachoice, a uterine balloon therapy system used to treat women who suffer from heavy periods or menorrhagia. Heavy periods may be caused by a number of medical conditions, including hormonal imbalance, endometriosis, neoplasia, fibroids, blood clotting or more serious conditions such as cancer, which is why it is important for a women to discuss this issue with her gynecologist.
- Pelvic Floor Repair, a procedure in which the doctor repairs pelvic floor walls that have dropped due to aging and resulted in urinary issues for the woman.

**Pap smears**

A Pap smear is a non-invasive procedure in which a health care provider screens for cervical cancer by collecting cells from the cervix and vagina, and evaluating the cell sample under a microscope for infections or abnormal cells that may grow into a cancerous tumor. The American Cancer Society recommends that a woman undergo her first Pap smear within three years of becoming sexually active or by age 21. How often a woman needs to receive a Pap smear depends on her individual situation. If there are health concerns involved, a woman may need to be tested on an annual basis, but if a woman is in good health she may only receive a Pap smear once every two years. Breast and pelvic exams should be conducted on an annual basis.

**Urodynamics**

Women who experience incontinence may also receive assistance through the services of Boyd OB/GYN. Urodynamic testing may be used to determine the cause of symptoms such as urine leakage or obstructed urine flow. Urodynamics is a study that evaluates the performance of the bladder and urethra when it comes to storing and releasing urine. Women experiencing abnormal urinary symptoms such as frequent urination, painful urination or recurrent urinary tract infections should consult a health care professional as abnormalities in urinary flow can in some cases lead to urine being backed up toward the kidneys, resulting in infection or kidney damage. Urinary tract issues may result from a number of different causes, including aging, injury or illness.

**Informational**

For women who are experiencing difficulties in conceiving children, infertility evaluations and treatment are available. Other areas in which Boyd OB/GYN provides informational assistance include Family Planning and PMS counseling and treatment.

Breast and ovarian cancer screening, or BRCA analysis, is a preventative test available to women who have a family history of either of these cancers. If results are found to be positive the health care can be pro active in helping the patient to prevent the cancer.

Among other services offered, patients looking to lose weight and stay in shape may also inquire about the Boyd Weight Loss program.

**Appointments**

Office hours for Boyd OB/GYN are Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The office is closed from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. during lunch hour. New patients are always welcome and Boyd OB/GYN is one of few obstetrics and gynecology offices in the area that accept Medicaid cards, so Medicaid patients are welcome. The office, located in Suite 660 on the sixth floor of the Methodist Atrium building, is contracted with most major insurance companies, PPO, POS, HMO and more. While nearly 90 percent of Boyd Obstetrics and Gynecology childbirth deliveries and surgeries are performed at the Methodist Medical Center, as a private practitioner he also delivers at OSF St. Francis Medical Center and performs minimally invasive surgeries at the Peoria Day Surgery Center. Personal health information is kept confidential in compliance with HIPAA regulations.

For more information on services offered through Boyd Obstetrics and Gynecology visit the office’s website online at www.boydobgyn.com or contact the business office during office hours Monday through Thursday at (309) 687-4230.