

Dr. Aimée Shunney brings a unique approach to women's health

Chances are that you don't look forward to your annual women's health exam. You go because you know you have to, but you could live without the poking and prodding, the backless gowns, and the often-too-brief encounter with the actual doctor. Aimée Shunney, N.D. is making sure that her patients get more out of their annual visit at Riverside Obstetrics & Gynecology. While the exam, unfortunately, is the same, Dr. Shunney's approach ensures adequate time for conversation and a multitude of treatment options.

Dr. Shunney is a naturopathic physician specializing in women's health. She earned her graduate degree at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Oregon, one of four accredited naturopathic schools in the country. Her unique brand of medicine combines traditional necessities such as pap smears and hormones, with dietary and lifestyle counseling, supplements, herbal medicine, and homeopathy. She also uses a technique called Maya Abdominal Massage to treat many common gynecological and digestive complaints such as painful periods, endometriosis, infertility, difficult menopause, and irritable bowel syndrome.

This spring, Dr. Shunney is pleased to introduce **Compassionate Gynecology for Teens**, a program designed to ensure that a young woman's first gynecologic visit is positive and empowering. "This lays the groundwork for teens to have a sense of pride and ownership about their bodies," she says. "If we can give them that, then they are more likely to make smart choices in the future."

Girls are understandably anxious about their first exam. Dr. Shunney says that the best time is before a teen becomes sexually active or at the latest, when she's heading off to college. "I encourage moms to bring their daughters in *before* it's time for the exam as a kind of 'prep course,' often before they go off to camp," she explains. "I let the girls know when they should have the exam, why it's important, and what they can expect. That way, they can be involved in the process." Dr. Shunney also uses the opportunity to talk about menstruation, birth

control - whatever's on their minds.

When it is time for the examination, Dr. Shunney thoroughly reviews the specifics of the procedure. In the examination room, with an assistant present, she reminds the teen of each step of the exam before she proceeds. Afterwards, Dr. Shunney leaves plenty of time for questions. She also goes to great lengths to discuss ways in which common problems such as PMS, painful periods, mood swings, and acne can be vastly improved with nutrition and supplements. Sometimes medication can be avoided, she notes, because problems can be alleviated with non-invasive, natural measures.

In January, Dr. Shunney joined Drs. Russell Turk and Carol Fucigna at Riverside Obstetrics & Gynecology. She also maintains a private practice in Brooklyn, NY and coordinates the Health Education and Wellness Programs at Long Island College Hospital, also in Brooklyn.

For more information, visit www.drshunney.com or call 203-637-3337. Riverside Obstetrics & Gynecology is located at 1200 East Putnam Avenue in Riverside, CT.

