**Women's Health in Kumamoto**

For dealing with women's health matters in English, the best spot seems to be Fukuda Women's Hospital in Kumamoto City. There are English speaking doctors at Fukuda Women’s Hospital – Dr. Fukuda, Dr. Yamamoto, Dr. Hagiwara and Dr. Obaru. They are used to foreigners so it is easy to explain what you need from them. It’s located near the central post office and the Kotsu Center in central Kumamoto and the clinic is open Monday to Saturday 9:00am - 6:00pm. You cannot make an appointment ahead of time, so be prepared for a long wait. The phone number is 096-322-2995.

Gynecologists or doctors who are able to perform gynecological exams are also available at many clinics and hospitals throughout the prefecture, though English isn't likely to be understood or spoken by most. The following is a list of places that either have gynecologists on site, or offer gynecology along with other medical services. Please note that while these are all legitimate clinics and hospitals, not all of them have been tried out by JETs so the procedures, wait times, and response to foreigners may vary. Also, this list is not extensive. If you're looking for a women's clinic near you, it's a good idea to ask some of your female coworkers.

**\*A note on gynecology in Japan\***

Be prepared for things to be a little different here than in your home country. Women's clinics often have more of a focus on prenatal care and birthing rather than sexual health. Also, while experiences vary, it helps to also be prepared for there to be more people than you're used to in the room during any given procedure (more than one nurse plus the doctor, for example).

**Amakusa**

*Onikuza Clinic* 鬼塚クリニック

Address: (English) 863-0046 Kumamoto Prefecture Amakusa Kamebamachijikiba 984-1

(Japanese)〒863-0046 熊本県天草市亀場町食場984-1

Telephone: 0969-24-3636

**Arao**

*Ishikawa Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology*いしかわ産婦人科

Address: (English) 864-0163 Kumamoto Prefecture Arao field 259-1

(Japanese) 〒 864-0163 熊本県荒尾市野原259-1

Telephone: 0968-68-5511

Homepage: Http://Www.Ishikawa-sanfujinka.Com/

**Aso-gun**

*Murohara Clinic* 室原医院

Address: (English) 869-2401 Kumamoto Prefecture Aso-gun, Minamioguni-machi Akababa 1826

(Japanese)〒869-2401 熊本県阿蘇郡南小国町赤馬場1826

Telephone: 0967-42-0010

**Hitoyoshi**

*Hitoyoshi Central Onsen Hospital* 人吉中央温泉病院

Address: (English) 868-0005 Kumamoto Prefecture Hitoyoshi Kamiaoi cho, 170-1

(Japanese) 〒868-0005 熊本県人吉市上青井町170-1

Telephone: 0966-24-2854

**Kami-Amakusa**

*Honda Clinic* 本田医院

Address: (English) 866-0203 Amakusa Ryugatake the town above Kumamoto Prefecture Hinoshima 3486

(Japanese) 〒866-0203 熊本県上天草市龍ケ岳町樋島3486

Telephone: 0969-62-0570

**Koshi**

*Ikeda Clinic* 池田クリニック

Address: (English) 861-1112 Kumamoto Prefecture Koshi City Kikudomi 1866-1332

(Japanese)〒861-1112 熊本県合志市幾久富1866-1332

Phone: 096-248-8600

Homepage: Http://Www.Ikedaclinic.Com/

**Minamata**

*Honda Ladies Clinic* 本田レディースクリニック

Address: (English) 3 Chome-6-21 Hamamachi, Minamata, Kumamoto Prefecture 867-0065

(Japanese) 〒867-0065熊本県水俣市浜町3-6-21

Phone:0966-63-2019

Website: http://www.mediqube.com/honda-lc/usr/pc/

**Tamana**

*Public Tamana Central Hospital*公立玉名中央病院

Address: (English) 865-0064 Kumamoto Prefecture Tamana in 1950

(Japanese)〒865-0064 熊本県玉名市中1950

Phone: 0968-73-5000

Homepage: Http://Www.Tamana-chp.Jp/

**Uto**

*Uto Gynecology Clinic*宇土産婦人科医院

Address: (English) 869-0445 Kumamoto Prefecture Uto Sakae 15

(Japanese)〒869-0445 熊本県宇土市栄町15

Telephone: 0964-22-0524

**Yamaga**

*Fukuda Clinic*福田医院

Address: (English)861-0561 Kumamoto Prefecture Yamaga Kao-cho Iwappara 1402

(Japanese)〒861-0561 熊本県山鹿市鹿央町岩原1402

Telephone: 0968-36-2161

**Yatsushiro**

*Kataoka Ladies Clinic* 片岡レディスクリニック

Address: (English) 866-0861 Kumamoto Prefecture Yatsushiro Honcho 3-3-35

(Japanese) 〒866-0861 熊本県八代市本町3-3-35

Tel: 0965-32-2344

Homepage: Http://Www.Kataoka-lc.Com

*Motoshima Gynecology Clinic* 元島産婦人科医院

Address: (English) 866-0863 Kumamoto Prefecture Yatsushiro Nishimatsuejo cho 5-9

(Japanese) 〒866-0863 熊本県八代市西松江城町5-9

Tel: 0965-34-2022

Homepage: Http://Www-ya.Magma.Ne.Jp/～yuhkei/

**What Do I Do If I'm Being Sexually Harassed?**

In cases of sexual harassment, your supervisor at the BOE is who you should technically go to. However, it's understandable that you may feel more comfortable talking to a PA in English about it first. You can contact the PAs at kumamotopa@gmail.com.

CLAIR has included information in the Contracting Organisation Manual (*ninyo dantai-yo manyuaru*) about sexual harassment, how to avoid it, and what to do if it happens. If you wish to speak with your supervisor about the subject, please confirm that they have read the relevant passage.

Other Tips:

* Be aware of those around you, especially when alcohol is involved.
* Do not feel obligated to answer any questions about your dating or sexual history, ever.
* Show you are offended by giving short answers or reacting with a straight face or silence to unwanted remarks or actions. Body language is powerful.
* Make others aware of your discomfort.
* Tell the person to stop (yamete kudasai: やめてください).

**Safety Tips**

* Always lock your house, whether you are going out or are at home. Do not write your name on your doorplate or mailbox. Instead, use a magnet or sticker to help friends identify your home.
* Be selective about giving personal information such as e-mail, Facebook, or Line IDs .
* If walking alone at night cannot be avoided, bring a flashlight with you and do not listen to music or play with your phone. Text a friend to let them know when you're leaving and check in when you're back home.
* Watch your purse, especially in crowded places like nightclubs. Wallet thefts DO happen.
* Always keep an eye on your drink when out at bars or clubs.
* In smaller towns especially, sometimes wearing clothes that seem perfectly modest at home can be interpreted as showing off too much skin and attract unwanted attention. Having your knees, shoulders, and cleavage covered is generally considered "modest" here.
* Invest in a portable cell phone charger, so you're never caught with a dead battery.

**Important Numbers**

An emergency phone call can be made free of charge from any phone, including public pay phones. If you cannot speak Japanese, you will be transferred to an English Answering service in Tokyo.

**110 POLICE**

Call 110 to report an accident or crime to the police call center.

**119 FIRE, AMBULANCE, and RESCUE**

Call 119 to report a fire or to ask for an ambulance or rescue service or to contact an emergency call center (fire station).

**AJET Peer Support Group**

**- 8PM to 7AM every night –**

**050 -5534 -5566 or ‘AJETPSG’ on Skype (http://www.ajet.net/psg/ )**

**Tokyo English Lifeline**

**- 9AM to 11PM daily -**

**03 -5774 -0992**

**(http://www.telljp.com/ )**

**Condoms**

Japanese condoms for men tend to be smaller than their western counterparts. You can buy them at most drug stores, convenience stores and places like the Don Quixote (ﾄﾞﾝｷﾎﾃｲ) in Shimotori in Kumamoto City. Some JETs get Western-sized condoms sent from home or order them on the Internet (trywww.comdomania.com, www.drugstore.com). The female condom is sold under the name “MyFemy”.

**The Pill**

The Pill is fairly easy to obtain. It is available at private hospitals and at women’s clinics. Picking up the prescription monthly usually straightforward. There is a brief consultation with the doctor (“Has anything changed?”, “How are you feeling?”, etc. It is not a full examination.) and your blood pressure will be measured. It is covered by your insurance and the price runs from 2,000 to 3,000 yen.

If you do not want to deal with a clinic or hospital monthly, there are other options! You may want to check out BirthControlBrands.org or see if your preferred brand is available for sale online. You can have it shipped to you, however you will need to include a written prescription from your doctor.

**The Morning-After Pill**

In Japan the “Morning After Pill” is officially only given in emergencies as it is viewed by many Japanese doctors as unsafe. In Japanese, it is called ‘kei kou shinin yaku’ or in katakana ‘moruningu afuta piru’. It must be taken within 72 hours after the incident. This pill is not covered by national insurance, and the price can range anywhere from 10,000 to 20,000 yen (no, that is not a typo). It requires a prescription and Fukuda Women’s Hospital is one of the only places in Kumamoto willing to administer this pill.

**Pregnancy Tests**

The home pregnancy test called “Clear Blue” is available from pharmacies and major drug stores for about 500 Yen. It is reportedly quite accurate and comes with English instructions

**Pregnancy**

If you decide to have a baby in Japan, you need to register the pregnancy at your city/town/village office within the first month. You will be given a mother and child information booklet and the Tokyo Childbirth Education Association has information about pregnancy and childbirth in Japan.

**Abortion**

Abortion seems to be the most common way of dealing with an unwanted pregnancy in Japan. It is not covered by insurance and cannot be done after the second trimester. Again, Fukuda Hospital in Kumamoto City is best for this as they are able to do abortions and the location in the city offers you anonymity.

While abortion is still a big decision for women and their partners to make, there is often minimal counseling offered at the clinic. However, there are dozens of counseling resources available online as well as hotlines.

**STI Testing**

STI tests can be administered at the Kumamoto City Public Health Center or by any gynecologists or general practitioners. See the Kumamoto JET website section on sexual health for all you need to know on where and how to get tested in Japan.

**Yeast Infections**

There is no over-the-counter medication for yeast infections in Japan. You need to go to a women's clinic. If you have a yeast infection, they will test you on the spot and give you your first treatment. However, they will likely ask you to come back either every day for a week, or again in another week. If that is an inconvenience for you, ask if you can take the rest of the suppositories home to treat yourself.

\*In Japanese, yeast infection is “shinkinsei chitsuen” 真菌性膣炎; Candidiasis is “kanjita” カンジタ

**Bladder Infections, Cystitis, Urinary Tract Infections**

Unfortunately, all of these ailments will require a trip to a women's clinic to get a prescription. Due to the average Japanese women being slightly smaller than the average foreigner, doses of antibiotics may be significantly lower than what you're used to at home. If you have encountered the issue before and can remember exactly what you were given (that worked) at home, it may be helpful to bring this information along to show the doctor.

**Periods Etc.**

*Cramps*

Ibuprofen is available at most drug stores and pharmacies. The word to look (or ask) for is: イブプロフェン (pronounced almost the same as in English except the “i” sounds like a long “e” instead of “eye"). Some of the more common brands are Eve and Meridon, although others exist as well. If you look at the category/section labels or names, you'll most likely see the kanji or word for pain: 痛み (いたみ, itami).

*Pads/Tampons*

Pads and tampons can be found at drug stores, pharmacies, convenience stores and some grocery stores. The pads in Japan are a lot bigger and thicker than what you might have available in your home country, so be wary that you're buying pads for menstruation and not incontinence . It's an easy mistake to make in towns where there are more post-menopausal than menstruating women.

*Menstrual Pain Leave*

According to the JET Programme Terms and Conditions for 2015, female JETs are entitled to take days off "when a female JET is unable to work due to severe menstrual discomfort." However, JETs will not be paid for these days off.





