

Women's Issues



Aimee Chen (Yamanashi, 2011-2014)
Robin Mele (Tokushima, 2012-2014)

Healthcare

- ❖ **National Health Insurance:** generally covers 70% of doctor's visits and other healthcare-related costs. Supervisors and CIRs/PSG are good resources.
- ❖ **School check-ups required annually**
- ❖ If you have some preferred OTC medicines, consider bringing them with you to Japan. BUT make sure they are legal and you have the right documents for them!
- ❖ You are allowed to bring **one month's worth of prescription medicine** with you. To bring more, you will need a Yakkan Shomei certificate from your nearest Japanese Embassy or Consulate before you leave.

Gynecology Pt. 1

Ask other JETs (including PAs) or Japanese friends in your area about local gynecologists + clinics.

- ❖ **Tampons** are available, though may be less available in very rural areas, but Amazon Japan is great if you need it shipped. Bring extra tampons in case.
- ❖ Healthcare covers **yearly check ups**, and certain tests are covered. **STD tests** are not covered by NHS.
 - Note: Many gynecologists in Japan are **male**. Also, the procedure may be a bit different and often includes a “**privacy curtain.**”



Gynecology Pt. 2

Be aware that contraceptive options may be limited.



- ❖ **Birth control:** The Pill is available in Japan at ¥2,000-¥3,000 a month w/ monthly check-up. Clinics charge different prices and have different options, so feel free to call around to check different clinics.
- ❖ **IUDs** are available and can cost around ¥30,000, but check around your area as not all doctors do the procedures.
- ❖ **Emergency contraceptives** are available, but access may be difficult.
- ❖ **Abortions** are available but have different restrictions than in the U.S.

Clothing

- ❖ In general, **size ranges are narrower and go smaller.**
- ❖ **Clothes:** Japanese medium = US small. M is often “one size fits all.”
- ❖ **Bras:** Sizes are smaller and measured differently. Bring extra bras, order online, or ask around for stores that sell larger sizes if you think your size might be difficult to find.
- ❖ **Shoes:** Sizes available generally range from 5.5 to 8 (equiv. to Japan size 21.5 to 24). There are specialty stores for sizes above that.

Don't despair! Here's a fun kimono story. 😊

Dress for Success

- ❖ **Work:** Keep it professional. When in doubt, more coverage.
 - Cover shoulders and cleavage. Don't wear tank tops.
 - Keep hems at the knee.
 - Beware of sheer fabrics. Conceal bra straps. "Are you cold?"
 - Watches, nail polish, jewelry, and piercings.
 - Indoor shoes.
- ❖ **Outside work:** Be yourself, but remember you remain visible to your community as a representative of your country and the JET Program.



Gender Norms & Navigating Social Interactions

❖ Preconceptions and Expectations

- Be aware of notions you may have before going to Japan and what may be expected of you.

❖ Personal Boundaries

- Know the limits to your personal space.

❖ Visibility

- Be aware of your presence in your community.

❖ Work Culture

- Expectations in the office or at school.
- Aimee's anecdote on pouring tea.



Useful Links

- ❖ <http://www.survivingnjapan.com/>
 - <http://www.survivingnjapan.com/2010/12/guide-to-birth-control-pills-in-japan.html>
- ❖ <http://japanhealthinfo.com>
 - Healthcare providers in Japan
- ❖ <http://www.hyogoajet.net/2013/11/24/bringing-medicine-to-japan/>
 - Important list to check for legal and illegal medication.
- ❖ <http://savvytokyo.com/>



