



The
Womens
Center
at GBMC



A CASE FOR SUPPORT

GBMC

*Celebrating 60 Years
of Caring for Women*



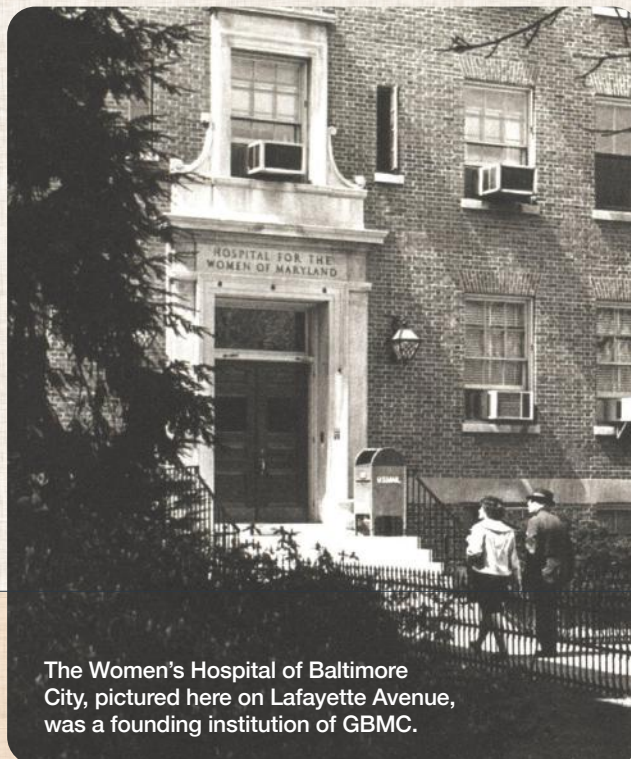
Our Legacy, *Your Future*

**Built on a foundation of women's
health, growing for tomorrow**

From the very beginning, GBMC has stood at the forefront of women's health. Our story began with the Hospital for Women of Baltimore City—founded in 1882. It was built by and for women at a time when dedicated care for women was rare and often overlooked.

That same spirit still guides us today as we redefine what it means to provide whole person, coordinated care for women.

The Womens Center at GBMC is the next evolution of women's healthcare at GBMC: bringing subspecialty expertise together in a beautiful, modern, collaborative space. We're creating something different—care that revolves around you through every age, every stage, and every moment of life.



The Women's Hospital of Baltimore City, pictured here on Lafayette Avenue, was a founding institution of GBMC.



The Care Women Have Been Missing—*Now Within Reach*

The landscape of women's health is changing—and GBMC is leading the response.

Today, women spend nearly 40% of their lives post menopause, navigating a range of physical, hormonal, and emotional changes that demand specialized, nuanced care. At the same time, more women are being diagnosed with complex gynecologic conditions such as fibroids, endometriosis, pelvic organ prolapse, and debilitating menopause symptoms that drastically impact their quality of life.

Yet in Baltimore and beyond, too many women are left without comprehensive support.

In the absence of coordinated, evidence-based care, many patients bounce from office to office in search of answers—often growing frustrated and turning to unproven treatments or giving up on care altogether.

At GBMC, we believe women deserve better.

Our new Center brings together experts in advanced gynecologic surgery, urogynecology, pelvic floor physical therapy, and menopause care in a space built for comfort, discretion, and healing. By creating seamless pathways between specialists and primary care, we're transforming the experience of gynecologic and midlife care for women in Baltimore.

Trusted Partners in *Women's Health*



Joan Blomquist, MD
Chair, Department of Gynecology

Dr. Joan Blomquist has devoted her career to improving the lives of women navigating some of their most personal—and often least discussed—health challenges. A nationally recognized leader in urogynecology, she brings extraordinary surgical skill, clinical expertise, and deep empathy to every patient encounter.

Dr. Blomquist joined GBMC in 1996 after completing her OB/GYN residency at the University of Pittsburgh. She later returned to complete a fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at GBMC. Board certified in both OB/GYN and Urogynecology, she led GBMC's Division of Urogynecology for a decade before becoming Chair of the Department of Gynecology. Her clinical practice focuses on pelvic floor disorders and complex gynecologic conditions, and her research explores how childbirth impacts pelvic floor function.

A longtime advocate for global women's health, Dr. Blomquist has led medical missions to Niger, Vietnam, and Rwanda since 2005 through the International Organization for Women and Development. She also served in the Peace Corps in Fiji during medical school and chaired the American Urogynecologic Society's Global Health Special Interest Group.

For Dr. Blomquist, the launch of GBMC's new Women's Center is a defining moment—one that promises coordinated, compassionate care for every woman, right here in the community she's served for nearly 30 years.

“

Menopause hit me harder than I expected — the symptoms were overwhelming. Dr. Blomquist offered real solutions rooted in science, not gimmicks. I felt supported, understood, and finally empowered to thrive.

— Sara M.

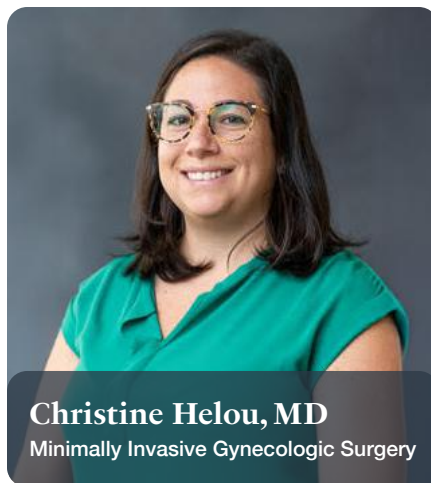


Stephanie Jacobs, MD
Chief, Division of Urogynecology

Dr. Jacobs is a trusted advocate for her patients navigating pelvic floor issues. As Director of Urogynecology at GBMC, she brings clinical excellence, calm leadership, and a deep commitment to women's health. She has specific expertise in issues of female pelvic floor support (prolapse), incontinence, and overall pelvic floor dysfunction.

Dr. Jacobs earned her undergraduate degree from Bowdoin College and her medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. She completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and fellowship in Urogynecology (Female Pelvic Medicine and Reproductive Surgery) at University of California, Irvine. She is board-certified in both Female Pelvic Medicine & Reproductive Surgery and Obstetrics & Gynecology.

Known for her approachable, thoughtful style, Dr. Jacobs is deeply engaged in patient care. She believes in the value of continued quality improvement and of mentoring the next generation of women's health providers. Many of the issues with which her patients struggle may be cloaked in embarrassment. She strives to provide excellent, informed care in an environment that feels safe and non-judgemental.



Christine Helou, MD
Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery

Dr. Helou brings precision, innovation, and compassion to the care of women facing complex gynecologic conditions. As a fellowship-trained minimally invasive gynecologic surgeon, she specializes in treating issues such as fibroids, endometriosis, and pelvic pain with the most advanced techniques—helping patients heal faster and return to their lives with confidence.

Dr. Helou earned her undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and her medical degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine. She completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at University of Maryland Medical Center. She then completed an AAGL fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Dr. Helou is board-certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and holds a focused practice designation in minimally invasive gynecologic surgery (MIGS) through the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG).

The focused practice designation recognizes gynecologists who have additional surgical expertise and dedicate the majority of their practice to the care of women with benign and complex gynecologic diseases. This designation distinguishes gynecologic surgeons who have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform complex surgeries for patients with benign disease safely and effectively.

Dr. Helou's philosophy of care centers on listening—taking time to understand each woman's story and goals before crafting a personalized path forward.

“

Dr. Helou listened to me, validated me, and continually supports me. She is responsive and genuine in her care. She really helped me get my life back, and I cannot thank her enough for her thoroughness and care.

— Maryellen T.



Beth L Emami, MSN, CRNP
Urogynecology & Reconstructive Surgery

Beth is a board-certified Women's Health Nurse Practitioner with over 30 years of experience specializing in urogynecology. Her main focus is on non-surgical approaches to treating pelvic floor disorders such as pelvic organ prolapse, urinary incontinence, and other complex bladder dysfunctions.

Beth began her academic journey at Towson State University, earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and went on to complete her Master of Science in Nursing at the University of Maryland. Throughout her career, she has remained dedicated to helping women improve their quality of life through compassionate, evidence-based care that prioritizes less invasive treatment methods.

Residing in southern Pennsylvania, Beth enjoys a rich life outside of clinical practice—reading, gardening, baking, traveling, and spending time outdoors with her canine companion of five years, Lamar.

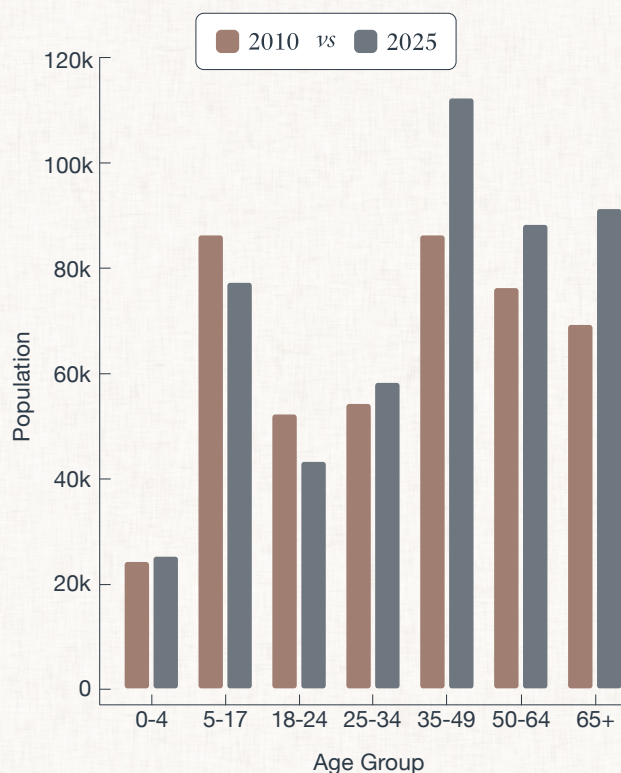
Why Now: Meeting the Moment for Women's Health

As the population of Baltimore County ages, the need for specialized women's healthcare is becoming increasingly important. From 2010 to 2022, the number of women aged 65 and older grew by nearly 33%. Today, women make up 52.8% of the county's population—about 446,000 people—underscoring the broad and growing demand for care.

Up to 70% of postmenopausal women experience Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause, a group of conditions that calls for thoughtful, compassionate, and expert gynecologic support. As more women enter this stage of life, the need for gynecologic services tailored to aging women will continue to grow—reinforcing the value of a dedicated Women's Center designed to meet these evolving needs.

BALTIMORE COUNTY'S WOMEN ARE AGING

Female population by age group: Baltimore County



One Team for Endometrial Cancer

While many cancer types have stabilized or declined, endometrial cancer is steadily climbing—in Baltimore County and beyond. This growth is particularly pronounced in women under 50, with Millennial and Gen X women experiencing the highest increase in both diagnosis and mortality compared to other cancers. Although only 12% of endometrial cancer patients live in Baltimore City, nearly 40% of surgeries are performed there, suggesting that many County residents are traveling to the City for cancer care.

To address this gap, clinicians in the GBMC Women's Center will partner closely with the Gynecologic Oncology team at GBMC's Sandra and Malcolm Berman Cancer Institute. Together, they will ensure seamless coordination of care for patients with complex or concerning findings, including navigating long-term effects of treatment such as intimacy and urinary challenges. This collaboration enables timely referrals, shared decision-making, and a unified plan—from evaluation through survivorship—giving patients the benefit of both advanced cancer expertise and the personalized support of a dedicated women's health team, all within one trusted system.

Comprehensive Care *for Every Season of Life*



CARE WE PROVIDE	WHY IT MATTERS TO HER
Prolapse repair, incontinence care, and treatment for recurrent UTIs	Helps regain comfort, dignity, and control over her daily life
Menopause care and evidence-based hormone therapy	Supports her through a natural transition with personalized symptom relief and guidance
Minimally invasive surgery for endometriosis, fibroids, and abnormal bleeding	Offers faster recovery, less pain, and improved quality of life
Pelvic floor physical therapy	Builds strength and restores function—empowering her to feel strong and in control again
Preventive surgical options, like opportunistic salpingectomy	Lowers lifetime cancer risk and supports proactive health decisions
Education and counseling	Helps her understand pelvic health, sexual wellness, and treatment options—leading to confident decisions



Join Us in Our Next Season *of Women's Health*

With your support, GBMC will create a new Womens Center that reflects our bold vision for the future: one place where women can access the full spectrum of care they need—gynecologic and surgical services, advanced diagnostics, menopause care, pelvic health, education, and more—delivered by trusted experts who listen, partner, and truly understand.

This Center will not only expand access to essential services but also elevate the standard of care for every woman who walks through our doors. It will be a place of healing, empowerment, and innovation.

Together, we can transform women's lives—now and for generations to come.

Get involved by contacting Rachel Ladenson, Senior Director of Development

443-849-3765 | rladenson@gbmc.org

GBMC