

NEWSLETTER



About Us!

The Women's Health Multidisciplinary Consortium is a student led organization here at UNC.

Our mission is to create a trainee-focused, unified community of faculty, clinicians, and researchers with a vested interest in women's health research and sex-specific pathologies.

Upcoming Events

new WHR certificate opening!

10
July

Carolina Women's Center Coffee Hour 12 - 1pm

30
July

1st Year Medical School Organization Fair 1 - 5pm

11
August

Graduate Certificate in Women's Health Research Application Deadline

13
August

Graduate Schools New Student Orientation 2 - 4pm

Hot Off the Press!

A recent study by the University of Cambridge examined the impact of bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy (BSO) on mortality rates among women with BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations. The research involved 666 women with these genetic variants and no prior cancer diagnosis, comparing those who underwent BSO to those who did not. The findings indicated that **BSO was associated with a significant reduction in overall mortality, breast cancer-specific mortality, and ovarian cancer-specific mortality.**



Access the article [here](#).

Congratulations to all the new WHMC graduates!



We look forward to seeing all the great work you do!

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

A formal program of courses and seminars
to develop specialized research training in
the field of women's health

9 credits of
coursework

Monthly
journal club

Present your
research at a
symposium

Application Coming Soon!

For more information,
check the WHMC website!



**APPLICATION OPENS
AUGUST 2025**

Applicants will need:

- 1) NIH Biosketch
- 2) Project proposal with aims
(1 page max)
- 3) Letter of support from
primary mentor



Questions? Contact Program Director Dr. Melinda Yates (msyates@email.unc.edu)

Tomato Day 2025



Carrboro Farmers' Market

Locally Grown • Nationally Known

Saturday, July 12th • 301 W. Main Street, Carrboro

Recipes, raffle, and a **HUGE** variety of
fresh, locally-grown tomatoes to sample!

carrborofarmersmarket.com

SPLINTER

**Laser
IMAGE**
QUALITY PRINTING
DESIGN
CAMERAS



Endswell
A MODERN FUNERAL HOME



Women's Health Research Roundtable: The Vaginal Microbiome and Implications for Women's Health

Thursday, July 17, 2025, 3-4 p.m. EDT



To participate in this webinar, please register at

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/d6b58e21-cf24-46e8-b101-c277cd214ff4@14b77578-9773-42d5-8507-251ca2dc2b06>

FEATURING:



Mary Kimmel, M.D., Ph.D. is an Associate Professor at Washington University in St. Louis with expertise in the microbiome and reproductive psychiatry. Dr. Kimmel will discuss the microbiome's influence on the HPA and HPO axes and explore future directions to support maternal mental health through microbiome-informed strategies. She will share findings from a study of pregnant individuals in North Carolina and Sweden, examining how gut microbiome diversity and function relate to depression and anxiety during pregnancy and the postpartum period. The study highlights complex patterns in alpha-diversity and identifies microbial functions, such as cortisol degradation and short-chain fatty acid synthesis, linked to mood symptoms and stress response.



Anuja Dokras, M.D., MHCI, Ph.D. is the Executive Director of the Women's Health Center for Clinical Innovation (WHCCI) and the Founder's Professor of Women's Health in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. She is also the Director of the PENN Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) Center, a multi-disciplinary center providing care to adolescents and people with PCOS across the lifespan. Dr. Dokras brings to this role her extensive research experience in translational medicine and clinical trials with a focus on understanding cardiometabolic risk and mental health co-morbidities associated with PCOS. Dr. Dokras will discuss the vaginal microbiome in polycystic ovary syndrome.

Sign language interpreting services are available upon request. Individuals who need interpreting services and/or other reasonable accommodations to participate in this event should contact Liz Schott at elizabeth.schott@nih.gov. Requests should be made at least five business days in advance.

HONORARY FACULTY INTERVIEW: DR. ADAM ELWOOD, MD



Could you tell us briefly about your background and how it shaped your academic interests?

I went to medical school at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. While I was there, I sought ways to work with the community in a way that would feel meaningful. Not long afterwards, the director of a Philadelphia abortion clinic came to present at the medical school. She discussed what her job is like, how it impacts the people she works with, and the importance of abortion. They happened to be looking for volunteer patient escorts to walk with patients through protest lines. Every weekend I would wait outside the building in front of protesters accosting patients walking to their appointments.

They appreciated having a welcoming face to comfort them through that difficult walk. Often patients would come outside to talk with us while waiting for their appointments; I learned so much from them during these breaks. I learned about their lives, their history, their thoughts, and their feelings.

These experiences were incredibly meaningful and would eventually lead to my pursuit of a Complex Family Planning fellowship.

I approached the third year of medical school with an open mind, and the OBGYN clerkship took me by surprise. We had learned so little of clinical obstetrics or gynecology and being thrown into labor and delivery was a complete unknown.



INTERVIEW, CONTINUED

It was thrilling, interesting, exhilarating, and sometimes heartbreakingly difficult. I owe so much to the entire medical teams and patients involved during these rotations for showing me how much OBGYN has to offer. Afterwards, I went to residency at Rutgers back in my home state of New Jersey

What research or other work in women's health are you involved in currently?

I am currently enrolling patients for a study investigating adjunct pain control during IUD insertion.

Right now, the CDC recommends lidocaine nerve blocks and vaginal gel to help with pain during the procedure.



Other medications like ibuprofen and acetaminophen have not been shown to help, but a similar medication called ketorolac has had some promising results. Based on the way the medication is metabolized, we believe that giving ketorolac earlier will help better with pain during the procedure. So, we are randomizing patients to receive ketorolac 1 hour vs 2 hours prior to their IUD insertion and measuring pain and satisfaction. We just started enrolling participants and expect to continue enrolling through next Spring.

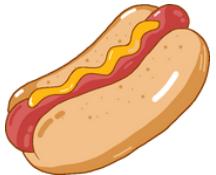
Who inspires you academically or otherwise?

Dr. Amy Bryant is my inspiration in all things Family Planning. She is an expert clinician, a fierce advocate, and a truly compassionate friend and mentor.

MONTHLY CALENDAR



JULY 2025



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
A cartoon illustration of a pink ice cream cone with yellow stripes.		1	2	3	A stylized illustration of fireworks in red, white, and blue.	5
6	7	8	9	A yellow sun icon containing the text "10 Women's Center Coffee Hour".	11	Illustrations of whole and sliced red tomatoes.
13	14	15	16	A pink cloud shape containing the text "17 NIH Women's Health Research Roundtable".	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	A yellow sun icon containing the text "30 MS1 Org Fair".	31	Illustrations of a pink and green striped beach umbrella and a blue cooler.	

Have a great summer!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



Hot Topics Seminar

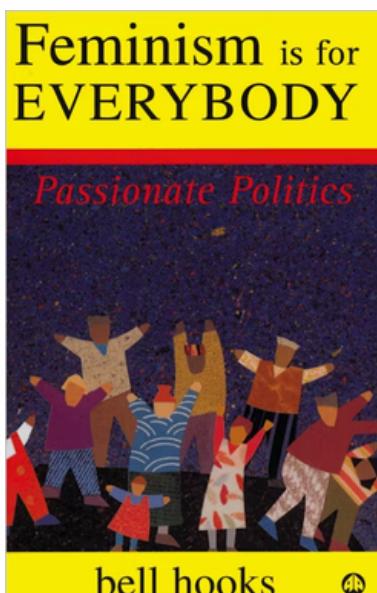
This month's Hot Topics Seminar focused on Benign Gynecological Pain. We were joined by Dr. Asha McClurg and Dr. Vanessa Miller, who tag-teamed chronic pelvic pain management and research. Thank you everyone who came out and made this seminar a success!



NC Diaper Bank

We finished out our last NC Diaper Bank volunteer shift of the semester! We are so grateful for everyone who came out to help - we were able to help pack 8000 diapers which would go to help 266 toddlers in North Carolina!

WHMC BOOK RECOMMENDATION OF THE MONTH



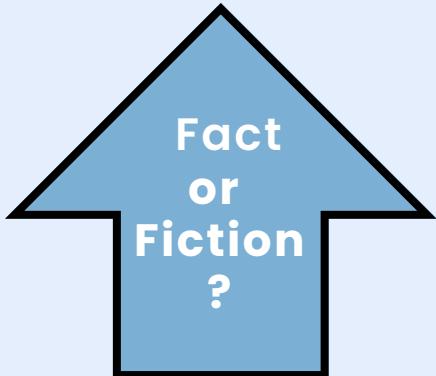
Read through [UNC Library](#)

Feminism Is For Everybody: Passionate Politics by bell hooks

In honor of Emancipation Day in June, the WHMC highlights a prolific African American writer, Gloria Jean Watkins, better known by her pen name, bell hooks. Her writings examine the intersection between gender, race, and class.

This book serves as a perfect introduction to feminist theory, addressing misconceptions and emphasizing its vital role in creating an equitable society. hooks explores how the patriarchy not only limits women's freedoms, but also places unrealistic, harmful norms on men. She ends with a strong call to action and encourages readers to become involved in the feminist movement through education and advocacy.

THE FDA DIDN'T MANDATE THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN CLINICAL TRIALS UNTIL 1993



This AAMC article highlights how decades of excluding women—especially those of reproductive age—from clinical trials, starting with a 1977 FDA policy, have led to major gaps in understanding and treating women's health.

Although this policy was reversed in 1993, women, particularly women of color, remain underrepresented in research. This lack of inclusion has resulted in higher rates of adverse drug reactions in women and poor understanding of conditions like heart disease, endometriosis, and menopause. Experts now call for women to be routinely included in studies and for research data to be analyzed by both sex and race to address these disparities.

For more: [Why we know so little about women's health](#)

GET INVOLVED WITH THE WHMC!



Visit our website!

Submit your work, recent publications, upcoming events, and more [here](#) to be featured in our monthly newsletter!



Share the WHMC listserv with others!

It's your WHMC communication engagement team here!

Kate Aberman



Sarah Rebbeor



Kylie Hutchison



Mehnaz Shafquat



Emily Perou



We're looking for your submissions! This is a space for a community bulletin – a place to look for research or work positions, fill professional needs, submit shoutouts, and submit photos to be used in future newsletters!