



The University of Arizona College of Medicine Phoenix /
Banner - University Medical Center Phoenix

Department of OBGYN – Vision Statement

"... where patients thrive, learners grow, discovery is valued,
and everyone is proud to work."

Ob Gyn HEALTH Newsletter

Initiatives to advance clinical care, spark learning, innovation and training

In this issue:

- Reframing Menopausal Hormone Therapy and the Emerging Role of Testosterone in Sexual Health by Dr. Shaída Molloy
- Cardio—Obstetrics Update by Dr. Steven Calvin
- Advancing Pelvic Floor Health Through Comprehensive, Multidisciplinary Care by Dr. Olivia Cardenas-Trowers
- Successes in Research by Dr. Pamela Garcia-Filion

Welcome and News from the Chair

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Summer 2026 issue of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology Newsletter. As I reflect on the past several months, I am struck by the remarkable energy, dedication, and innovation that define this department — and by how much we have accomplished together in a relatively short period of time.

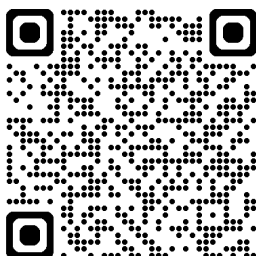
This issue highlights the meaningful strides being made across our divisions, each of which is contributing to a broader vision of comprehensive, patient-centered women's health care.

In the area of menopause medicine, our team is embracing updated evidence, expanding access to individualized hormone therapy, and incorporating emerging treatments for sexual health and overall well-being. In Maternal-Fetal Medicine, we are proud to announce the development of a dedicated Cardio-Obstetrics Program, a milestone that reflects our commitment to addressing one of the most urgent challenges in maternal health and positions Banner - University Medical Center Phoenix as a statewide leader in high-risk pregnancy care. Our Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery division continues to expand both its clinical reach and community presence, bringing specialized pelvic floor care to women across the valley while fostering the multidisciplinary collaborations that lead to better outcomes.

Our research enterprise is equally thriving. Residents and fellows have presented at prestigious regional and national meetings, earned well-deserved recognition for their scholarly work, and contributed to a growing body of peer-reviewed literature. Their curiosity and commitment to discovery reflect the strength of our academic mission.

None of this is possible without the talent, compassion, and tireless effort of every member of this department. I am proud of what we are building together and excited for what lies ahead.

Rosanne M. Kho, MD
Professor and Chair, Dept Ob Gyn
UAZ COMP / BUMCP



Scan QR code to link to our website

Reframing Menopausal Hormone Therapy and the Emerging Role of Testosterone in Sexual Health

Dr. Shaida Molloy

Section of Sexual Health and Menopause Medicine

“From outdated warnings to personalized care, the way we treat menopause is being rewritten—and our team is leading the way.”

The landscape of care for patients at all stages of the menopause transition is undergoing a significant shift, driven by updated interpretations of long-standing evidence and the emergence of therapies targeting sexual health. One of the most impactful recent developments is the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s 2025 decision to remove the boxed (“black box”) warning from menopausal hormone therapy (MHT)¹.

Originally instituted in 2003 following early Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) data, the boxed warning emphasized risks of cardiovascular disease, breast cancer, and dementia, contributing to a dramatic decline in menopause hormone therapy use. However, subsequent analyses have demonstrated that these risks were overstated, particularly as the WHI population was older (mean age 63 years) and not representative of typical menopausal patients. Contemporary evidence now supports a “timing hypothesis,” showing that initiation of MHT in women younger than 60 years or within 10 years of menopause onset is associated with a more favorable risk-benefit profile, including neutral or reduced risks of coronary heart disease and mortality². The removal of the boxed warning reflects a shift toward individualized, evidence-based counseling and is expected to improve access to effective symptom management.

In parallel, increased attention is being paid to female sexual dysfunction, which affects a substantial proportion of women at all stages of the menopause transition. Testosterone therapy has emerged as an evidence-based option for carefully selected patients. Clinical guidelines from the Menopause Society support the use of testosterone therapy in postmenopausal patients, though data has been published to support the use in patients who are earlier in their menopause transition³. This data also suggests testosterone therapy provides benefits beyond sexual function, including improvement in energy/fatigue, depression, irritability, and overall global wellbeing. Ongoing research is necessary to further explore these benefits which we continue to develop in our practice. It is critical for patients to be guided by providers who are educated in selecting, educating, and monitoring patients appropriately to ensure safety as is the case with our providers at the Banner Women’s Institute.

These developments signal a broader paradigm shift: menopause transition management is moving beyond risk aversion toward a comprehensive, patient-centered approach that prioritizes both symptom relief and quality of life, including sexual well-being.

References

1. HHS Advances Women’s Health, Removes Misleading FDA Warnings on Hormone Replacement Therapy. Nov 11, 2025. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/hhs-advances-womens-health-removes-misleading-fda-warnings-hormone-replacement-therapy>
2. Pinkerton JV, Stovall DW, Kightlinger RS. *Advances in the treatment of menopausal symptoms*. N Engl J Med. 2018;379(2):170–180. doi:10.1056/NEJMc1714787
3. Elggren CW, Iverson CH, Morris MD, Cooper-Leavitt EF, Parker G, Richardson AW, Reynolds AP, Cortes PM, Bikman BT, Reynolds PR. Testosterone Replacement Therapy in Women Is Associated with Improved Symptom Burden and Favorable Biomarker Changes: A Retrospective Observational Study. *Journal of Personalized Medicine*. 2026; 16(5):231. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jpm16050231>



For provider referrals, please call: 602-747-1289

To schedule an appointment, please call: 602-521-5700

Cardio-Obstetrics Update

Dr. Steven Calvin

Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine

“When a mother’s failing heart and her unborn son’s survival hung in the balance, Banner University’s teams came together—and now they’re building Arizona’s first dedicated Cardio-Obstetrics Program to ensure no family faces that moment alone.”

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States, accounting for nearly 25% of all maternal deaths nationally. In Arizona, data from the Arizona Maternal Mortality Review Program has consistently identified cardiac conditions as among the most preventable causes of maternal death. BUMCP is Arizona’s only academic medical center with both a high-volume Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM) division and comprehensive cardiology subspecialty coverage, including adult congenital heart disease (ACHD), advanced heart failure, interventional cardiology, electrophysiology, and cardiac anesthesia. There are major needs in Arizona:

- Current cardio-obstetrics care is fragmented between separate cardiology and obstetric providers.
- Delivery planning for high-risk cardiac patients is often reactive rather than proactive.
- There is a lack of standardized, evidence-based care pathways for managing cardiovascular disease in pregnancy.
- Inconsistent postpartum cardiovascular follow-up is common, leaving patients vulnerable to deterioration after delivery.

A recent inspiring B-UMCP clinical story, told with permission, has a happy ending. In April of 2025 Jessica Navarro faced serious heart complications during pregnancy. She was admitted in heart failure due to severe inherited coronary artery disease at 20 weeks’ gestation. Stenting or coronary artery bypass were impossible, and an eventual heart transplant was the only option. The situation was life-threatening and a previsible delivery was discussed.

The B-UMCP cardiology team worked steadily to tune Jessica’s heart up as much as possible. Jessica and her husband Alex have five daughters, and an ultrasound showed this baby was a boy. The choices and risks were agonizing. But Jessica’s heart function improved a bit. Could delivery be delayed to give this little boy a fighting chance in the hands of the neonatal team? The initial goal was 24 weeks, but she made it to 28 weeks.

After some time in the NICU, little Ezekiel is thriving at one year of age (see photo). His parents are grateful for the care that mother and baby received at B-UMCP. Jessica is currently stable while awaiting a heart transplant under the care of the Banner Heart Transplant team. This story highlights the power of clinical collaboration between the Cardiology and Obstetrics teams at Banner - University Medical Center Phoenix and underscores the need for a formal, structured, multidisciplinary Banner Cardio-Obstetrics Program.

The groundwork for this program began through the dedicated efforts of Dr. Kathy Mostajeran, graduating MFM fellow, who has helped advance this important clinical initiative before returning home to Houston, Texas, where she will continue providing exceptional care. Her cardiology partner in this effort has been Dr. Ambar Andrade. Together, their work has helped lay the foundation for a program that is still evolving, but already demonstrates the strength of multidisciplinary care at B-UMCP.

The Cardio-Obstetrics Program at B-UMCP will be jointly led by Maternal–Fetal Medicine and Cardiology subspecialists. The program will provide coordinated, evidence-based, and patient-centered care for pregnant and postpartum patients with cardiovascular disease through a multidisciplinary model that brings together the expertise needed to care for these high-risk patients.

Importantly, the Cardio-Obstetrics Program will be the first dedicated program of its kind in the state of Arizona. It positions B-UMCP as a statewide referral hub and regional leader in the management of cardiovascular disease in pregnancy, directly addressing one of the leading causes of maternal morbidity and mortality.

Through this program, B-UMCP is not only expanding access to highly specialized care, but also building a model for how collaboration, innovation, and academic medicine can improve outcomes for mothers, babies, and families across Arizona.



For provider referrals, please call: 602-747-1289

To schedule an appointment, please call: 602-521-5700

Advancing Pelvic Floor Health Through Comprehensive, Multidisciplinary Care

Dr. Olivia Cardenas-Trowers

Division of Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery

“From community awareness to cutting-edge care, Banner University’s Urogynecology team is breaking the silence around pelvic floor disorders and transforming lives for women across Arizona.”

Public awareness of pelvic floor disorders continues to grow, particularly following Pelvic Health Awareness Month in May. As part of these efforts, I recently appeared on Fox 10 Phoenix to discuss pelvic floor conditions affecting women during pregnancy and the postpartum period. Community outreach initiatives such as this help educate patients about symptoms that are often overlooked or normalized and reinforce the importance of seeking specialized evaluation and treatment. At Banner—University Medicine Phoenix, we are committed to advancing both public awareness and access to comprehensive pelvic floor care for women throughout Arizona.

Pelvic floor disorders—including urinary incontinence, overactive bladder, pelvic organ prolapse, pelvic pain, and bowel dysfunction—can significantly impact quality of life. Although these conditions become increasingly common with age, many women first experience symptoms during the peripartum period. Early recognition and timely intervention can improve outcomes and help women return to the activities that matter most to them.

At Banner-University Medicine Phoenix, we provide comprehensive, evidence-based pelvic floor care that distinguishes us as a regional referral center for women throughout Arizona. Our Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery program offers the full spectrum of treatment options, ranging from conservative therapies to advanced surgical management. Patients have access to specialized diagnostic testing, including multichannel urodynamics and office cystoscopy, as well as minimally invasive office-based procedures such as intradetrusor botulinum toxin injections and percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation.

Our program is equally committed to collaborative, multidisciplinary care. We work closely with pelvic floor physical therapists, gastroenterologists, colorectal surgeons, primary care physicians, and obstetric providers to develop individualized treatment plans tailored to each patient's goals and needs. This team-based approach ensures that women receive comprehensive evaluation and coordinated care across all aspects of pelvic health.

As awareness continues to grow, our mission remains clear: to provide compassionate, innovative, and patient-centered care while advancing education about pelvic floor disorders throughout our community. By combining clinical expertise, multidisciplinary collaboration, and a full range of treatment options, we are helping women restore function, improve quality of life, and regain confidence at every stage of life.

References

1. Nygaard IE, et al. Prevalence of symptomatic pelvic floor disorders in US women. JAMA. 2008;300(11):1311-1316.
2. Woodley SJ, et al. Pelvic floor muscle training for prevention and treatment of urinary and fecal incontinence in antenatal and postnatal women. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2020;5:CD007471.
3. ACOG Practice Bulletin No. 214: Pelvic Organ Prolapse. Obstet Gynecol. 2019;134:e126-e142.



For provider referrals, please call: 602-747-1289

To schedule an appointment, please call: 602-521-5700

Successes in Research

Dr. Pamela Garcia-Filion

Research Section

“Making their mark in scholarship, B-UMCP Ob Gyn residents and fellows are earning recognition at regional and national meetings and contributing meaningful research across the field of women’s health.”

Research continues to be a cornerstone of academic excellence within the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the 2025–2026 academic year has been another productive year for resident and fellow scholarship. Our trainees presented their work at regional and national meetings, including the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), the Society of Gynecologic Surgeons (SGS), the University of Arizona College of Medicine–Phoenix Academic Excellence Day (AED), the Western Association of Canadian, American, and Mexican Pathologists (WCPAG), and the Phoenix Obstetrics and Gynecology Society (POGS).

Our annual Scholarly Project Day (SPD), held on April 8, showcased the breadth and quality of trainee-led research ([list](#)). Participants included all chief residents, three PGY-3 residents, one MFM fellow, and one MIGS fellow. This year also marked the first implementation of our revised scholarly curriculum, in which residents present their primary research during the PGY-3 year and dedicate the chief resident year to dissemination through presentations and publications.

Research awards were presented to residents Tatiahna Rivera-Rodriguez, MD, and Megan Sluga, MD, and fellow Kathy Mostajeran, DO, for outstanding scholarly achievement. Departmental representation was also strong at AED, where four residents and one fellow presented their work. Drs. Rivera-Rodriguez and Mary Nowlen earned awards for Best Resident Poster Presentation, while Dr. Mostajeran received first prize for Best Fellow Podium Presentation. In addition, projects led by Drs. Rivera-Rodriguez and Nowlen received Best Research Awards at the 2026 POGS Research Symposium.

Resident and fellow projects addressed diverse topics, including resident education, immune receptor profiling in endometriosis, virtual reality surgical training, fetal heart monitoring, artificial intelligence, and population health outcomes. These efforts continue to translate into scholarly productivity, with 11 peer-reviewed publications in 2026 to date and four additional manuscripts pending submission or under review.



For provider referrals, please call: 602-747-1289

To schedule an appointment, please call: 602-521-5700