



FEMALE PELVIC MEDICINE: SEEK THE EXPERTS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CARE

Pelvic pain, prolapse, and incontinence can rob your quality of life. The world-renowned physicians at Athena Women's Institute for Pelvic Health can help you get it back.

"Pelvic problems are hard to talk about, but we listen with compassion, preserve a patient's dignity, and offer a full range of conservative and surgical options to restore confidence and normal function," says medical director Dr. Elizabeth Babin.

At Athena, care is approached individually and comprehensively. Conservative strategies such as medication, behavior modification, or simply avoiding certain foods can make a big difference in controlling too-frequent urination. Devices such as pessaries support pelvic organs to relieve pressure, and urethral plugs can provide temporary control for special activities.

State-of-the-art Surgery

When surgery is the best option, Dr. Babin and Dr. Timothy McKinney are international leaders in minimally invasive approaches. Laparoscopy, in which a small probe with a camera is inserted through a tiny incision, is just one of their specialized techniques. Ninety-nine percent of their procedures—including hysterectomy,

sacral colpopexy, and fistula repairs—are performed as outpatient procedures, getting patients home within 24 hours.

"We get referrals from all over the country," notes Dr. McKinney, who, in 1989, was one of the first surgeons worldwide to perform laparoscopic hysterectomy. "Minimally invasive surgery is our hallmark, not something we just perform occasionally. I haven't 'opened' an abdomen in more than a decade."

Dr. Babin holds one of the region's only certificates from the Council of Gynecologic Endoscopy recognizing her special skills in minimally invasive surgery. In addition to

traditional laparoscopy, Athena surgeons are experienced with robotic-assisted surgery.

"We give patients abundant choices," continues Dr. McKinney, "but we won't recommend a treatment just because it's new; we recommend what's best for the patient."

They also serve as the regional referral for difficult surgical cases and patients who have complications from prior surgeries.

Pioneers in the Field

With more than 35 years' combined experience, Athena surgeons were instrumental in defining the medical subspecialty of female pelvic health, and fostered many technological advances used widely today.

They are world leaders in research for urodynamics, interstitial cystitis, vaginal pain, and prolapse.

"We are dedicated to advancing our specialty with scientific research," Dr. McKinney says, "but we never lose sight of the personal side of the practice. We are all about quality, customized care."

Concludes Dr. Babin: "We are passionate about giving women back their lifestyles."



Terminology 101

Formally called "urogynecology," the name of the specialty practiced by Drs. McKinney and Babin is now "female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery." The doctors are faculty for one of the few certified fellowship programs for this specialty in the country.

AID FOR AFRICA

Athena Women's Institute for Pelvic Health is proud to provide services—such as fistula repair—to women in Africa through the International Organization for Women and Development, Inc. To donate to this worthy cause, visit iowd.org.



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