



Welcome to our first monthly newsletter to stay in touch with our patients and update you on practice news and health topics of interest.



## Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October was breast cancer awareness month, making this a perfect time to point out that in 2020 it is estimated that 276,480 new invasive breast cancer cases will be diagnosed in women in the U.S. and another 48,530 new non-invasive breast cancer cases. Approximately 42,000 women die from this disease each year in the U.S.. 64% of breast cancer cases are found at the localized stage (meaning there is no sign the cancer has spread outside the breast), and the 5-year survival rate is 99%. The largest percentage of breast cancers occur in women over 50; breast cancer also affects younger women. Behind skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women.

The cases of non-invasive breast cancer are most often found before any symptoms are apparent. These diagnoses are made from a screening mammogram. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) recommends that every woman age 40 and over (or earlier if there is a family history of breast cancer) have a screening mammogram annually. Mammogram is the most effective and reliable way to discover breast cancers early when they are most treatable. Your health insurance preventive care services cover mammograms.

There are some risk factors for breast cancer, including being female, age 50 or over, having a family history of breast cancer, being overweight, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and taking hormones. There is no indication that you can stop from developing breast cancer, but reducing your risk factors is helpful. If you have a family history of breast cancer, then discussing this with your physician and taking additional precautions, such as genetic testing, allows you to be proactive in protecting your health.

We recognize that many women do not get screening mammograms due to the inconvenience of going to your gynecologist and then another visit to a mammography facility. We have brought screening mammography into our office so that you can complete this during your annual exam.

[Click here](#) to learn more about our mammography services.

Breast cancer is of concern to all women, but staying current with your mammograms and being aware of your risk factors can help you to reduce your chances of a diagnosis.



## Updated COVID Office Policies

We are following CDC guidelines for dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic. The safety of our patients and staff is our primary concern, and our policies exemplify this. [Visit our website](#) for our protocols. We appreciate you responding to our screening questions and following our protocols when you come to our office.



## Votiva

[Votiva](#) is a very effective vaginal restoration procedure that is non-hormonal, non-surgical, and comfortable, done right in our office.

Vaginal restoration (tightening) addresses several feminine health issues resulting from normal aging, menopause, and the effects of experiencing vaginal deliveries. Using bipolar radio frequency, the Votiva treatments restore vaginal tissue by increasing collagen production and tightening vulvar laxity.

Many women suffer from stress urinary incontinence, vaginal dryness, loss of elastin, laxity and wrinkled appearance of the labia and vulva, lack of sensation, low blood flow, and lack of sensitivity during sex. These issues affect women of all ages, and transversely Votiva is helpful for women of all ages.

If you are experiencing any of these issues, please [call our office](#) to schedule an appointment to discuss Votiva treatments with your provider.



## Preventive Care Services and Your Health Insurance

Preventive Care is routine health care, including screenings, checkups, and patient counseling, to help prevent illnesses, disease, or other health problems. There may be some exceptions, so it's important to know what qualifies as Preventive Care and what questions to ask your doctor to understand what may incur extra costs.

Preventive Care is covered at 100% when: 1) provided by a doctor in-network with your insurance plan, 2) claim is filed as a preventive visit, and 3) services are identified as Preventive Care under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). It is essential to verify that Gynecology and Laparoscopic Surgeons (GLSI) is an in-network provider in your plan. When changing plans, you should research to confirm that GLSI is an in-network provider under your new plan so that you can maintain continuity of care. Our staff is happy to help you understand your benefits if you have questions.

Knowing your plan benefits, in-network providers, and deductibles will help you obtain care at the lowest out of office visit. Please [call our office](#) if you have questions about your current coverage and our office. [Visit our website](#) to view our complete insurance policies.



## Ask Your Gynecologist

Ask Your Gynecologist is a column on our website where we answer patients' questions. It is another way that we support our patients and provide education whenever we can. This month's column is on Osteoporosis. [Click here](#) to see the question and answer. Also, please [email us](#) any topics you would like to see included in this column.

**Wear your mask, enjoy the fall weather, stay healthy, and call on us when we can be of help!**

***Dr. Roberts, Dr. Hilbert, Dr. Barbee, Pam Lawlor, RN, AAD, WHNP, and our entire staff!***