

STATE-OF-THE-ART BREAST CLINIC DIAGNOSES EARLIER, DELIVERS BETTER OUTCOMES

“We do what we do because we care deeply,” says Dr. Rachel Brem, Director of Breast Imaging and Intervention. “It’s because of our personal connections with breast cancer that we are so driven to help women beat this and live their best lives.”



THE COMPREHENSIVE BREAST CENTER is home to what may be the best high-risk clinic in the country. Dr. Rebecca Kaltman, Medical Oncologist, focuses her time and attention on genetic counseling and risk assessment.

“When assessing risk, we need to review both sides of a woman’s family history back three generations to see definitive patterns. Other factors that increase risk include dense breast tissue, complicated breast exams, alcohol use, and diet and exercise. Jewish women may be at a higher risk, and those who have only male relatives or are adopted have uncertain risk due to incomplete family histories,” Kaltman says. “If there’s any question about your risk level, please talk to your family, learn as much as you can about your family history, and come to us for a consultation. We can help you live a long and healthy life.”

The doctors who work at the George Washington University Hospital Comprehensive Breast Center describe it as “for women, by women,” and say it “feels more like a spa than a doctor’s office.” In fact, part of the Center’s integrative approach to medicine includes complementary therapies, like massage therapy and reiki. Dr. Rachel Brem, Director of Breast Imaging and Intervention, and Dr. Christine Teal, Chief of Breast Surgery, believe the uniqueness of the clinic helps patients feel better cared for and aids in reducing stress levels.

Beyond such trappings, though, lies something far more important: a passion for providing outstanding breast cancer care.

As part of a world-class academic medical center dedicated to education and research, Brem and Teal and their team of female radiologists, surgeons, and oncologists offer a level of medical expertise that is unrivaled. George Washington University’s reputation and



Dr. Rebecca Kaltman, Medical Oncologist; Dr. Rachel Brem, Director of Breast Imaging and Intervention; and Dr. Christine Teal, Chief of Breast Surgery

position in the field also afford the Comprehensive Breast Center access to cutting-edge diagnostic technology and treatment protocols that virtually no other hospital can offer.

Diagnostic Innovations
Molecular Breast Imaging (MBI) is just one of the advanced tech-

niques Brem uses in diagnosing breast cancer.

“It enables us to find tumors we can’t find with any other technology, and it’s especially effective in detecting breast cancer in women who are at higher-than-average risk for the disease or who have dense breast tissue,” she explains.

And as a new tech tester, Brem

also has access to the only FDA-approved automated whole breast ultrasound, which can find cancer missed by more traditional mammography and in patients with no familial or other high-risk factors.

Advancements in Treating Breast Cancer

Following diagnosis, a multidisciplinary team convenes to study each case and make treatment recommendations. “Using genetic biomarkers found within a tumor is a breakthrough,” says Teal. “It helps us make recommendations that are measurable improvements for the patient. We may, for example, exclude chemotherapy for patients who have a low score.”

The team also does their best to accommodate patient preferences—especially concerning cosmesis—by performing nipple-sparing and Hidden Scar™ procedures. Oncology plastic surgeons may also perform certain procedures in conjunction with a breast cancer surgery, and patients are invited to participate in clinical trials when appropriate.

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