

Fourth Annual Gynecologic Pain Research Virtual Meeting

May 12, 2026 | 12-5 p.m. Eastern Time

Gynecologic Health and Disease Branch (GHDB)
Division of Extramural Research (DER)
Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and
Human Development (NICHD)
National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Purpose and Scope

The goal of the Gynecologic Pain Research Virtual Meeting is to provide an opportunity for investigators to share their research advances and to foster collaboration, resulting in promoting and advancing gynecologic pain research. This meeting will bring together investigators in the field of gynecology and pain research, clinicians, and patients to spur interest, share ideas, and discuss emerging trends within gynecologic pain research.

This meeting will cover the following major topics related to gynecologic pain, including:

- Endometriosis-associated pain
- Fibroid-associated pain
- Vulvar pain
- Chronic pelvic pain
- Menstrual pain
- Female genital mutilation/cutting
- Gynecologic pain management/treatment
 - Neuromodulation
 - AI and machine learning
 - Rehabilitation

Speakers will give an overarching view of hot topics within their field of expertise, share their recent research findings, and discuss challenges, gaps, and potential future directions.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute
of Child Health and Human Development

Agenda

- 12:00 p.m.** **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Candace Tingen, Ph.D.
Chief, GHDB, NICHD, NIH
- Rohan Hazra, M.D.***
Acting Director, NICHD, NIH
- 12:10 p.m.** **Overview of GHDB and Gynecologic Pain Program**
Helena Ahn, Ph.D.
Program Officer, GHDB, NICHD, NIH
- 12:20 p.m.** **NIH HEAL Initiative® Training and Career Development Programs**
Elizabeth Sypek, Ph.D.
Program Officer, HEAL, NINDS, NIH
- 12:30 p.m.** **The NIDDK Multi-Disciplinary Approach to the Study of Chronic Pelvic Pain (MAPP) Research Network**
Chris Mullins, Ph.D.
Program Officer, NIDDK, NIH

Session I

Moderator: [Helena Ahn, Ph.D.](#)

- 12:40 p.m.** **The Enigma of Endometriosis: Pain Mechanisms and Misdiagnoses**
Tamer Seckin, M.D.
Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra Northwell New York
Attending Physician, Lenox Hill Hospital
Founder of The Endometriosis Foundation of America (EndoFound)
- 1:00 p.m.** **Patient Perspective: Turning Pain into Purpose**
Diana Falzone
The Endometriosis Foundation of America (EndoFound)

- 1:15 p.m.** **JNK Inhibitors Mitigate Pain and Inflammation in Endometriosis**
Diana Monsivais, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Pathology and Immunology, Baylor College of Medicine
- 1:35 p.m.** **Actionable mHealth Measures in Women's Health: Patient-Generated Data Methods**
Ipek Ensari, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Windreich Department of Artificial Intelligence and Human Health, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- 1:55 p.m.** **Uterine Fibroids and Pelvic Pain**
Elizabeth A. (Ebbie) Stewart, M.D.
Consultant, Division of Reproductive Endocrinology, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Surgery, Mayo Clinic Alix College of Medicine
Center Director, COEQUaL Specialized Center for Uterine Fibroids and Health Disparities
- 2:15 p.m.** **Vulvodynia: Prevalent, Debilitating, Poorly Understood**
An evolution of research exploring co-morbidity and biopsychosocial hypotheses
Bernard L. Harlow, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Boston University School of Public Health

2:35 P.M. **BREAK**

Session II

Moderator: Leigh Allen, Ph.D. (Program Officer, GHDB, NICHD)

- 2:50 p.m.** **Uncovering Individual Differences in Dysmenorrhea: The Potential Role of the Vaginal Microbiome**
Chen X. Chen, Ph.D., R.N., M.B.B.S., FAAN
Professor & Gladys E Sorensen Endowed Professor
University of Arizona College of Nursing
- 3:10 p.m.** **Posterior Tibial Nerve Neuromodulation for the Treatment of Dysmenorrhea**
Daniel Burnett, M.D., M.B.A.
CEO, Theranova, LLC

- 3:30 p.m.** **Signal in the Noise: AI and Machine Learning Applications in Gynecologic Pain Care**
Margaret Melville, M.B.A.
Co-Founder and CEO, Lasa Health
- 3:50 p.m.** **Beyond the Pain Pill: Novel Rehabilitation Approaches for Patients with Chronic Pelvic Pain**
Caitlyn Tivy, D.P.T., O.C.S.
Chief Clinical Officer, Cervu Health, Inc.
- 4:10 p.m.** **The Experience of Sexual Pain for Those Affected by Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting**
Jennifer Connor, Ph.D., LMFT
Associate Professor, Eli Coleman Institute of Sexual and Gender Health, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, University of Minnesota Medical School
- 4:30 p.m.** **Discussion**
Moderator: Tara L. DeYampert, M.D., M.P.H., FACOG
Program Officer, DER, NICHD
- 5:00 P.M.** **ADJOURN**