

MEET THE PHYSICIANS

Introducing Debra Cohn, DO, and Melissa Palma, MD

In late 2021, Milford Regional welcomed obstetricians/gynecologists Debra Cohn, DO, and Melissa Palma, MD, to the Milford Regional Women's Health practice located at 169 West Main Street in Hopkinton.



Dr. Cohn specializes in both routine and atypical gynecologic and obstetrical care, minimally invasive surgical procedures, contraception and family planning. She has additional training in osteopathic manipulative medicine. Dr. Cohn completed her residency at Jersey Shore University Medical Center and is a member of the American College of Osteopathic Association, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists.



Dr. Palma provides general gynecologic care for women of all ages, and both general and high-risk obstetrics care. She also specializes in minimally invasive surgical procedures. Dr. Palma received her medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine and completed her residency at Saint Joseph Hospital in Chicago. She holds teaching appointments at Tufts and Boston University School of Medicine.



What drove your decision to specialize in Obstetrics and Gynecology?

Dr. Cohn: I chose obstetrics and gynecology as my specialty because it allows me to perform a good amount of surgery, but I also get to take care of patients from adolescence to menopause and form great relationships along the way.

Dr. Palma: I had always pictured myself as a pediatrician. However, my Obstetrics and Gynecology rotation in medical school convinced me that this specialty was my calling. I love teaching young women about their bodies and how to plan for (or prevent) pregnancy, and then helping to bring that life into the world.

Why did you decide to practice in Massachusetts?

Dr. Cohn: I grew up in Westborough and wanted to be close to my family. I chose Milford Regional Medical Center specifically because it is a small community hospital that is affiliated with the academic medical centers in Boston and Worcester.

Dr. Palma: I was born and raised in Massachusetts, and went to college and medical school here. After spending some time in the Midwest, I knew Massachusetts was where I wanted to raise my own family and begin my career. I began my career in Framingham in 2006 but made the transition to Milford Regional Medical Center more recently as I saw the growth and development of the medical center and knew the patient care opportunities here would only continue to expand.

How do you establish a connection with your patients?

Dr. Cohn: I think the most important way to establish trust and a connection with a patient is to listen to what they have to say. When you truly listen to someone, you can learn a lot and then find the best options to be able to help them or solve whatever problem they may be having.

Dr. Palma: I think one of the best ways to connect with

patients is to share a little about myself as we progress through the visit. I think patients really appreciate hearing that they are not alone in some situations and it helps them see that their physician is human too.

What advances in your field are you excited about?

Dr. Cohn: Like with most specialties, advancements and improvements in care are steady. It is quite exciting to implement the most up-to-date care for my patients.

Dr. Palma: Although not exactly a "new" advancement, I consider in vitro fertilization (IVF) one of the miracles of our specialty. It is so rewarding to see the joy on patients' faces when they come to me for their first prenatal visit after undergoing their fertility treatments.

How do your patients describe your bedside manner?

Dr. Cohn: Patients have described me as calm and a good listener. I work hard to be both, so I'm glad my patients pick up on these attributes and hope both provide them with confidence in my care.

Dr. Palma: I treat each patient as I would want to be treated myself. I aim to be compassionate and sympathetic and always try to make sure I explain everything as thoroughly as possible by using language that anyone can understand.

What have you found to be the most rewarding part of your chosen profession?

Dr. Cohn: The most rewarding part of my profession is treating women through the prime of their lives – from giving birth to going through menopause.

Dr. Palma: Definitely seeing the smiles on everyone's face when a new life enters the world!

Drs. Cohn and Palma see patients at Milford Regional Women's Health, located at 169 West Main Street, in Hopkinton. Call 508.321.2840 to schedule an appointment. ■