

Fetal Care Center Team

Margot Ahronovich, MD, Medical Director



Dr. Ahronovich serves as medical director of the Inova Children's Hospital Fetal Care Center. In addition to her role leading the Fetal Care Center, Dr. Ahronovich is a neonatologist in the Inova Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Dr. Ahronovich completed her residency and fellowship at Children's National Medical Center.

Melissa Eatherly, FNP-BC, Nurse Practitioner



Melissa is a board certified Nurse Practitioner who leads the Fetal Care Center. She provides support, patient care coordination, and education for families. Prior to earning her Master's degree at George Washington University, Melissa worked for many years as a neonatal nurse and charge nurse at the Inova Children's Hospital Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Erin Caulfield, BSN, RN, IBCLC, Patient Navigator



Erin is a Registered Nurse who serves as a Patient Navigator at the Fetal Care Center. She provides patient care coordination, support, and education for families. Erin is a board certified Lactation Consultant with over 20 years of experience in the fields of Maternal and Neonatal Intensive Care nursing. She co-founded and developed the NICU Lactation Program at Inova Children's Hospital.

To more about the Fetal Care Center or to refer a patient, please call 703.776.6371 or visit our website at inovachildrens.org/fetal-care-program

About Inova Children's Hospital

As Northern Virginia's only pediatric tertiary care center, Inova Children's Hospital is a 226-bed, full-service children's hospital that provides the highest level of patient care. We are home to the only pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) and the most comprehensive Level IV neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Northern Virginia. We provide a complete range of expert, specialized children's services in more than 35 medical specialties, close to home.

About Inova Women's Hospital

At Inova Women's Hospital, we have a goal not just to provide today's healthcare, but the future of health. This means many things to us—providing quality care in the safest medical environment, educating the physicians and clinicians of tomorrow, emphasizing public awareness of women's disease to foster early detection and prevention; as well as challenging ourselves through our research efforts to lead the field in providing more personalized care to patients.

Inova Children's Hospital





One call to the Fetal Care Center patient navigator provides access to the entire care process - 703.776.6371

Inova Children's Hospital Fetal Care Center

Inova Children's Hospital Fetal Care Center provides a supportive team approach to pregnant women who are at risk or suspected of carrying a baby with a fetal concern. The goal of the Fetal Care Center is to provide accurate diagnosis and a coordinated delivery plan to meet the individualized needs of each patient. In addition, families are referred to specific pediatric providers that will be involved in the care of the baby after birth. The center provides a full continuum of care by combining the expertise of Inova Women's Hospital with highly specialized neonatologists and pediatric subspecialists of Inova Children's Hospital.

What sets this program apart from other area hospitals is the continuity of care the family receives as Inova Women's Hospital and Inova Children's Hospital are in the same location. Therefore, after delivery mother and baby remain in the same facility, close together.

What Patients Can Expect

A pregnant woman suspected of carrying a high risk baby will be referred to the Fetal Care Center by their obstetrician or maternal fetal medicine specialist. Once the specifics of your case are identified, the team will then facilitate recommended consultations and any further diagnostic testing to appropriately prepare for the birth of your baby. Throughout the pregnancy, the Fetal Care Team will provide ongoing support and education regarding your baby's diagnosis. If an intensive care unit stay is anticipated, tours by the team will be provided. Resources and education are offered including: what to expect in the delivery room, breast feeding/pumping, and an extended hospital stay. As delivery approaches, the Fetal Care Team will ensure that all specialists are coordinated for the arrival of your baby.

Obstetrics and Maternal Fetal Medicine

First trimester ultrasounds, comprehensive Level II ultrasound scans, as well as 3D and 4D ultrasounds are available through the Obstetricians and Maternal Fetal Medicine community practitioners who partner with the Fetal Care Center. Invasive diagnostic testing includes chorionic villus sampling (CVS) and amniocentesis. Noninvasive screening includes First Trimester Screen with nuchal translucency, cell free DNA (NIPT), and Carrier Screening per ACOG recommendations.

Inova Children's Hospital Congenital Heart Program

The Congenital Heart Program at Inova Children's Hospital has been caring for the hearts of our region's children for more than 25 years. Board certified pediatric cardiologists, electrophysiologists, anesthesiologists, radiologists, and congenital cardiac surgeons have dedicated their practice to helping children overcome complex congenital anomalies, including Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS) and other single ventricle syndromes. Fetal cardiologists partner with obstetricians, maternal fetal medicine specialists as well as other pediatric subspecialists to coordinate care for you and your baby. Each year, our pediatric cardiac surgeons perform approximately 300 surgeries with outcomes that outperform national benchmarks and standards.

Inova Children's Hospital Neuroscience Program

Inova Children's Neuroscience Program is uniquely qualified to evaluate and treat neurological conditions from birth and into adulthood.

Combining the expertise of Inova Children's Hospital with the specialty knowledge of Inova Neuroscience Institute, the program features a full complement of board-certified specialists who cover all aspects of inpatient and outpatient care from diagnosis and treatment to rehabilitation and long-term follow-up.

The pediatric neurosurgeons, neurologists, physical medicine and rehabilitation physicians, and other clinical team members are skilled in the diagnosis and treatment of the most complex congenital brain and spinal cord anomalies. Capabilities include the surgical and non-surgical treatment of Spina Bifida, hydrocephalus, Chiari malformation, tethered spinal cord, encephalocele and intracranial cystic masses.

Inova Children's Hospital Craniofacial Program

Inova Children's Hospital Craniofacial Program and its pediatric experts use a multi-disciplinary approach to evaluate and treat children with craniofacial abnormalities. Pediatric plastic surgeons, neurosurgeons, oral and maxillofacial surgeons, ENTs, dentists, audiologists, and speech and language pathologists see patients in a coordinated clinic model, led by a nurse navigator.

The Craniofacial Program is skilled in the treatment of cleft lip/palate, craniosynostosis, hemifacial microsomia, Pierre Robin Sequence, and other craniofacial abnormalities.

Inova Children's Hospital Surgical Care

The pediatric surgical team at Inova Children's Hospital provides compassionate family-centered care for infants with complex congenital defects of the abdominal wall, gastrointestinal system, and the lung. The surgeons are board-certified in Pediatric General and Thoracic surgery with expertise in the surgical and nonsurgical treatment of gastroschisis, omphalocele, congenital diaphragmatic hernia, intestinal atresia, and congenital cystic airway malformation of the lung.

Inova Children's Hospital Genetics and Inova Translational Medicine Institute

The division of Medical Genomics includes medical geneticists and genetic counselors who are able to provide expectant mothers with genetic testing and counseling for a variety of maternal and fetal diagnoses. In addition to clinical genetic testing that Inova is able to provide, the Inova Translational Medicine Institute focuses their research on identifying genomic causes for disease. If a rare or unknown genetic diagnosis is suspected, the Institute is able to perform full genome sequencing in order to help determine possible diagnosis.

Inova's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

Inova Children's Hospital is home to the region's only Level IV, comprehensive subspecialty NICU. The NICU is nationally ranked by U.S. News & World Report and consistently receives national recognition for its outcomes.

The 108-bed unit is staffed 24 hours a day by a multidisciplinary team of neonatal specialists, including round the clock in-house board-certified neonatologists, neonatal nurse practitioners and specialized nurses. Our NICU cares for high-risk infants requiring specialized care and observation.

Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU) and Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

Inova Children's Hospital is home to the region's only Pediatric Intensive Care And Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Units.

The unit is staffed 24 hours a day by a multidisciplinary team of board certified intensivists, pediatric intensive care practitioners, and critical care professionals. Our 26-bed PICU also serves as the postoperative care unit for the many pediatric surgery services available at Inova Children's Hospital, including cardiac, craniofacial, general and spinal surgeries as well as neurosurgery.

The 8-bed Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Unit provides specialized care for infants and children with congenital heart defects and heart disease. The unit has a specialized team of caregivers that are dedicated to caring for children's hearts, including cardiac intensivists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and specially trained nurses. Rooms within the unit were designed with complex cardiac care in mind, and are built with additional space and capabilities that caring for these complex patients require.

Patient and Family Support Services

Inova Children's Hospital is dedicated to family and patient-centered care and has a host of resources to help support children and their families during their stay. Throughout Inova Children's Hospital, our 24 hour visitation policy encourages parents to spend unlimited time with their children, truly creating a family centered approach.

Within the NICU, PICU, and CICU, Child Life Specialists assist with sibling visitation and education to ensure that older siblings have individualized support. Inside of the NICU a parent lounge provides a comfortable space for families to have a meal, rest, and work remotely. The March of Dimes organization provides family education and support throughout the NICU stay. On the 8th floor, where the PICU and CICU are located, the Ronald McDonald Family Room provides family respite. The Ronald McDonald House of Northern Virginia is located on the Inova Fairfax Campus. The house provides qualifying families a home away from home while their child is receiving care at Inova Children's Hospital.

Inova Children's Hospital boasts a wide range of specialty clinicians to support your child's care during the hospital stay. Dedicated lactation consultants will meet with each mother to provide education and resources. Each baby with an extended admission to the NICU or CICU will also have additional assistance from physical therapy, occupational therapy, registered dietitians, and respiratory therapists.