

You Complete Me: Nationally Recognized OB/GYN Clinic Treats The Whole Woman



From left, doctors Miriam Mackovic-Basic, Leilani Misajon Woodson and Antoaneta Muller of Complete Women Care. The practice has offices in Lakewood, Long Beach, San Pedro as well as a recently opened office on Naples Island in Long Beach. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Thomas McConville)

■ By **ASHLEIGH OLDLAND**
Staff Writer

Women's health issues have historically been considered taboo. In the 1800s, physicians would examine women's reproductive organs by touch alone – never making a visual diagnosis and rarely providing a treatment method. And while gynecologists today have an enormous capacity to help their female patients, many women remain unaware of the healthcare resources available to them. “There is a lack of understanding,”

explains Dr. Miriam Mackovic-Basic, medical director at Complete Women Care. “Certain diseases or conditions are so common and so widespread that there is a belief that they are normal. . . . No one in their clear mind, if you don't see well, would not get glasses and go around half blinded. But in women's health, when women get more mature, they go with diapers and pads rather than correct it because they don't know better.”

Specializing in obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN), Complete Women

Care, which has offices in Long Beach, Naples Island, Lakewood and San Pedro, was selected as one of the top OB/GYN practices in the U.S. for 2007, 2008 and 2009 by the Consumer Research Council of America.

“Our goal is simple,” Mackovic-Basic says. “We just want to be the best OB/GYN practice in the community and make our patients healthy and happy.”

Mackovic-Basic has delivered more than 4,000 babies in the last 16 years, but the veteran doctor is as enthusiastic

about her job today as she was while studying at the University of Zagreb School of Medicine in Croatia and later interning at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

“I have always wanted to work with women and promote their health and happiness and equality and make everyone aware of how much goodness women bring to society,” she says.

Providing more than just basic OB/GYN services, Complete Women Care is the only practice in the Greater Long Beach area to boast in-office tubal sterilization; an advanced Hydro ThermAblator device to seal blood vessels inside the uterus as an alternative to performing a hysterectomy; and free health coaching for all pregnant patients. Additionally, Complete Women Care is the testing site for a new, single-incision bladder sling.

The full-service gynecological practice features “almost anything that is available in women’s healthcare,” Mackovic-Basic says. That includes full urogynecological care; bladder tests; advanced repairs; routine exams; pelvic reconstruction; vaginal reconstruction; infertility care; 4-D ultrasound in real time; pelvic-floor computerized rehabilitation and stimulation; in-office bone density scans; and more.

Working in the field of obstetrics and gynecology allows doctors to experience a unique range of patient care, from basic checkups to childbirth to advanced surgery, says Dr. Leilani Misajon Woodson of Complete Women Care. Woodson, who knew her career path at age 7, when she received

a Fisher Price medical kit, enjoys the versatility of OB/GYN medicine. Woodson studied at the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California and completed her residency at Harbor-University of California, Los Angeles Medical Center.

“I personally thought I was going to be a surgeon when I first went to medical school, and then I realized I wanted more contact with my patient than just the surgery. I found that OB/GYN does that,” Woodson says. “And then there’s the obstetrics, and I absolutely love everything about pregnancy. I have three kids myself, so I practice what I preach.”

Woodson says the most important thing women can do for their health is to be proactive and observant of their bodies rather than accept medical issues interfering with their quality of life as normal.

“Minimally, at least once a year, see your gynecologist,” she says. “Don’t hesitate to come in for a new symptom, and don’t wait for it to get worse. It may be nothing, but it would be better to come in and get checked because it could be something.”

“Women in general tend to think of their problems as less than what they probably are,” Woodson adds. “We minimize our pain. We put the needs of our family, our kids, our husbands in front of our own. More women need to realize that [doctors] can probably help them – you don’t have to be wetting your pants, or you don’t have to be sitting there in pain.”

Having a doctor that makes patients feel comfortable is crucial to the suc-

cess of an OB/GYN practice, Woodson says. And Mackovic-Basic agrees.

“The secret is really having great physicians and staff who truly believe the patient is the most important thing,” Mackovic-Basic says. “Take care of the patients and love your patients – that is the essence of medicine.”

Longtime patient Dakeysha Dampeer has gone to Mackovic-Basic for the last 15 years.

“It was to the point where I told my husband, ‘We can’t move out of state until we finish having our family because there is nobody else that I want to care for me,’” says Dampeer, who has had two children since becoming Mackovic-Basic’s patient. “I know she has delivered thousands of children, but she made me feel like mine was the first child she’d delivered. . . . You don’t want to be looked at as just another chart, just another number. . . . If I ever move to another state, I will always go back to her for my yearly checkups.”

Complete Women Care Offices:

- Lakewood Office: 3650 E. South St. Suite 403 in Lakewood, 562/634-8812;
- Long Beach Office: Columbia Medical Building, 2840 Long Beach Blvd. Suite 330 in Long Beach, 562/424-8422;
- Naples Island Office: 5865 Naples Plaza in Long Beach, 562/343-2814;
- San Pedro Office: 1360 W. 6th St. Suite 165 in San Pedro, 310/832-2369

For more information about Complete Women Care, visit www.completewomencare.com. ■