

BCGX

The Direct-To-Women (DTW) revolution is reshaping the MedTech industry

By Sam Juraschka, Diana Cordova, Maria Alejandra Altet, and Alex Friedman

2026 Report

Intro

Women's health has long relied on devices not designed for women, diagnostics that overlook what matters most, and care pathways that make it hard to get clear answers. For many, this remains the everyday experience of care.

Today, women are no longer waiting for solutions or navigating slow, fragmented systems. They begin care on their own terms through online search, tracking apps, wearables, and at-home tests, often well before setting foot in a clinic.

As a result, the front door of women's health has moved outside the traditional system, giving rise to a new direct-to-women MedTech model. The pages ahead explore why this shift is accelerating, how innovators are redefining what's possible, and what MedTech organizations must build to remain where women turn first.



**innovate
her**

A BCG X offering to ignite and transform the woman's experience, by harnessing innovation to lead the next wave of growth

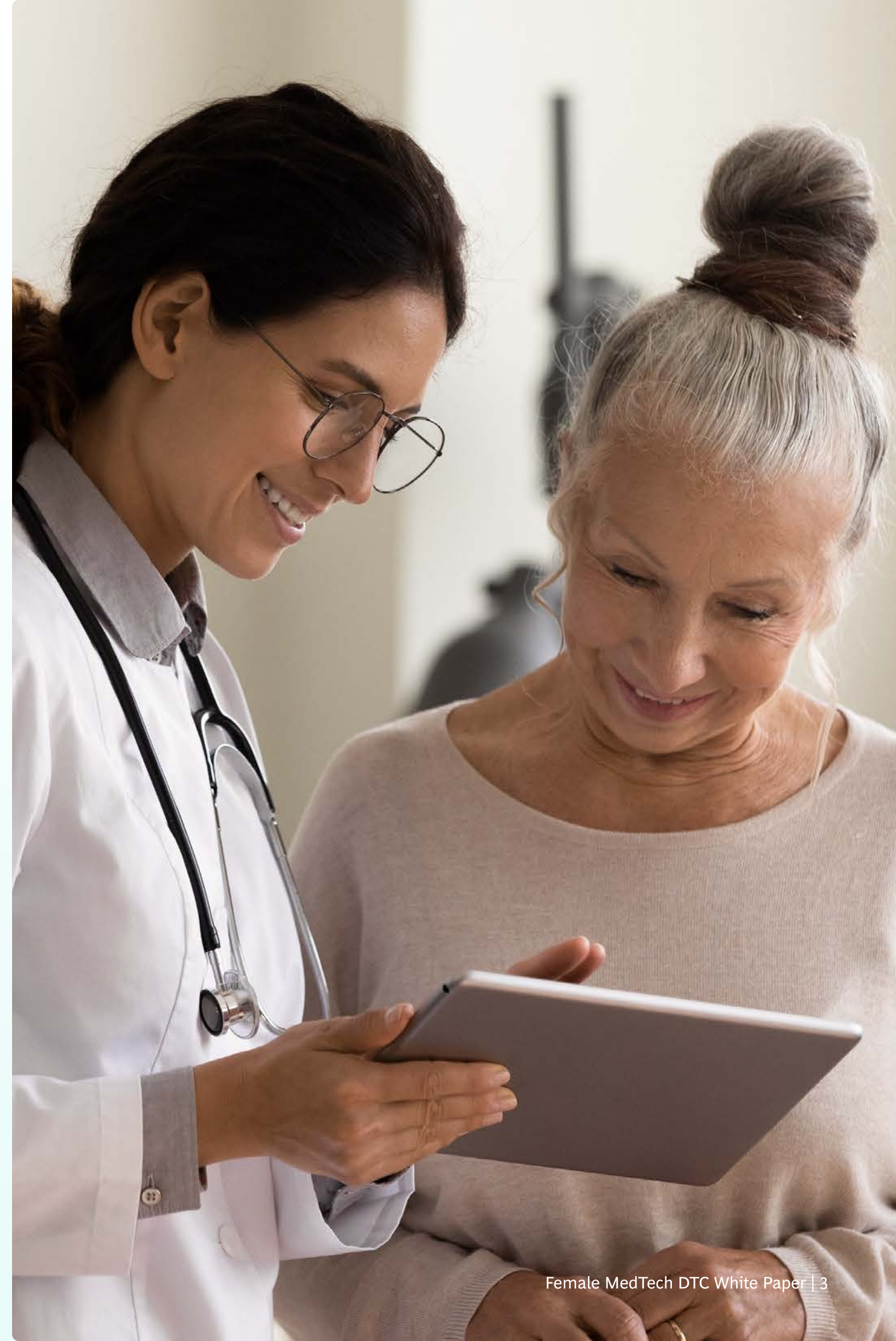
The authors extend gratitude to their BCG colleagues, Tamara Salman for the design of the report, and Isabelle Lavin, Sarah Chamberlain, and Trish Stroman for their market expertise and perspectives that informed the analysis. They also extend their appreciation to Evvy, Willow, and Teal for their partnership and insights.

The Problem



Traditional MedTech is failing women when they need it most

Gaps in MedTech are pushing women to look beyond the system. Digital and at-home tools are becoming a first stop for care



The Problem

A system not built for women creates structural, access, and trust gaps

Structural Gaps

The system was built around the “average patient”, not women, optimized for payers and providers rather than end-user needs

- Prevalence of chronic conditions and limited research
- Dismissal or disbelief of symptoms
- Generic diagnoses, wide categories
- Care constrained by coverage rules

A 2019 FDA study found that **67% of device related injuries or deaths were women**¹

80% of autoimmune disease patients are women²

Access Gaps

Even when care exists, it’s difficult to reach. Traditional channels require in-clinic provider visits to access diagnostics or treatment

- Schedule and logistical barriers
- Cost and insurance hurdles
- Required in-clinic visits to use tools
- Negative interactions with providers

Over 50% of cervical cancers occur in women who have never/not had a Pap test in 5 years³

75% of women with children say it is hard to make their health a top priority⁴

Trust Gaps

Women are losing confidence in a system constrained by payer-driven processes rather than patient outcomes

The Problem

Women are changing how they begin and navigate care, turning to DTW MedTech to work around system gaps



Traditional care is slow, fragmented, and hard to access

Women face:

- Long waits and unclear guidance (60–90+ days to see an OB-GYN)
- Care that requires navigating multiple providers
- Slow adoption of new medical evidence

These barriers push women toward DTW options that offer faster, clearer, women-designed solutions

- **Women spend ~25% more of their lives in poor health or with disability than men**, reflecting persistent care gaps¹
- **38% of women delay or skip healthcare** due to cost or access barriers²
- New clinical evidence takes **17 years**, on average, to be adopted into practice³



Women turn to digital channels as their first source of care

Women now begin care with:

- Search, symptom checking, and cycle tracking
- Wearables and digital communities
- Influencers, newsletters, and social platforms

Women self-triage early, so DTW solutions meet them at the true start of care, becoming the natural first point of entry

- **58% of U.S. adults used the internet** to look for health or medical information⁴
- **56% of women used at least one virtual or digital health tool** in the past year⁵
- Major consumer platforms are entering health navigation, including **OpenAI's health-focused ChatGPT** initiatives⁶



At-home tools provide faster, credible alternatives

Women now complete key diagnostics at home with regulated diagnostic testing solutions:

- Self-collection offers lab-grade accuracy
- At-home tests give immediate results
- Apps guide next steps

These tools reduce wait times and help avoid unnecessary clinic visits

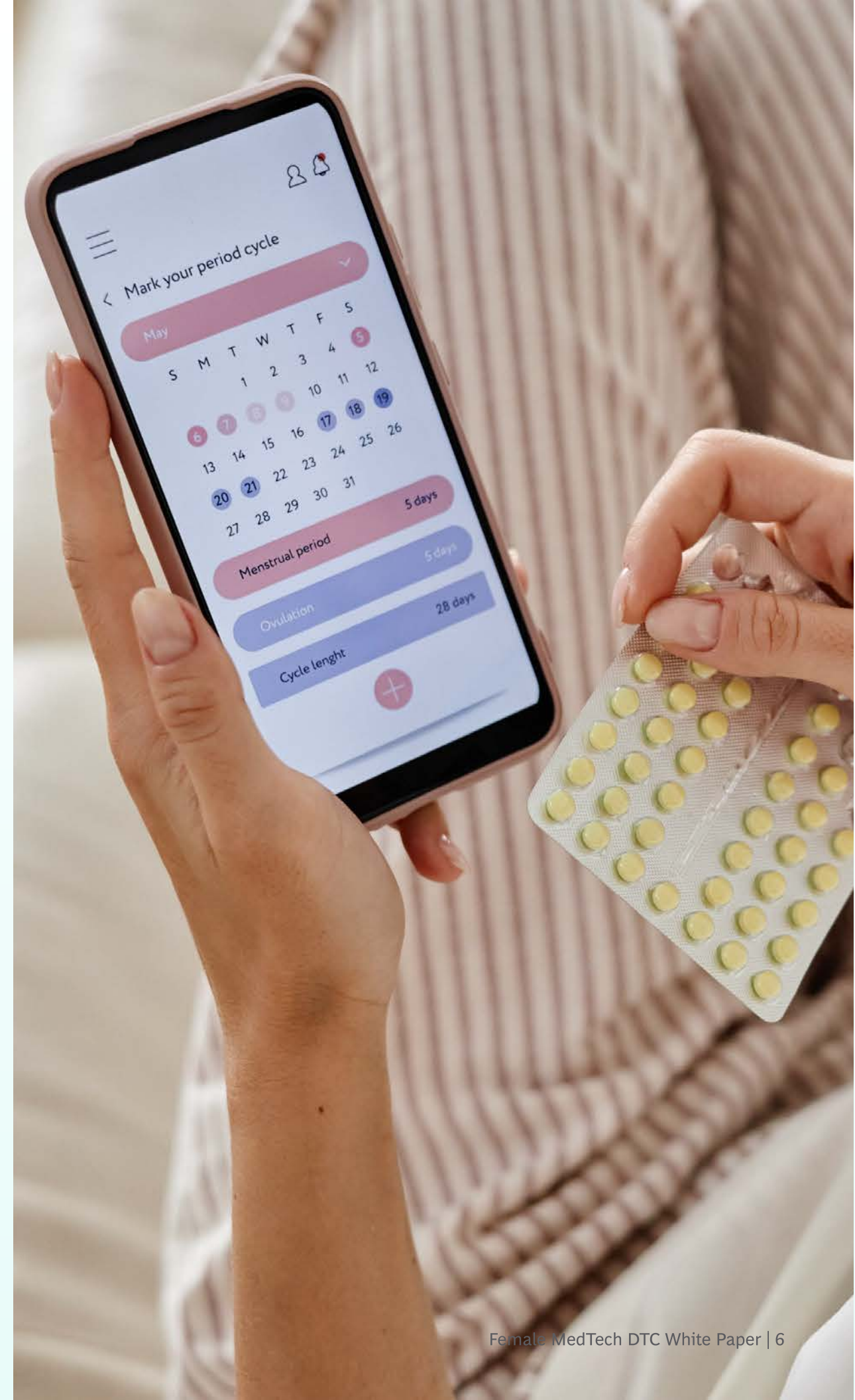
- **HPV self-collection increases cervical cancer screening adherence by ~30-40%**⁷
- American Cancer Society screening guidelines now include at-home HPV self-collection, triggering **ACA-mandated coverage beginning in 2027**⁸
- **At-home pregnancy tests are ~99% accurate when used correctly**⁹

The Opportunity



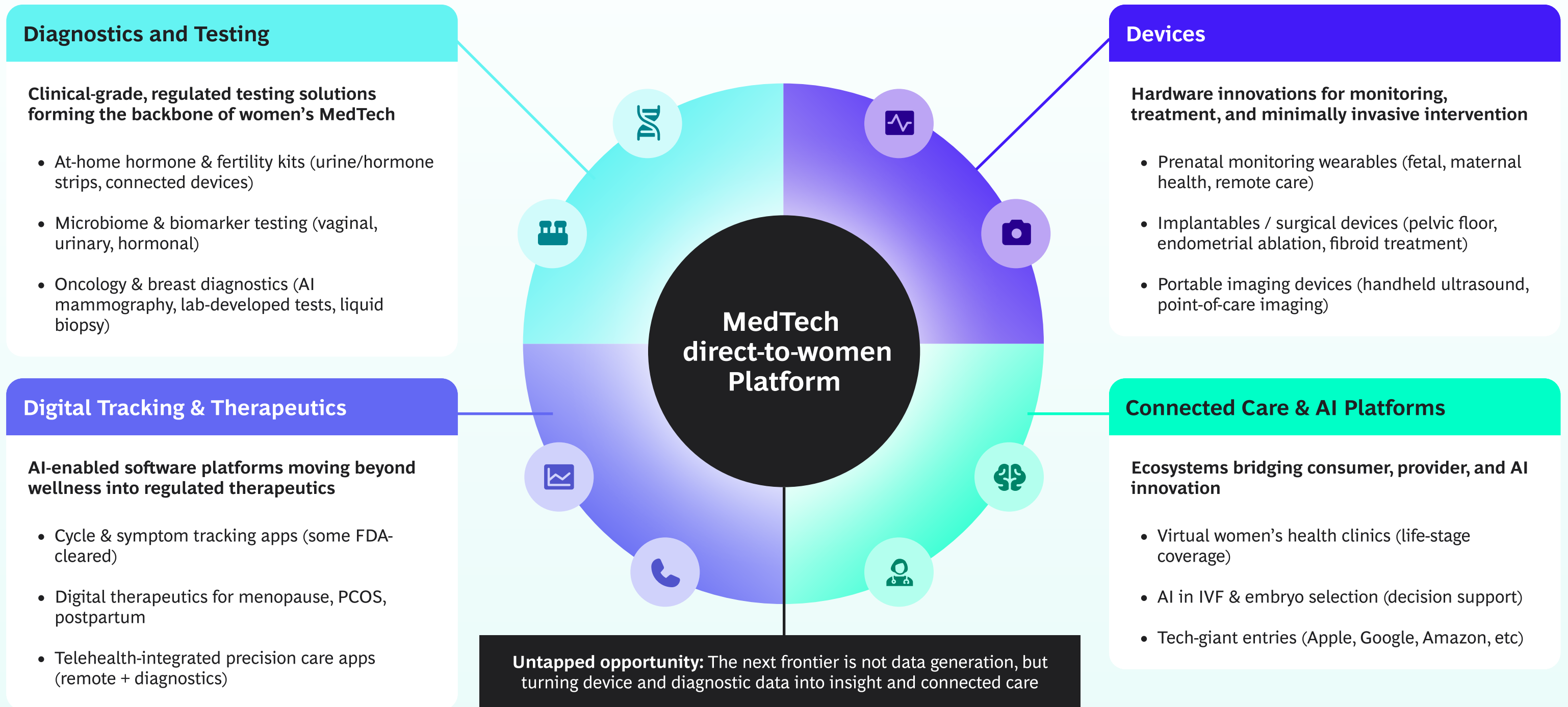
Women's rising expectations are unlocking a new era of MedTech innovation

A new MedTech ecosystem is taking shape to meet women's rising expectations. The market is real and growing, but most funding is still clustered in a few areas. Emerging opportunity sits within the underserved gaps, waiting for leaders to do more



The Opportunity

A new DTW MedTech market is taking shape; the next frontier is turning diagnostics, tracking, and device data into insight and connected care

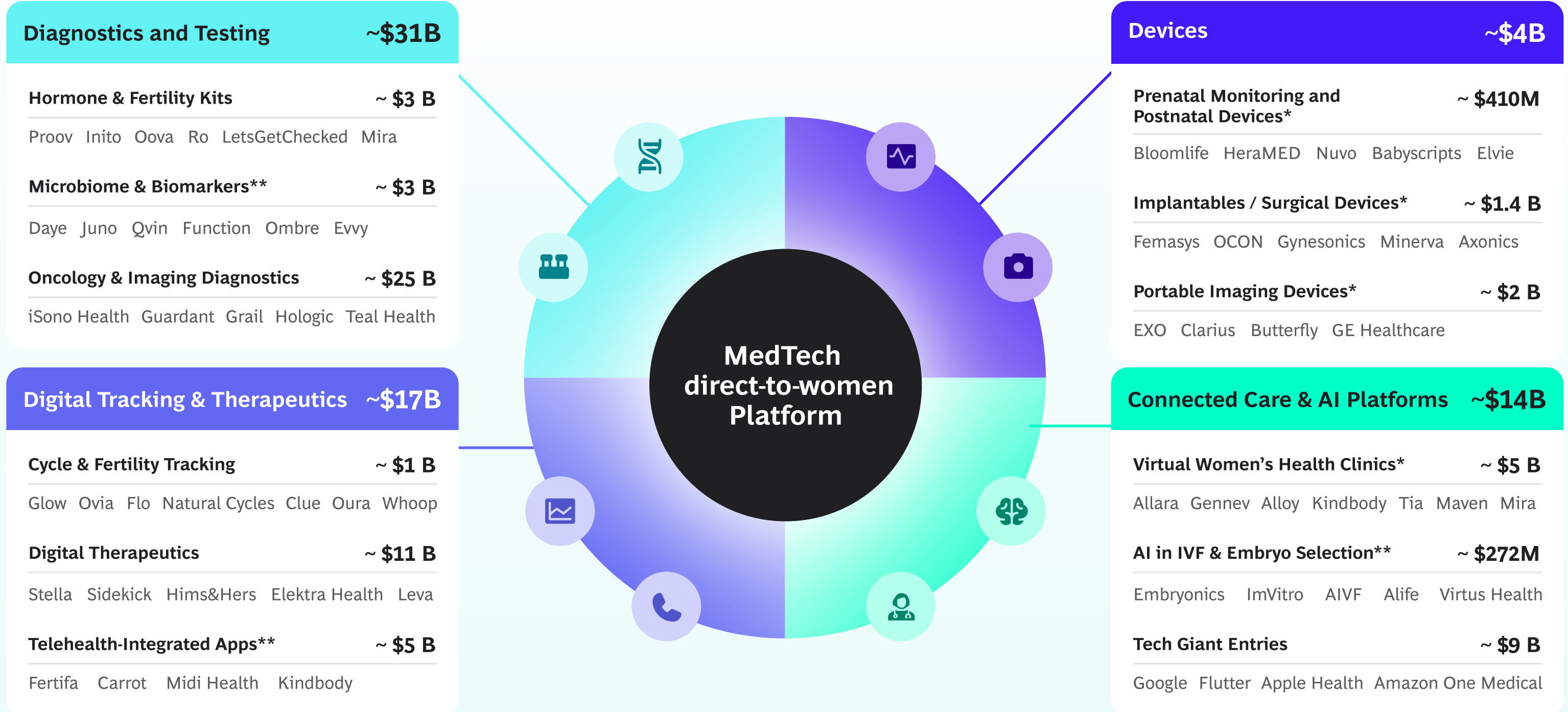


Illustrative, not exhaustive

The Opportunity

The DTW MedTech market is already a \$70B opportunity

TAM reflects leading spend and emerging direct-to-women MedTech categories; categories may overlap



Illustrative, not exhaustive

Note: TAM values reflect U.S. market estimates for 2025, calculated using a consistent methodology (Population × Adoption × Price). Categories represent direct-to-women MedTech segments and may be partially overlapping, so figures are not mutually exclusive. * Categories marked with an asterisk are not strictly direct-to-consumer but rely on consumer awareness or direct-path-to-physician/device purchase. ** Categories marked with a double asterisk represent overlapping segments that appear across multiple TAM categories

The Opportunity

Women's costliest, most neglected needs reveal MedTech's biggest opportunities

	Total Deals (2020-2025) ¹	Est. Annual Economic Burden ²
Women's Cancers	1,203	\$45 B
Reproductive Health	906	\$37 B
Maternal Health	572	\$265 B
Generic Women's Health	280	Not Estimated
Mental Health	156	\$282 B
Endometriosis	82	\$69 B
PCOS	39	\$15 B
Infectious Diseases	24	\$120 B
Endocrine Disorders	15	\$413 B
Urological Disorders	12	\$86 B
Cardiovascular & Circulatory Disorders	11	\$407 B
Menstrual Health	11	\$84 B
Metabolic Disorders	8	> \$673 B
Menopausal Health	6	\$26 B
Neurological & Neuro-sensory Disorders	4	\$800 B
Musculoskeletal & Pain Disorders	3	\$980 B

Key Takeaways

- **Investment remains narrowly focused:** ~ 80% of MedTech deals in women's health target cancer and reproductive care, areas that represent a smaller share of total disease burden
- **High-cost chronic conditions remain underfunded:** Cardiovascular, endocrine, and musculoskeletal disorders account for the largest system costs but attract limited investment
- Significant white space for innovation: Musculoskeletal, Neurological, and Metabolic conditions carry high economic burden yet see minimal investment, signaling major untapped opportunities

Top 5 categories by total deals (left) or economic burden (right)

1. Funding events from the last 5 years grouped by Topic Area between 2020-2025. Deals include M&A, minority stake, private investment, and public offering

2. Economic burden represents total U.S. system costs (male and female); most of these areas disproportionately affect women. Estimates include direct medical and productivity costs

Leading the Change



Innovators are redefining how women access and experience care

DTW innovators are redefining how women access care by providing earlier, clearer, and more usable answers. They combine regulated diagnostic testing with tools built around women's real needs, removing many of the barriers in today's system



Leading the Change

The fastest-growing DTW innovators solve the gaps women feel most, and the results prove it

Key Benefit	Examples are illustrative and not exhaustive*
Self-managed tracking Continuous monitoring and accessible insights give women greater agency over their health	Flo Health supports ~70 million monthly active users across cycle, fertility, and pregnancy tracking ¹
Condition specific solutions Virtual and condition targeted platforms, access to specialized care and treatment options	Maven clinic covers ~17 million lives through employer-sponsored virtual health care for women and families ²
Actionable diagnostics & alerts At-home solutions compress diagnostic efficiency delivering faster actionable answers	Evyv supports 90 000+ patients using at-home vaginal microbiome testing ³
Transparent & predictable pricing Remove insurance friction through upfront, flexible pricing models	Everlywell offers 30+ CLIA-certified at-home lab tests with transparent, upfront pricing ⁴
At home privacy & convenience Hybrid & remote models provide discreet access to care and reduce burden of in-person visits	Willow provides FDA-cleared, insurance-covered wearable breast pumps for postpartum care ⁵
Data-driven insights & protocols Aggregated data from real diagnostics & outcomes generates evidence-based protocols	Function Health offers longitudinal testing across 100+ biomarkers for its members ⁶
Validation & emotional connection Solutions grounded in lived experiences, proactive follow-ups, supportive communities	Kindbody operates a national fertility clinic network serving employer populations ⁷
Integrated health data Connect biomarkers and multi-dimensional data to create a holistic view of women's health	Oura has sold 5.5M+ smart rings integrating sleep, temperature, and cycle insights ⁸

Leading the Change

Gaps across the care journey opened the door for new innovators

Advancing vaginal health diagnostics

- **Problem:** Bacterial vaginosis affects ~30% of women of reproductive age¹, with recurrence rates exceeding 50% within 12 months after treatment²
- **Why DTW:** at-home testing offers **privacy, clearer costs, and easier access**, making it simpler to begin and repeat
- **DTW Demand:** At-home vaginal testing is gaining traction, with **90K+ women** participating, enabling longitudinal microbiome datasets³

Improving support throughout postpartum recovery

- **Problem:** Only ~25% of U.S. mothers are still breastfeeding at **12 months**⁴, reflecting gaps in sustained postpartum care and support
- **Why DTW:** Covered options often do not match real **postpartum needs** for **comfort, privacy and mobility**
- **DTW Demand:** Many mothers report paying **out of pocket** for postpartum and feeding support tools⁵

Expanding access to cervical cancer screening

- **Problem:** **1 in 4** U.S. women are overdue for recommended cervical cancer screening⁶, with discomfort, pain, and embarrassment commonly cited as barriers⁷
- **Why DTW:** **Self-collection** removes the major **barriers** such as **speculum discomfort** and **scheduling logistics**
- **DTW Demand:** **More than half** of women report willingness to use at-home HPV self-collection when clinically validated⁸

Featured Case Studies

Evvy

willow

 teal health

These companies show how DTW models fill gaps in traditional care with clearer information, easier use, and fewer barriers

Leading the Change

Vaginal infections affect 1 in 3 women over their lifetime, yet most never receive comprehensive diagnostic testing¹

The gap in care



Standard diagnostic tests typically assess **~3–4 microbes**, while sequencing-based approaches detect **700+**²



Recurrence up to 84% signals missed underlying imbalance³



Women frequently cycle through **multiple providers** without clear answers⁴



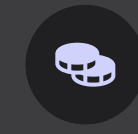
Stigma and privacy concerns contribute to **delayed or avoided care**⁵

Why DTW is Emerging



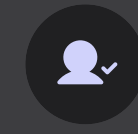
Fragmented pathways

Traditional diagnosis requires multiple visits, inconsistent testing approaches, and long wait times lowering follow-through¹



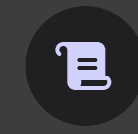
Cost & coverage friction

Advanced vaginal and microbiome tests often cost hundreds of dollars and are not consistently covered by insurance⁶



Consumer readiness

Over 50% of women track health data digitally⁷ and show high openness to private, at-home testing for intimate concerns⁵



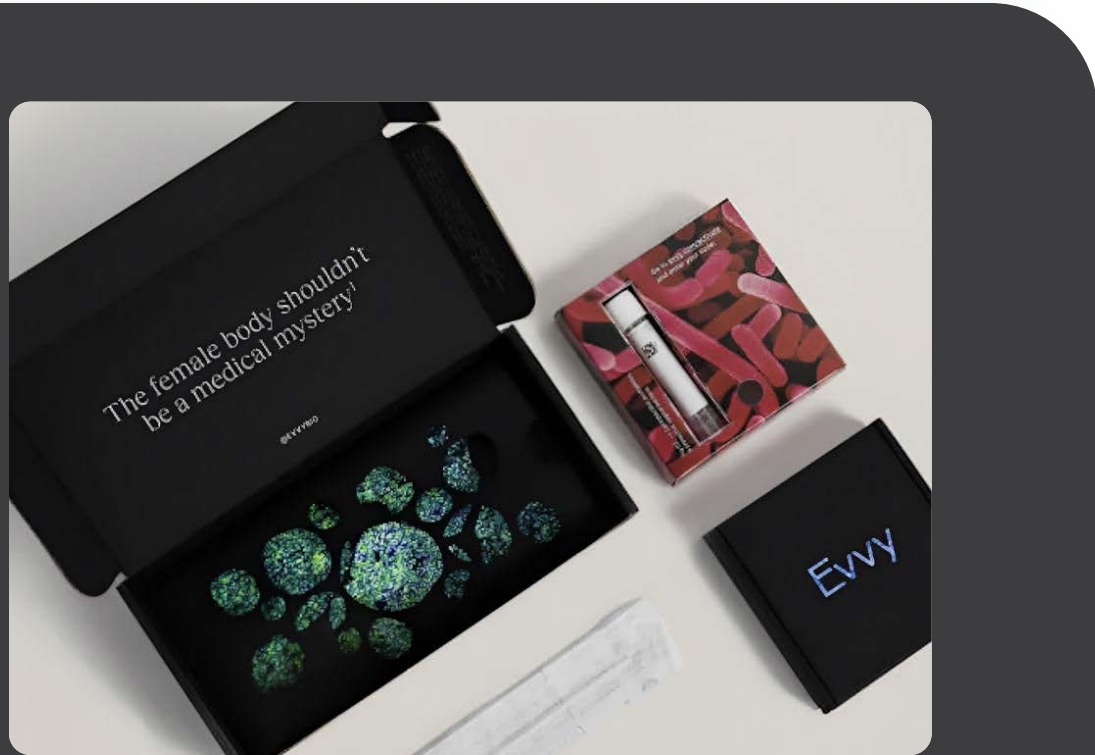
Need for more comprehensive testing

Broader testing can surface underlying imbalances earlier and support clearer conversations with clinicians²

Sources: 1. CDC; 2. Priyanka Jain, Co-founder & CEO, Evvy — founder interview conducted for this whitepaper (2024); 3. Bradshaw CS et al., Clinical Infectious Diseases (2006); 4. Atashili J et al., PLoS Medicine (2008); 5. Peebles K et al., PLOS ONE (2019); 6. Lev-Sagie A et al., Nature Medicine (2023); 7. Chen X et al., Frontiers in Digital Health (2021)

Leading the Change

Women rarely get real answers about vaginal health; now those answers can start at home



Evvy's Approach



Full-spectrum diagnostics

One test analyzes the full vaginal microbiome, reducing repeated visits and fragmented panels



Digital interpretation and guidance

A digital platform helps women interpret results, track symptoms, and follow personalized care



Clinician partnerships & evidence development

Clinician collaborations build real-world evidence, improve accuracy, and advance women's health standards

Evvy

Evvy offers an at-home vaginal microbiome test that maps the full microbial ecosystem, giving women clear results, convenient testing, and guidance on next steps

“The healthcare system was never designed with women in mind. Evvy exists so women can finally understand their own bodies.

Providers were never taught the vaginal microbiome, leaving women to navigate symptoms alone.”

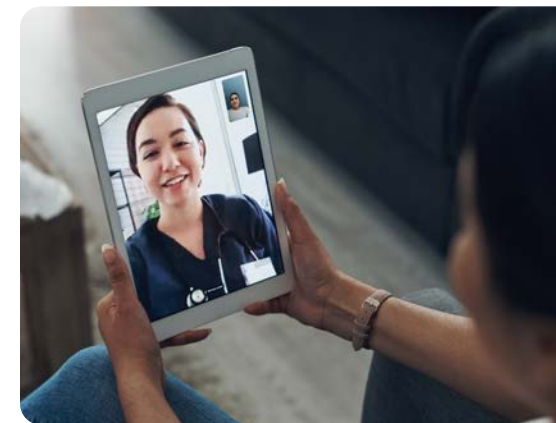
Priyanka Jain, Co-Founder and CEO, Evvy
BCG interview with Evvy leadership, 2025



90K+ women tested¹



One of the largest vaginal microbiome datasets to date²



Sources: 1. Priyanka Jain, Co-founder & CEO, Evvy — founder interview conducted for this whitepaper (2025); 2. Evvy Website (2025)

Leading the Change

Traditional pumps are so inconvenient that 1 in 3 mothers stop pumping early¹

The gap in care



60% of mothers report that pumping interferes with daily activities, including moving, working, or caring for their baby¹



Pumps rely on **cords, external bottles, and fixed positions**, limiting mobility and privacy



Insurance coverage typically includes only basic pumps, leading many mothers to **pay out of pocket for pump upgrades or alternatives**²



Managing pumping schedules and milk output **adds daily mental and logistical burden**

Why DTW is Emerging



Inconsistent Support

Nearly 70% of mothers say traditional pumps don't fit real-world routines¹



Cost & coverage friction

Wearable pumps cost \$150–\$500, and insurance coverage varies widely²



Consumer readiness

Coverage models delay feedback; DTW relationships enable real-time learning



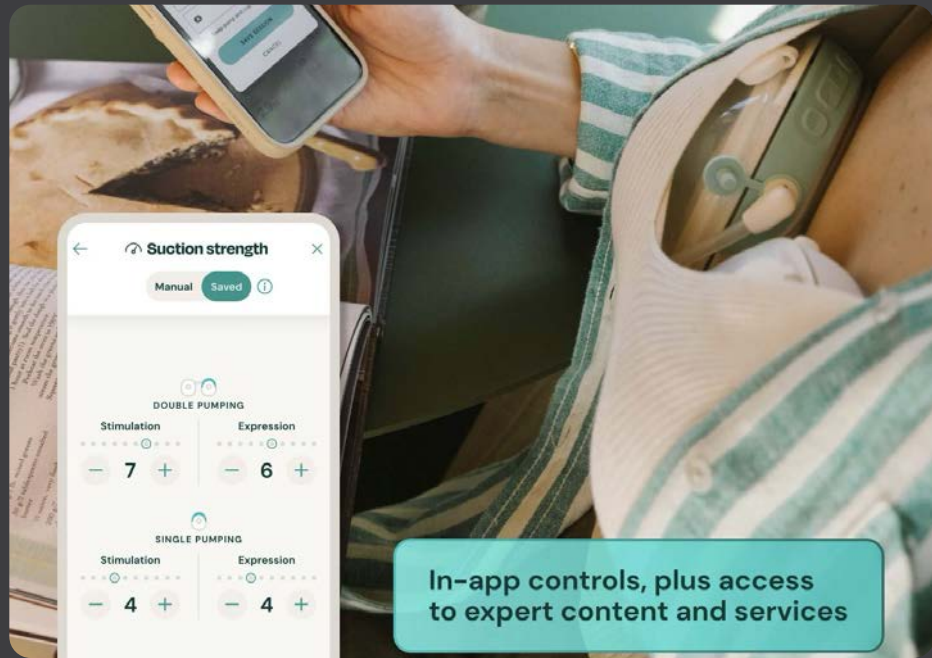
Need for mobility + discretion

Pumping averages 2–3 hours/day, driving demand for solutions that allow movement and privacy³

Sources: 1. [Babylist Pumping Survey \(2023\)](#); 2. [Aeroflow Breast Pumps — Insurance Coverage Guide](#); 3. [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\) — Breastfeeding Guidance](#)

Leading the Change

Pumping once pulled mothers out of real life; it's now being redesigned to move with them



Willow's Approach



Mobility without compromise

Designed for movement and daily life, enabling hands-free pumping without cords, external tubes, or stationary setups



Fully discreet use

A quiet, in-bra profile enables pumping in shared, public, or work environments without interruption



Smart supportive care

App-enabled tracking and guidance help reduce mental load and support breastfeeding and postpartum recovery

Willow

Willow pioneered an in-bra, hands-free wearable pump that gives mothers discreet, comfortable, and mobile pumping without cords, bottles, or private pumping spaces

“ Traditional pumps were built to extract milk, not support women. We designed a pump around the woman, not the system. Pumping anywhere is the breakthrough. That freedom changes how women breastfeed. ”

Sarah O’Leary, CEO, Willow
BCG interview with Willow leadership, 2025

~40% revenue growth year-over-year¹

\$150M+ raised to scale wearable pumping¹



Leading the Change

Over 50% of women report discomfort, pain, or embarrassment as barriers to cervical cancer screening⁵

The gap in care



1 in 4 U.S. women are overdue for recommended cervical cancer screening¹



42% of women report having trouble accessing preventive care, including screening services²



Screening adherence is lower in underserved populations, with **non-adherence exceeding 40%** in some groups³



Women frequently report **challenges understanding results and navigating follow-up care**⁴

Why DTW is Emerging



Uncomfortable in-clinic experience

Speculum exams deter screening; >50% of women report discomfort with speculum-based screening methods⁵



Access barriers

Top barriers include out-of-pocket costs (22%) and work, school, or childcare obligations (19%)²



Consumer readiness

Surveys show 64% of women report willingness to use HPV self-collection when validated⁶



Need for trusted, evidence-based alternatives

At-home HPV self-collection is shown to be as accurate as clinician-collected testing in large studies⁷

Sources: 1. CDC — Cervical Cancer Screening Statistics; 2. Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP)/Ipsos Poll; 3. WHO — Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines (2021); 4. BMC Public Health (2024) available via PubMed Central (NIH/NLM); 5. Atashili J et al., PLOS Medicine (2008); 6. Reiter PL et al., Women's Acceptability of HPV Self-Collection (2025); 7. Phillips SA, et al., Accuracy of HPV Self-Collection Compared with Clinician-Collected HPV Testing and Cytology: A Meta-analysis, AACR Journals (2025)

Leading the Change

At-home testing is making cervical screening more private, comfortable, and easier to access



Teal Health

Teal Health offers an FDA-authorized at-home HPV self-collection device, giving women a private, speculum-free way to stay current with cervical screening while maintaining clinical-grade accuracy

Teal's Approach



Clinical-grade validation

At-home HPV self-collection delivers clinician-level accuracy in large studies supporting broader adoption



Comfort-first design

A guided at-home process avoids the discomfort and embarrassment many women associate with speculum exams



Connected care pathway

Clinicians review results, provide next steps, and escalate to in-person care only when needed

“ Women deserve solutions that move at the pace of their lives.

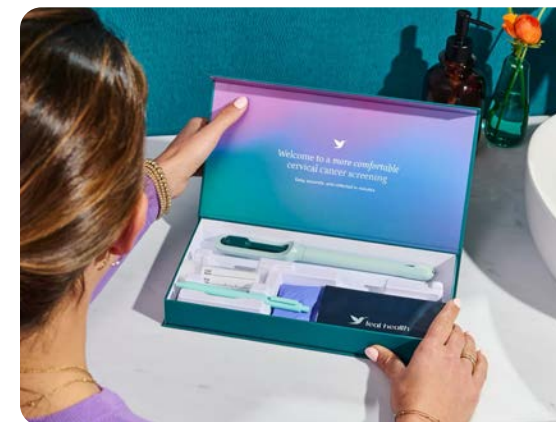
Self-collection lets women take control of their screening on their own terms.

That level of comfort, privacy, and convenience was not possible in the traditional exam. ”

Kara Egan, Co-Founder and CEO, Teal Health
BCG interview with Teal leadership, 2025

🏠 94% of women preferred at-home screening¹

🩺 At-home self-collection added to ACS & HHS guidelines, with ACA-mandated coverage beginning 2027²



From Legacy to Leading



Women are reshaping care and MedTech must evolve with them

Women have reshaped how care begins, how decisions are made, and what earns their trust. Innovators moved early to meet these behaviors, and the next leaders will be the MedTech organizations that do the same



From Legacy to Leading

Innovators moved early to meet these behaviors, and the next leaders will be the MedTech organizations that do the same



Presence in early digital discovery

MedTech needs visibility where women begin care, across search, apps, and at-home tools

63%

of women look online for health information¹



Woman-centered experience

Products designed around women's real routines, mobility, privacy, ease drive adoption and retention

2x

as often as men, women experience adverse drug events²



Lower barriers to adoption

Affordable, intuitive, and accessible solutions increase adoption, and reducing these barriers helps sustain care

~38%

of women report cost as a barrier to accessing healthcare³



Evidence-led trust building

Clear, accessible proof of accuracy and clinical rigor differentiates solutions women trust

~1 in 3

participants in some medical device trials⁴ are women

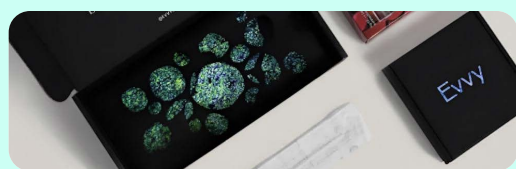


Actionable & connected data

Women expect actionable insights, and clinicians require integrated systems. Data must bridge the two

55%

of women in the U.S. track at least one digital health metric daily⁵



Evvy meets women at symptom onset with at-home microbiome testing



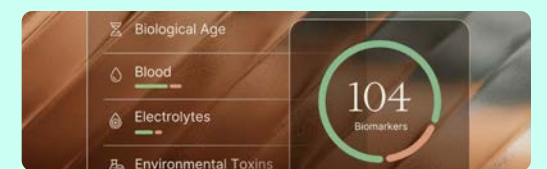
Willow redesigned pumping around mobility and discretion so women can continue daily life



Everlywell uses upfront pricing and a simple digital flow, enabling women to start care without referrals or visits



Teal's FDA authorization shows at-home HPV self-collection can match standards used in clinic-based screening



Function Health has run 5M+ lab tests, giving members biomarker data they can use in care