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page 38

→ PROFILE

Where Patients Become Parents

by **Erica Young**

photography by
Alison Dunlap



RMA of Philadelphia helps families achieve an elusive goal: bringing new life into the world through best-in-class fertility expertise, personalized care, and cutting-edge research.

OVERCOMING FERTILITY ISSUES IS A DIFFICULT JOURNEY FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY.

From the emotional toll that comes from struggling to conceive, the medical implications of treatment, and the financial costs associated with care, many people find the process overwhelming.

Few people understand these challenges better than the specialists at RMA of Philadelphia. The organization has created a patient-centered approach focused entirely on empathy, convenience, and positive outcomes. RMA of Philadelphia's team of physicians, nurses, financial experts, and patient support teams spend every day helping area residents build the families of their dreams.

RMA of Philadelphia is a part of the IVI-RMA Network, a global organization whose reach extends across the Delaware Valley and as far away as Florida, California, and across Europe. With a team of more than 500 physicians, embryologists, and researchers behind the RMA name, RMA of Philadelphia has evolved

to offer world-class care in a highly individualized way.

“Our goal is to break fertility care down in a way that is approachable, understandable and manageable for our patients; we want to demystify the process,” explains Jacqueline N. Gutmann, M.D., FACOG, a reproductive endocrinologist who has been helping people build their families in the Philadelphia area since 1993, and as part of RMA since 2009. “In order to facilitate care, each patient has their own team of specialists including their doctor, fertility nurse, and financial coordinator. This helps keep our patients informed about all aspects of their care through their fertility journey. To further assist our patients, we have a team of patient navigators.”

Arthur J. Castelbaum, M.D., FACOG, started practicing in 1994. As a reproductive endocrinologist, he enjoys helping patients achieve their goal of starting or adding to their families. He also appreciates the opportunity to coach patients through the whirlwind of emotions they may feel along the way.

“For some patients, it’s overwhelming and complicated,” Dr. Castelbaum says. “Nursing is complicated, insurance is complicated, medicine is complicated, but it shouldn’t get in the way of your dreams and your goals. You want someone who can help you unpack that emotion and experience.”

To help, every patient is paired with a dedicated nurse who works with them through every facet of the process. Financial consultants help each patient untangle complicated insurance questions. The organization also provides access to other resources—acupuncture, mental health, and legal services, for example—to ensure the entire range of a patient’s needs are met.

“We want our patients to be as comfortable as possible in what can be a very stressful situation,” says Jeffrey T. Thorne, M.D., a reproductive endocrinologist who joined RMA in 2019 after completing a fellowship in infertility and in vitro fertilization, or IVF. “We offer personalized care and a dedicated team for each patient, eliminating the need to re-introduce themselves to a new face each time they come in for treatment.”

For all patients, the process begins with an initial consultation. This is where members of the medical team get to know each person’s history—medically and personally, as well as any previous fertility treatments they may have tried.

“Coming to see a fertility specialist may seem overwhelming and scary,” says Dr. Gutmann. “Knowing that you will have a



From top: Dr. Arthur J. Castelbaum, Dr. Jeffrey T. Thorne, Dr. Jacqueline N. Gutmann

dedicated care team will hopefully help in reducing some of the anxiety associated with seeking care. We also want patients to know that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. For patients experiencing infertility, miscarriages, or other reproductive challenges, our job is to evaluate what’s going on and work with each patient to determine what the right path forward for them should be.”

Opportunity through Innovation

RMA of Philadelphia’s approach to care incorporates the full array of the medical and laboratory advances pioneered by RMA’s international team of specialists. IVF is a good example.

“RMA is at the forefront of next-generation sequencing and preimplantation genetic testing with IVF,” explains Dr. Thorne, whose research interests include investigating how preimplantation genetic testing facilitates successful IVF outcomes.

“Because of preimplantation genetic testing, we improve our patients’ pregnancy rates and reduce the risk of miscarriage.”

IVF remains an option for many patients who come to RMA with fertility issues. New research published by RMA suggests that genetic testing helps to improve the likelihood of a successful pregnancy—and a healthy baby—with a single round of IVF, according to Dr. Castelbaum.

“The power of technology gives us the ability to focus on getting pregnant on the first try with a genetically tested embryo and a high likelihood of success,” he says. “Not only is IVF great for having your first child, but frozen genetically tested embryos can be used for a second or third children with equally high pregnancy rates. The uterus does not age.”

RMA provides world-class care for all patients, including hopeful single parents and LGBTQ+ individuals. Dr. Gutmann notes that care is tailored to each patient. “In order to make a baby, you still need eggs, you still need sperm, you still need a uterus; how that comes together depends on each situation,” she says. “We work with our patients to bring these elements together to help them build their families.”

Put another way, RMA of Philadelphia offers fertility options for patients of all backgrounds and circumstances, giving everyone the chance to build a family in a way that makes them feel cared for and comfortable. As Dr. Thorne suggests, there’s no such thing as a “traditional” family.

“When we say full-service fertility practice, we mean it,” he says. “That looks different for everyone, and our services reflect that. Many people are intimidated to see a fertility doctor, but we move at your pace and your speed. We want this process to be educational; I want my patients to know what I’m looking for and why. By doing that, we’re able to demystify fertility treatments and customize the care provided to each of our patients.”

Most importantly, the physicians and fertility specialists at RMA of Philadelphia strive to help patients achieve their goal: bringing new life into the world. ■

➔ RMA of Philadelphia

RMA of Philadelphia has multiple offices in the area, both in the city and surrounding suburbs. Call (215) 922-1556 or visit RMANetwork.com for more information.