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**RMA Marlton's** newly opened laboratory and surgery center enhance the care and convenience for area residents eager to bring new life into the world. page 36

**RMA MARLTON'S**  
newly opened laboratory and surgery  
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ience for area residents eager to  
bring new life into the world.

# fertile ground

by  
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**Philadelphia-area residents**  
who need help in their quest to  
conceive rejoiced last year when RMA  
New Jersey opened a gleaming,  
41,600-square-foot facility across  
the river in Marlton, New Jersey.  
The facility has since offered addi-  
tional causes for celebration by  
opening its on-site embryology  
and andrology laboratory and its  
ambulatory surgery center.

“We’ve been able to do many aspects of patient care here when we opened [in April 2019], but now we’re able to offer every aspect of care close to home,” says Jason M. Franasiak, M.D., FACOG, HCLD/ALD, a reproductive endocrinologist who serves as the lead physician and laboratory director at RMA Marlton. “We’re bringing to bear all the science and technology and research innovations that RMA is known for, right here in Marlton, combined with the exceptional personalized patient care people have come to expect from us.”

Dr. Franasiak has good reason to be proud of these accomplishments. He was intimately involved in every aspect of planning for the Marlton office, including the surgery center and laboratory. In fact, he

Kathleen Upham,  
the laboratory  
manager at  
RMA Marlton



**We've come a long way, and I'm excited to see where we go from here."**

—**Jason M. Franasiak, M.D.**  
RMA Marlton  
Laboratory Director



drafted early architectural blueprints of the entire facility on his computer, based on similar experiences he had working with other locations within the RMA network.

"A number of things we do in our lab practice set us apart," he adds. "Embryos and their culture environment are very particular. The goal in our embryology lab is to mimic the environment inside the human body, involving different gases and changes in temperature—it's very specific. We recreate these conditions in an incubator, and whenever that incubator door is open and closed, that environment can be disturbed. We strictly limit the amount of time spent outside the incubator to maintain conditions and increase our likelihood of success."

The lab also enables RMA Marlton to provide preimplantation genetic testing of blastocysts—embryos aged five to six days after fertilization—to ensure a chromosomally normal baby. The majority of patients elect to have this critical test done, according to Emily K. Osman, M.D., a reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist at RMA Marlton.

"We're testing for the correct number of chromosomes," says Dr. Osman, who

joined the practice earlier this year. "As women age, the chromosomes in each egg do not separate as efficiently. Genetic testing provides the assurance people need and also helps to increase the live birth rate. People can also be assured that the biopsy causes no harm to the embryo itself."

The opening of the surgery center means that patients no longer have to travel to other RMA locations for delicate procedures such as egg retrieval, embryo transfer, and hysteroscopy to evaluate the health of the uterine cavity. The center will also be doing male-related procedures, such as sperm retrieval for use in IVF treatment.

The enhanced capabilities at RMA Marlton will enable its practitioners to further contribute to RMA's culture of groundbreaking research. In fact, Dr. Osman has taken the lead on a research project to determine whether the use of super-cooled liquid ni-

trogen in embryo vitrification—or freezing—may lead to higher survival rates in embryos. The research is currently in clinical trials, showing "very promising" results.

Dr. Franasiak credits his fellow team members for RMA Marlton's early success in providing positive patient outcomes. In particular, he cites Kathleen Upham, the laboratory manager who previously led the lab in RMA's northern New Jersey office, and the "fantastic team" in the surgery center's post-anesthesia care unit, headed by lead PACU nurse Joy Jennings.

"We've come a long way, and I'm excited to see where we go from here," he says. "We will continue to offer the same excellent care to patients in southern New Jersey. We hope that having the surgery center and laboratory now open will allow for patients even farther south to receive fertility care from RMA of New Jersey." ■



**For more information on**

**RMA New Jersey,**

*including its location in Marlton, visit [rmanetwork.com](http://rmanetwork.com)  
or call (856) 267-8100.*