

The Jones Institute for Reproductive Medicine: Creating families, hope

BY LAUREN WICKS

There is no certain type of patient who walks through the doors of the Jones Institute.

Clients ranging from young couples wanting to start a family to older couples who have waited longer to begin trying have called upon the services of the Jones Institute for Reproductive Medicine.

The Jones Institute—a division of Eastern Virginia Medical School—has been around for more than two decades, leading the way in scientific advances for infertility treatments as well as making contributions to the specialty of reproductive biology.

In fact, the first in-vitro fertilization (IVF) baby in the United States was born at the Jones Institute.

According to the Jones Institute Web site, the practice offers comprehensive treatment techniques in all areas of assisted reproduction technologies including IVF, sperm donation and fertility preservation for cancer survivors.

In March of 2007, the institute expanded its Norfolk office with a branch in Newport News. Open three days a week, the three doctors from Jones Institute rotate shifts, working at the Newport News location to better service all of the institute's patients.

"We love it out here," says Dr. Laurel Stadtmauer, associate professor of reproductive endocrinology and infertility. Stadtmauer adds that while working in the Norfolk office, nearly 20 to 30 percent of the patients were commuting from the Newport News and Hampton area.

Infertility treatments are stressful enough, she says, with patients sometimes having to come to four or five appointments within a two-week time. Patients should not have to worry about how they are going to make it to their appointment on top of everything else, she says.

"It's a very stressful thing to go through and have to deal with the traffic, and the tunnel and all that," Stadtmauer says. "It's just nice that patients don't have to travel."

Continuing along the idea of comfort and convenience for its patients, the Newport News office has every capability to handle all of the patients' consultations, pre-testing and evaluations, with the surgical procedures still being done in Norfolk.

The office even has an acupuncturist working in the same location to help patients relax during the treatment process.

Stadtmauer says that on top of being a convenience for its patients, the Jones Institute staff leads the way in research in the infertility field to give the best and most up-to-date recommendations for each individual.

"We are at the cutting edge of new findings, new studies," she says. "So, the patients here can have all that knowledge, all our expertise."

Stadtmauer did say that even with the best of research and best of attempts, sometimes the staff's work becomes providing closure and coping methods for patients unable to have children.

"It's helping them with that reality," she says, "and educating them on their options for their situation."

While those cases are sometimes harder, Stadtmauer says the true joy of the job comes in the successes of seeing families go home with their new joys.

"That's the fun part, the excitement," she says. "We just follow (the babies) all the way through. We get the pictures and the e-mails. It's wonderful. It's so satisfying." ◀



Laurel A. Stadtmauer, MD, PhD

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TO THE Point

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