

Trade Names

Facial surgeon worked to get patients

A 2-employee office is now a practice with 9 surgeons, 6 offices

BY JOAN TUPPONCE
Special Correspondent

Deb Arrington consulted with Dr. Joe Niamtu in February 2008 when she was considering facial cosmetic surgery.

"He was honest about what to expect and left it up to me as to what I wanted to have done," she said. "I like dealing with people who are honest and upfront."

Arrington underwent surgery late last year.

"Everything went smoothly, and I am very pleased," said Arrington, president of Deb's Construction, a residential and commercial builder, and Better Green Technologies, a distributor for vertical insulated concrete forms.

"Dr. Niamtu was really wonderful and his staff was pleasant. I'm glad I went to him."

Niamtu started doing facial cosmetic surgery in 1995.

"It became a passion," he said.

"A lot of things were happening technologically at that time. Lasers and Botox had come onto the scene," he said. "I wanted to embrace that cutting edge."

He has over the years. In January, he opened a state-of-the-art surgery center in The Shoppes at Bellgrade in Chesterfield County.

Niamtu's decision to build the 5,000-square-foot center was based on industry trends that show a growing interest in cosmetic surgery. A February report from Global Industry Analysts predicted that the market for U.S. cosmetic-surgery procedures will reach \$15.13 billion by 2012.

"Cosmetic centers have to be more upscale and cater to a more aesthetic client base," Niamtu said. "It's a different clientele. Cosmetic patients are very discerning and expect concierge care."

His cosmetic facial surgery business has seen a 93.7 percent growth in revenue since 2004, when he de-



LINDY KEAST RODMAN/TIMES-DISPATCH

Facial cosmetic surgeon Joe Niamtu gives a patient a Botox treatment. Since 2004, his facial cosmetic surgery business has seen a 93.7 percent growth in revenue.

voted most of his time to that practice.

Ninety percent of his patients are female. Most are between the ages of 35 and 65.

His most popular surgical procedures include face-lifts and eyelid surgery. Among nonsurgical procedures, Botox, fillers and wrinkle treatments are the most prevalent.

In 2004, Niamtu developed his cosmetic facial surgery specialty as a separate entity within the larger surgical practice of Drs. Niamtu, Alexander, Keeney, Harris, Metzger, Dymon, Wlodawsky and Associates.

That practice specializes in surgery for those with problem wisdom teeth, facial pain and misaligned

jaws, as well as accident victims.

He started the practice in 1983 after finishing his residency program at what is now Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Medicine.

He took out a \$50,000 small-business loan to open an office on Midlothian Turnpike.

"At that time, I was doing everything, from wisdom teeth to facial trauma and reconstructive surgery," he said.

What started as a two-employee office is now a nine-surgeon, six-office practice that Niamtu and his partners built through aggressive marketing.

"I knocked on the doors of physi-

Joe Niamtu III Cosmetic Facial Surgery

What is it? Cosmetic facial surgery practice

Employees: Nine full-time, including Dr. Joe Niamtu

Owner: Niamtu, the medical director

Location: 11319 Polo Place in the The Shoppes at Bellgrade in Chesterfield County

Contact: (804) 934-3223 or LoveThatFace.com

cians, dentists, pharmacists and health-care providers, anyone who might have patients," he said. "I started getting referrals and I also volunteered for extra [work] in emergency rooms at hospitals. Each patient was an opportunity to get another patient and/or family."

He thought strategically about sites for his office locations. He pinpointed areas that were underserved and stayed away from areas that had an abundance of dentist offices and other health-care competitors.

"One of the things that drove my office locations was car dealerships, hotels and chain restaurants," he said. "They were some of my indicators. Those companies had done a lot of market research, and I rode on their coattails."

His goal was to have a group practice that was "accessible and would give people options."

"That was my driving mantra," he said.

Gilly Roberts, administrator for W. Baxter Perkinson Jr. and Associates Ltd., a multioffice dentistry practice, describes Niamtu as "one of the most motivated" people you will find.

"When he finds something he wants to do, he works 24/7," Roberts said. "His energy level is amazing."

Roberts, who has known Niamtu since their medical school days in the early 1980s, said he has been impressed at what Niamtu has accomplished.

"Different types of physicians from all over the world come to his surgery center to train."