

Q&A WITH DR. AMIT RASTOGI

By Michele Meyer



Meet the CEO

Dr. Amit Rastogi, MD, MHCM, reflects upon his first year as president and CEO of Jupiter Medical Center, his background in medicine, and what the future holds

Talk about a trial by fire. Just months after Dr. Amit Rastogi joined Jupiter Medical Center as president and chief executive officer, COVID-19 changed the medical landscape worldwide. However, the New Jersey native was poised to lead his team through this health crisis, having earned his master's in health care management at Harvard University and having previously served various executive roles at Yale New Haven Health. Prior to a career shift into health care management, Rastogi, who is a board-certified internal medicine physician, amassed nearly 20 years of clinical experience. Here, he shares insights into his career and JMC's response to the pandemic.

How has Jupiter Medical Center tackled the COVID-19 pandemic?

Since early January, when we recognized that COVID-19 would inevitably spread to the United States and affect our community, we were among the first medical centers in the state of Florida to initiate CDC guidelines. We also implemented a series of our own multidisciplinary measures to protect our patients, medical staff, and team members.

We carefully segmented the two distinct patient populations. COVID and non-COVID patients receive care in separate wings of our hospital and are treated by their own dedicated teams. It is likely COVID-19

will be with us for the foreseeable future and we have adjusted accordingly to successfully perform elective surgeries while also treating the most severe of our COVID-affected patients.

Has any good come out of this crisis?

The pandemic has reaffirmed how incredibly supportive the community has been. The philanthropic support we have received has been amazing and our community has rallied, donating equipment, services, and time. We have also learned a lot about our team members and medical staff who have demonstrated remarkable poise, courage, and dedication during this crisis. Our community should be very proud of their service.

What are your long-range plans for JMC?

Despite the pandemic, we continue to stay focused on our vision of evolving into a regional medical center. We are building on our already well-established reputation as the leader in safety, quality, and patient satisfaction. We continue to expand the breadth and depth of our cardiac, oncology, orthopedics, pediatrics, and diagnostic imaging capabilities. We also continue to make significant investments in technologies made possible by the generosity of our donors, trustees, and corporate board members.

In February, we announced a partnership with the University of Miami's Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, South Florida's only NCI-designated cancer program.

This relationship enables us to tap into groundbreaking clinical research to improve the quality of cancer treatment we provide right here in Jupiter, while also allowing us to collaborate with academics and world-class specialists at the University of Miami.

Our \$80 million surgical institute, set to open in 2023, will have "smart" operating rooms for minimally invasive and robotic surgery for cardiovascular, orthopedic, and various other procedures.

When did you decide to become a doctor?

I've always been interested in science. I enjoyed biology, chemistry, and mathematics in high school and gravitated to medicine because I wanted to make an impact on helping people. Medicine also fed my intellectual curiosity.

Are there other doctors in your family?

My father is a chemical engineer, but everyone else in our family is a doctor, including my wife of 21 years, Dr. Priya Rastogi, who is a radiologist. We have two teenage daughters, one of whom aspires to enter the health care field.

How has being a doctor helped you in your role as CEO?

As a physician and businessperson, I recognize a broad range of considerations that affect how we can improve patient care, the patient experience, and our outcomes, and solve many of the challenges and opportunities we encounter.

Why did you decide to transition into hospital administration?

I loved practicing medicine but realized that I could also make a significant impact, not just on each of my individual patients, but on entire communities.

You start your day at 3:30 a.m. How do you wind down?

For me, swimming is a form of meditation. The serenity of swimming laps allows me to wind down while also getting the exercise needed for me to bring a fresh perspective each day. ◀