

## Intravenous vitamins? It's a business

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By John George  
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Two doctors who first met years ago on the campus of a Philadelphia medical school have established what they believe to be the first medical practice in the city to focus on intravenous vitamin and nutrient therapy.

RestoreIV opened for business in January with offices in the Sherman Mills Complex in East Falls and at the Philadelphia Navy Yard Corporate Center in South Philadelphia. The practice also offers a concierge service that will deliver the therapy at a patient's home or office.

The practice is led by Drs. Jason Hartman and Jonathan White.

"Jason was one of my teachers at [Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine]," White said.

For the past five years Hartman has led an integrative medicine practice, Flat Rock Health, where his patients have included Flyers goalie Steve Mason.

White started his career in medicine as an anesthesiologist, but found he wanted to practice medicine in an area where he would get to know and interact with his patients. He was looking into IV nutrient therapy, a somewhat controversial field of medicine when vitamins, minerals and other nutrients are administered directly into the bloodstream through an IV drip, at around the same time Hartman was exploring the therapy for his practice.

Hartman got the idea from his practice manager, Michael Deldeo, who had previously worked at a Washington, D.C., medical group that was offering the therapy.

"I did my due diligence before getting into it," he said. "We believe in (the physician credo) 'First do no harm.'"

Hartman and White reunited and became business partners after White had referred his father-in-law, who was suffering from back problems, to Hartman for care.

Through those sessions the doctors learned of each other's interest in IV nutrient therapy.

The IV nutrient therapy is not inexpensive, and insurance coverage varies greatly. The SpectraCell test, which shows what vitamins and minerals patients needs most, carries a \$600 price tag. For patients who are candidates for IV therapy, a course of treatment can involve six to 10 infusion sessions — each of which last about 30 minutes. The initial assessment and first IV therapy cost between \$180 and \$400, while subsequent sessions average around \$150. Deldeo said health insurance for most patients typically covers 60 to 80 percent of the costs.



*Drs. Jonathan White (left) and Jason Hartman lead Restore IV, which focuses on intravenous vitamin and nutrient therapy.*

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Critics of IV nutrient therapy say nutrients are best delivered into the body through healthy eating habits, which allow the liver to perform its role of filtering food before vitamins and minerals reach the bloodstream. RestoreIV's staff agrees, noting one of their first actions with new patients is to assess his or her's diet.

"The problem is, not everybody eats a healthy diet, and not everybody has access to healthy food," Hartman said. "For those people, IV therapy is a great way to get nutrients."

Hartman said they are averaging about 50 patients a month at RestoreIV, treating patients with conditions ranging from migraine headaches and chronic pain to those with chronic fatigue, Crohn's disease and inflammatory bowel disorder.

White noted the therapy is ideally suited for patients who have undergone gastric bypass surgery for weight loss and now have restricted diets.

The different types of therapy cover treatment for hydration, detoxification, pain relief, cold and flu resilience, and energy. The practice also creates custom therapies based on the results of a SpectraCell test.

Through the concierge service, RestoreIV is targeting businesses by offering assessments and therapy sessions for employees. "The therapy can help people who travel a lot and take red-eye flights and are fatigued," White said.