

# Surgeon named in UK's top ten

By Pat Jones

A CONSULTANT surgeon from Essex feels 'deeply flattered' at being named one of top 10 in his field in the UK.

Fifty leading surgeons were asked, 'If your loved one was diagnosed with breast cancer, who would you refer them to?'

Venkat Ramakrishnan, a breast cancer and reconstructive surgeon at Broomfield Hospital, in Chelmsford, was among the very best, according to his peers.

"I am deeply flattered, but aware that often, patients have suffered psychologically as well, and it is our job as surgeons to help restore some sort of normality," he said.

"We try to give the care we would like our loved ones to get."

Mr Ramakrishnan has been based at the St Andrews Centre for plastic surgery and burns since 2002 - he transferred with the unit when it moved from Billericay.

"My work is very specialised," he continued. "I usually work with a breast cancer surgeon who will perform a mastectomy, then I take over with the reconstructive work."

Patients are referred to St Andrews from all over Essex.

Mr Ramakrishnan carries out around 300 reconstructive operations a year - each last-

ing about six hours.

A national newspaper carried out the survey to find the best breast cancer reconstructive surgeons in the country.

Those consulted said of Mr Ramakrishnan: "He is technically excellent and has pushed the boundaries with the most challenging microsurgical techniques."

"Microsurgeons have to be able to plumb veins with the tiniest stitches to ensure that transplanted tissue survives in its new home in the breast."

Mr Ramakrishnan, 50, who also performs cosmetic breast surgery at BMI Private Hospital in Southend, was born in India and followed in his plastic surgeon father's footsteps.

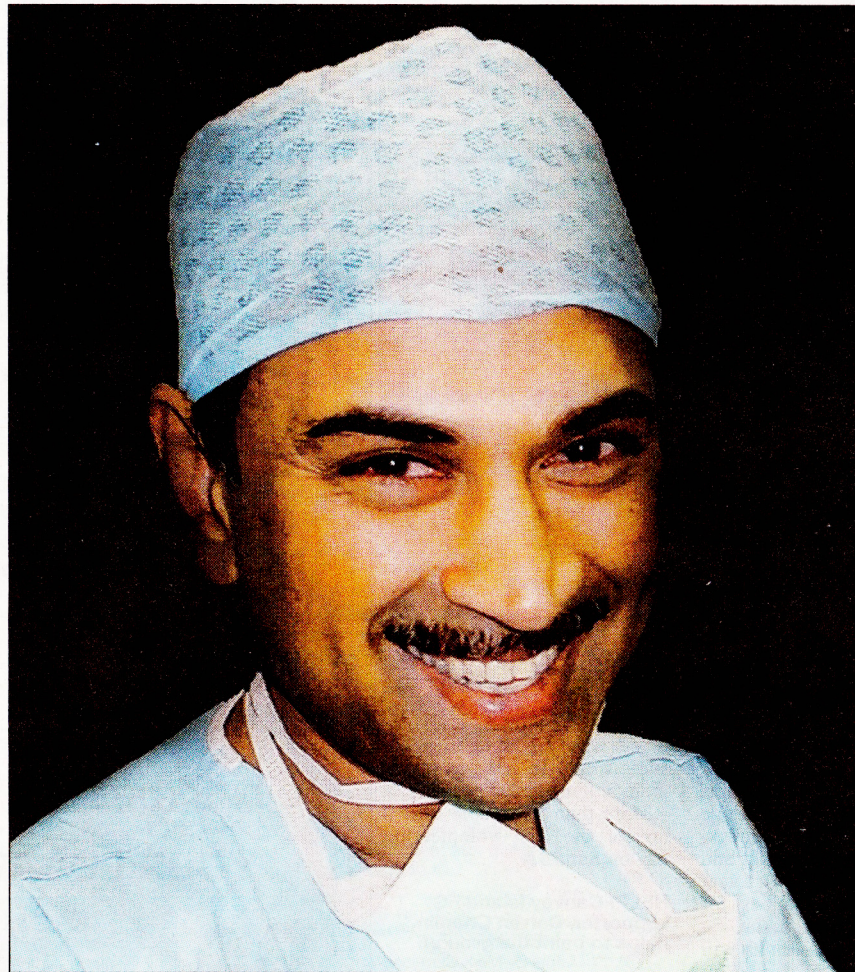
He went to medical school in India then trained as a plastic surgeon in Australia, before coming to the UK.

"I am extremely humbled by this accolade from fellow surgeons, and by the trust they place in me," he added.

Mr Ramakrishnan lives in Boreham with his wife and son, and his father is still practising in India.

■ St John Collier, a breast surgeon at Basildon Hospital, was also on the surgeons' highly commended list.

The report said he was 'a phenomenal and meticulous' breast surgeon who takes out all tissue without damaging the skin'.



FLATTERED: Surgeon Venkat Ramakrishnan.

## Become a heart hero

THE British Heart Foundation (BHF) is looking for 50 Heart Heroes across the county to help raise funds to save lives in its 50th birthday year.

The BHF launched its Hand on Heart volunteer campaign last week, which will run throughout June.

Volunteers play a vital role in the work of the BHF and last year, helped raised more than £30million for the pioneering work of the nation's heart charity.

Nicola Syred, BHF fundraising and volunteer manager for Essex, said: "Our volunteers truly are Heart Heroes and work with us to help us beat heart disease. We want you to put your hand on your heart, give time and join them."

"There are so many ways you can support us, from helping with local fundraising to volunteering in a BHF shop. Or you could put on your own event to raise money or even campaign to protect the UK's heart health."

"Volunteers tell us that helping the charity is not only incredibly rewarding but also a lot of fun."

"I look forward to hearing from you and hope you can support us in our 50th birthday year."

For more information about volunteering for the nation's heart charity, call 0300 456 8353, e-mail volunteer@bhf.org.uk or visit bhf.org.uk/volunteer