

SNM releases new fact sheet on breast cancer and molecular imaging

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Coinciding with the observance of Nuclear Medicine Week (October 5 to 11) and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October), SNM released today a new fact sheet highlighting recent developments in molecular imaging technologies that are dramatically improving the ways in which breast cancer is diagnosed and treated.

Molecular imaging is a highly effective, safe and painless imaging tool for diagnosing and treating breast cancer. Physicians report that the information they have gained from molecular imaging technologies has resulted in decisions to change the course of treatment in between 24 and 48 percent of breast cancer cases.

Breast cancer is just one of many types of cancer for which new and emerging molecular imaging techniques and therapies can significantly improve detection, diagnosis and treatment.

"As a field, molecular imaging is evolving very rapidly," said SNM President Robert W. Atcher, Ph.D., M.B.A. "Each new discovery—whether through improved cancer diagnosis and treatment, increased understanding of the fundamental causes of Alzheimer's disease or strides in how we treat cardiovascular disease—brings personalized medicine one step closer to reality. Molecular imaging techniques and therapies allow us to understand what is happening at a cellular level. Physicians can actually see the precise location of disease, determine if other organs are being affected and then target treatment. It is about delivering the right treatment to the right patient at the right

time."

Molecular imaging has the power to:

- Diagnose cancer early on—at its most curable stage;
- Create a portrait of what cells are doing and how they function over time;
- Eliminate the need for unnecessary exploratory surgery or multiple surgeries;
- Provide a painless and cost-effective alternative to more expensive—and less accurate—diagnostic tests;
- Confirm and treat suspected recurrent cancers;
- Monitor an individual's response to treatment and make adjustments as necessary;
- Equip physicians and individuals with information to make informed decisions about the best courses of action.

"Molecular imaging has the ability to detect abnormalities very early in the progression of disease, or even before symptoms occur—potentially saving countless lives," added Atcher. "Working together with patients and their caregivers, we can truly imagine the future."

For more information about the benefits of molecular imaging for the treatment of breast cancer and other types of cancer, visit www.snm.org/facts.

Source: Society of Nuclear Medicine

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