



**For Media Inquiries Contact:**  
**Mary Alice Taylor**  
**Communications Specialist**  
**901-516-0617**  
[taylmar@methodisthealth.org](mailto:taylmar@methodisthealth.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 4, 2010**

## **Methodist Healthcare to Tweet about New Multi-catheter Device**

*SAVI™: the Safest, Fastest, and Most Customizable Radiation Treatment for Breast Cancer*

**Memphis, Tenn.** – Beginning, Thursday, March 4, through Friday, March 12, Methodist Healthcare will host its first in a series of Twittercasts which will include tweets and videos focusing on women’s health services provided by Methodist Healthcare. The Twittercast will feature SAVI, the latest advancement in partial breast radiation to treat breast cancer. To follow the tweets, go to [www.twitter.com/methodisthlth](http://www.twitter.com/methodisthlth).

SAVI is offered at Methodist University Hospital (MUH), one of the seven hospitals within the Methodist system. MUH is the first medical facility in Memphis and one of about 200 sites in the country to offer breast cancer patients treatment with the leading edge technology of the SAVI catheter. SAVI offers more women the choice of partial breast radiation after a lumpectomy and a shorter treatment time. The Twittercast, will follow a patient from the time the SAVI catheter is surgically placed in her breast through her treatment which will cover about 10 days.

“The most exciting thing about SAVI is that it gives the radiation doctor ultimate control over where the dose goes,” explained Michael Farmer, M.D., a radiation oncologist with Memphis Radiological PC. “With the multi-catheter approach, SAVI delivers radiation in a way that maximizes the dose to the tumor, but minimizes the dose to normal tissue including the lymph nodes, the heart, and lungs.”

The multi-catheter characteristics of SAVI give doctors the ability to individualize treatment for each patient by shaping the radiation dose in three dimensions to exactly where patients need it and away from organs and tissue, keeping them safe. The ability to customize treatment means more women have the option of receiving partial breast radiation. In the past, if a woman had a lumpectomy cavity with a challenging geometry or if the location was too close to the skin, she would not have been able to receive partial breast radiation. Now with SAVI, these women can receive partial breast radiation.

“I love the technology,” said Michael Berry, M.D., a breast surgical oncologist with The Breast Clinic of Memphis. “SAVI is my catheter of choice because it gives me the ability to treat more patients.”

Sheri Lee of Olive Branch has already gone through radiation treatment with the SAVI catheter. She discovered she was a candidate for SAVI after finding a very small lump in her breast. The lump was so small it did not show up in a mammogram; however a biopsy revealed it was cancerous. When her friends found out she had breast cancer one said, "I'll get you set up at Mayo." Lee's response was, "I can stay right here in Memphis and get the treatment I need. I think it's very exciting to have access to the latest advances in health care. It's like one of our bright lights being turned on."

Traditionally, radiation lasts six-and-a-half weeks, but with the SAVI catheter patients receive radiation twice a day for just five days. The SAVI applicator is inserted in to the lumpectomy cavity through a small incision in the breast. Once the applicator is inserted, the catheters are expanded to conform to the cavity. The ends of the catheter remain accessible during treatment. A tiny radioactive seed is placed in each catheter by a computer-controlled machine. This delivers the radiation to areas where cancer is most likely to recur, while reducing the exposure of healthy tissue like the skin, heart, and lungs. The radiation source is completely removed after each treatment. After the fifth day of treatment, the catheters are collapsed from the lumpectomy cavity and the SAVI applicator is removed.

"People were shocked to learn that my radiation treatment only lasted for five days," said Lee.

Lee says going through the treatment was a lot less stressful since she was close to home.

"I received excellent care at Methodist University Hospital," said Lee. "Everyone was nice. All the personnel from the people who pushed the wheelchairs to the nurses were so helpful and pleasant to be around."

The radiation treatment with SAVI was successful for Lee. Her breast cancer is in remission.

Connect with Methodist on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/methodisthlth](http://www.twitter.com/methodisthlth) to learn what the next Twittercast will focus on.

### **Participating Physicians**

#### **Michael Farmer, M.D. – Radiation Oncologist**

Dr. Michael Farmer is an attending physician in the department of radiation oncology at Methodist Healthcare and a radiation oncologist with Memphis Radiological, P.C. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in molecular biology with honors and a minor in mathematics from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and went on to earn his medical degree from the University of Louisville School of Medicine in Louisville, Kentucky. Dr. Farmer completed his residency at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem, North Carolina.

Dr. Farmer has led a number of research projects and has co-authored numerous articles. He is a member of the Radiologic Society of North America and the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology.

**Michael Berry, M.D. – Breast Surgical Oncologist**

Dr. Michael Berry is a breast surgical oncologist with the Breast Clinic of Memphis. He received his fellowship training in breast surgical oncology through the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation fellowship of Breast Oncology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. This training in breast oncology has been completed by only a few physicians nationwide. Dr. Berry received his undergraduate degree from Baylor University, his medical degree from the University of Arkansas and his surgical training from Texas A&M University. He is board certified by the American Board of Surgery.

Nationally, Dr. Berry is a consultant and speaker for Susan G. Komen for the Cure. He serves as course instructor for the American College of Surgeons, the American Society of Breast Surgeons, and the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center. These courses provide continuing medical education to physicians across the country. He has also given several lectures at national meetings of the American Society of Breast Surgeons. Dr. Berry has participated in several national breast cancer trials and serves as an advisor and consultant to corporations developing new products and devices used in the care of the breast cancer patient. Locally, Dr. Berry is the President of the Board of Directors for the American Cancer Society Memphis Area.

**About Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare**

Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare is an integrated healthcare delivery system based in Memphis, Tenn. Founded in 1918 by The United Methodist Church to help meet the growing needs for quality healthcare in the Mid-South, Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare is a seven-hospital system that includes a home health agency, surgery and diagnostic centers, and outpatient clinics serving Memphis, Shelby County and the surrounding communities.

Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare's areas of excellence include cardiology, neurosciences, women's services, pediatrics and transplant services. To learn more about Methodist, visit our Web site at [www.methodisthealth.org](http://www.methodisthealth.org).

###