



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virginia Mason First in Seattle to Offer New Brachytherapy Radiation Option for Early-Stage Breast Cancer

SEATTLE – (Sept. 9, 2010) – The Floyd & Delores Jones Cancer Institute at Virginia Mason is the first cancer center in Seattle to offer a new radiation option for early-stage breast cancer patients that allows for customized radiation delivery, reduces toxicity, and reduces the length of treatment to only five days.

The SAVI[®] applicator, manufactured by Cianna Medical, Inc., facilitates the delivery of customized radiation treatment from inside the breast, using multiple catheters to direct radiation where it is needed most. The unique design allows for dose sculpting that minimizes exposure to healthy tissue and makes the benefits of breast brachytherapy available to many women, including many who would not be candidates for brachytherapy using a balloon catheter.

Partial breast irradiation targets only the breast tissue immediately surrounding the surgical cavity, rather than the whole breast, which is the target of conventional external beam radiotherapy. The SAVI device also allows the radiation dose to be tailored specifically to the patient's individual anatomy. Radiation exposure of healthy normal tissues, including heart, lung, skin, ribs, and unaffected breast tissue, is minimized.

Partial breast irradiation is also more convenient than conventional radiotherapy, as women can return to their normal family and work schedules after just five days of treatment. Breast brachytherapy typically involves two treatments per day for only five days, as compared to traditional external-beam radiation, which is delivered five days a week for up to six weeks.

"Radiation toxicity is on my patients' minds more and more these days. This new device combines the benefits of customization found in multicatheter brachytherapy with the ease of placement of a single catheter for a better patient experience," said Michelle Yao, MD, Virginia Mason radiation oncologist who specializes in breast cancer radiation therapy. "It gives us a nice dose distribution to the areas we want to treat with minimal dose to areas we want to avoid."

The multi-catheter SAVI applicator treats the tissue surrounding the lumpectomy cavity from the inside out. The device is inserted into the lumpectomy cavity through a single small incision, using local anesthesia. The physician then gently expands the bundle of catheters so the radiation dose will conform to the size and shape of the area to be treated. Treatments are delivered twice a day for five days, and the catheter is removed in clinic immediately following the last treatment.

Esther Coates of Edgewood, Wash. was one of the first patients at Virginia Mason to choose the SAVI approach. "One thing that is so different this time is how much more involved I am in my cancer care and in choosing my treatment," reflected Coates, who underwent treatment for ovarian cancer 27 years ago. "I feel so informed."

Coates said she chose SAVI after talking through all of her options with multiple specialists at Virginia Mason. Ultimately she chose this approach because of the ability to target the focused cancer area. "A big plus was that treatment only took five days," said Coates. "I feel great. I feel my normal self."

For additional clinical information, patients may call (206) 223-6801.

About Virginia Mason Medical Center

Virginia Mason Medical Center, founded in 1920, is a non-profit comprehensive regional health care system in Seattle that combines a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 440 physicians with a 336-bed acute-care hospital. Virginia Mason operates a network of clinics throughout the Puget Sound area; manages Bailey-Boushay House, a nursing residence and Chronic Care Management program for people living with HIV and AIDS; and operates Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason, internationally recognized in autoimmune disease research. Virginia Mason is known for applying manufacturing principles to health care to improve quality and patient safety. For more information, visit VirginiaMason.org or [Facebook/VMcares](https://www.facebook.com/VMcares) or follow @VirginiaMason on Twitter.

About Cianna Medical, Inc.

Cianna Medical, Inc. is a women's health company dedicated to the innovative treatment of early-stage breast cancer. When diagnosed early, most women have the option to save their breast by choosing breast conservation therapy (BCT). Cianna Medical manufactures and markets the SAVI[®] breast brachytherapy applicator. Cianna's commitment is to improve care and reduce the burden that breast cancer treatment places on women and their families.

Media contact: Alisha Mark, (206) 341-1509

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