



Leaders in radiation therapy
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New Breast Cancer Treatment May Reduce Radiation to Healthy Tissue, Study Shows

PHOENIX – A study conducted at Arizona Oncology Services (AOS) suggests the new SAVI™ applicator may reduce the amount of radiation delivered to healthy tissue during breast cancer treatment. The study was led by Salih Gurdalli, Ph.D., a physicist for AOS. The results were released in a poster presentation at the 2007 annual meeting of the American Brachytherapy Society in Chicago, April 29-May 1.

The study concluded that SAVI showed significantly lower doses of radiation at the skin surface while still maintaining coverage of the targeted tissue. The device's single-entry, multi-catheter design allows physicians to contour the dose of radiation away from healthy tissue, such as the skin surface.

AOS is the first medical facility in the nation to offer the device as part of breast conservation therapy. Robert Kuske, M.D. and Coral Quiet, M.D., both of AOS, are co-authors of the study.

The study compared the SAVI device to balloon brachytherapy, currently the most commonly used form of breast brachytherapy. Researchers inserted both devices into simulated lumpectomy cavities and applied the prescribed radiation dose.

“From a medical physics perspective, this study provides further evidence that SAVI may have some distinct advantages over earlier breast brachytherapy methods,” said Dr. Gurdalli.

“Essentially, SAVI combines the single-entry benefit of the balloon device with the flexible dosimetry of interstitial brachytherapy,” said Dr. Kuske. “The results suggest that some women with early-stage breast cancer who are not candidates for the balloon device could benefit from treatment with SAVI. The greater flexibility in using the SAVI catheter can also aid physicians in treating the part of the breast needing radiotherapy

while reducing dose to the skin, muscles, ribs, lungs, and heart, which do not need radiation exposure.”

Breast conservation therapy includes lumpectomy – surgical removal of the cancerous tissue within the breast plus tissue immediately around the tumor – followed by radiation.

While post-lumpectomy radiation has traditionally involved irradiation of the entire breast with an external beam, Arizona Oncology Services has been a leader in developing techniques in breast brachytherapy, an approach that targets the tumor site from inside the breast.

Whole breast irradiation can be inconvenient for the patient, as it involves a lengthy treatment course, with radiation delivered five times a week over a 6 - 7 week period. For eligible women, breast brachytherapy typically involves two treatments per day for only five days.

The SAVI applicator was developed by BioLucent, Inc., (Aliso Viejo, Calif.) a women's health company dedicated to the early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

Arizona Oncology Services (AOS) is a radiation oncology practice that was formed in 1981. With a team of 23 physicians and 13 locations in the greater Phoenix area and Yuma, AOS is a nationally recognized leader in numerous radiation techniques including accelerated partial breast therapy, brachytherapy, prostate seed implants, stereotactic radiosurgery, and monoclonal antibody radiation therapy. AOS physicians and staff partner with patients, families, and referring physicians to provide superior radiation oncology care with a focus on leading edge treatment, empathy and compassion. For more information, call 602-274-4484 or access www.azoncology.com

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