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Contact: Lois Griffitts, (602) 240-3375  
LGriffitts@AzOncology.com

**Medical Directors**

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David C. Beyer, MD

**Physicians**

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Thomas J. Taylor, MD  
Farley E. Yang, MD

**Chief Operating Officer**

Timothy T. McKeough

**Corporate Center**

300 W. Clarendon  
Ste. 350  
Phoenix, AZ 85013

602 274.4484 tel  
602 287.9406 fax  
800 360.6371 toll free

[www.azoncology.com](http://www.azoncology.com)

## **SAVI Applicator for Breast Brachytherapy May Optimize Treatment And Spare Healthy Tissue, Study Finds**

PHOENIX – A study conducted at Arizona Oncology Services (AOS) found that the new SAVI™ applicator potentially gives radiation oncologists two important tools for treating breast cancer. First, SAVI optimizes the distribution of the radiation dose to the targeted area. Second, the applicator reduces the radiation toxicity to healthy tissue such as the skin surface and chest wall.

SAVI is a single-entry, multi-catheter applicator that delivers a form of radiation therapy known as breast brachytherapy, as part of breast conservation therapy. By targeting the radiation more precisely, SAVI treats the tissue surrounding the lumpectomy cavity while minimizing the radiation exposure of non-targeted tissue.

The AOS study was led by Salih Gurdalli, Ph.D., a physicist for AOS. Robert Kuske, M.D. and Coral Quiet, M.D., radiation oncologists for AOS, co-authored the study. The results will be released in a poster presentation at the 2007 annual meeting of the American Society for Therapeutic Radiation and Oncology, in Los Angeles, October 28-November 1.

The study concluded that, as intended, the expandable, multi-catheter design of SAVI made it possible to treat the targeted area with the dosage amount considered optimal by the radiation oncologist. The AOS researchers concluded the SAVI applicator reduces exposure of nearby, healthy body structures that can be harmed by radiation – for example, the skin and chest wall. With SAVI, the dosage to the skin was 10–13 percent lower than published skin dose values for a previously developed brachytherapy device.

The authors also reported that SAVI was easy to place and remove, and that treatment with SAVI was unaffected by formation of seroma.

Ten patients participated in the study. Of the ten, seven would not have qualified as candidates for the older brachytherapy method. Among factors disqualifying use of the older method were nearness of the surgical cavity to the skin or chest wall and small cavity size.

“The ability of the SAVI applicator to be used with patients who otherwise might not be eligible for balloon brachytherapy is a significant benefit,” said Dr. Kuske, a nationally prominent radiation oncologist. “Brachytherapy is a much more convenient way for women to receive radiation therapy for early stage breast cancer. SAVI can make this five-day treatment alternative available to a larger number of patients.”

AOS was the first medical facility in the nation to offer SAVI as part of breast conservation therapy. Breast conservation therapy includes lumpectomy – the surgical removal of the cancerous tissue within the breast plus tissue immediately around the tumor – followed by radiation.

Radiation treatment after a lumpectomy has traditionally involved irradiation of the entire breast with an external beam. Known as whole breast irradiation (WBI), this approach exposes more healthy tissue and involves a lengthy treatment course, with radiation delivered five times a week over a six-to-seven week period. Treatment with the SAVI applicator lasts just five days. Breast brachytherapy is becoming a more widely used alternative to whole breast irradiation.

“Further study is needed to determine the long-term efficacy of treatment with SAVI, and also to test the treatment with more patients,” said Dr. Kuske. “The results of this study are quite promising.”

The SAVI applicator is made by Cianna Medical, Inc., a women's health company dedicated to the innovative treatment of early-stage breast cancer.

Arizona Oncology Services (AOS) is a radiation oncology practice that was formed in 1981. With a team of 25 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 leading edge radiation oncology care with a focus on empathy and compassion. For more information, call 602-274-4484 or access [www.azoncology.com](http://www.azoncology.com)

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