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HACKLEY HOSPITAL INTRODUCES LATEST IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

Muskegon, MI, December 20, 2005 -- Hackley Hospital is now using the latest diagnostic imaging technology to detect, monitor and treat cancer. Positron emission tomography, (PET) is a specific type of imaging that can help physicians distinguish abnormal from normal functioning organs and tissues. PET/CT combines anatomic information from computer tomography (CT) and metabolic information from the PET scan, which increases the overall diagnostic accuracy of the scan.

“This is a very exciting technology for cancer imaging. We have been using CT and MRI for years to differentiate abnormal from normal, however, it has predominantly been based on the size and shape of structures rather than their metabolic behavior, says Hackley Hospital radiologist Mario Orsini, DO. “With PET/CT we exploit the fact that tumors typically use more fuel than normal cells,” he continued. “An additional benefit is better targeting of radiation therapy, which not only allows more effective treatment of the cancer, but also limits the side-effects on surrounding normal tissues.”

PET/CT is performed as an outpatient imaging procedure. A very low dose radioactive substance is injected intravenously into the patient, who is then placed into a scanner, which resembles a traditional CT machine. The scanner converts the information to generate an image with both the anatomic and metabolic information. The result is unprecedented accuracy in the diagnosis and staging of cancer.

PET/CT is useful in a number of clinical diagnoses, such as the early detection of cancer, in evaluating the effectiveness of cancer treatment, and in monitoring for cancer recurrence. In addition to cancer imaging, PET/CT is useful in evaluating the brain for disease such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and seizure disorder.

“This is an extremely important service for the community,” says Mike Baker, Director of Operations. “Since our initial launch of the PET/CT service, we have seen a significant response from physicians and we plan to increase our capacity to meet the growing demand,” he said.

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