

# **Memorial Medical Center's Combined PET/CT Scanner Revolutionizes Cancer Care**

Combining the best of two scanning technologies, a new diagnostic imaging system at Memorial Medical Center will help doctors more accurately detect cancer and pinpoint its exact location in the body. Combining technology from a positron emission tomography (PET) with a computed tomography (CT), the dual-imaging scanner collects both anatomic and physiologic information during a single exam. Memorial Medical Center is the first hospital in the Springfield area to offer the combined PET/CT scanner. The integrated information permits accurate tumor detection and localization for a variety of cancers, including breast, esophageal, cervical, melanoma, lymphoma, lung, colorectal, head and neck, and ovarian cancer, explained Kathy Amb, director of radiology at Memorial Medical Center. Private insurance and Medicare cover the costs for the procedure.

"The introduction of PET/CT in the Springfield region represents a vast improvement in the way we stage and treat cancer," said Dr. Charles Neal, a radiologist whose specialty is in nuclear medicine at Memorial Medical Center. "This is exciting technology that provides patients with access to leading-edge diagnostic imaging technology at Memorial Medical Center." "The benefits for patients are tremendous," agreed Dr. Eric P. Justin, also a radiologist with a nuclear-medicine specialty. "Physicians will be able to make more accurate diagnoses and develop more targeted treatment plans. For patients, that all adds up to higher quality care that's second to none."

Other advantages of the PET/CT scanner, made by Siemens Nuclear Medicine Group of Hoffman Estates, Ill., include:

- Allowing the health care team to rapidly perform both PET and CT scans in a single 15-minute to 30-minute session without having to move the patient.
  - Enabling physicians to make earlier and more accurate diagnoses and develop more precise treatment plans.
  - Acquiring data for PET scans in less than half the time as conventional PET imaging, reducing the time spent by patients to complete their imaging procedures.
  - Detecting and pinpointing the exact location of tumors for a variety of cancers.
  - Increasing patient comfort and convenience by reducing the number of scanning sessions a patient must undergo. Increasing the ability for earlier detection of the recurrence of cancer, revealing tumors that may have been otherwise obscured by the scarring that results from traditional surgery and radiation therapy.
  - Providing faster and more complete diagnostic information to physicians.
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