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New Colorectal Cancer Resource Available *March Is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month*

March 9, 2007 – In time for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology is encouraging people to get educated about the disease by updating its colorectal cancer patient brochure.

An estimated 153,760 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2007, according to the American Cancer Society. Starting at age 50, both men and women are encouraged to be screened for colorectal cancer by a test called a colonoscopy. The exam is an outpatient procedure where your doctor will insert a thin tube with a microscopic camera so that the he or she can check for abnormalities in the rectum and colon. If irregularities are found, those samples are biopsied for evidence of cancer. If cancer is found, you are encouraged to talk to several cancer specialists, including a radiation oncologist, medical oncologist and a surgeon, to explore the treatment options available to you.

ASTRO's award-winning public awareness campaign was designed to bring more attention to treatment options available to patients. The patient brochures attempt to explain radiation therapy and other treatment techniques simply, giving guidance and resources to the patient in an uncomplicated format. *Radiation Therapy for Colorectal Cancer* is just one of the several different patient brochures ASTRO offers, including information on clinical trials, the radiation oncology treatment team as well as three new Spanish language brochures. All of the brochures are free of charge to patients and support groups by visiting www.rtanswers.org or calling 1-800-962-7876.

“Colorectal cancer is a very curable disease if caught in its early stages,” said Thomas J. Eichler, M.D., Chair of ASTRO's Communications Committee and a radiation oncologist at CJW Medical Center at the Thomas Johns Cancer Center in Richmond, Va. “Learning the signs, symptoms and screenings will help you make an informed decision on your treatment options if you or someone you know is diagnosed.”

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To learn more about colorectal cancer treatment options, visit www.rtanswers.org. To receive a complimentary brochure, please contact Beth Bukata at 1-800-962-7876 or bethb@astro.org.

ASTRO is the largest radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 8,600 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, biology and physics, the Society is dedicated to the advancement of the practice of radiation oncology by promoting excellence in patient care, providing opportunities for educational and professional development, promoting research and disseminating research results and representing radiation oncology in a rapidly evolving socioeconomic healthcare environment.

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