

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

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New Screening Process Helps Better Diagnose Oral Cancers

January 19, 2007 – Rancho Mirage, Calif. – Patients with early stage oral cancer may benefit from a more advanced screening process allowing for a more accurate diagnosis, according to a study presented at the plenary session today at the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Cancer Symposium in Rancho Mirage, Calif., co-sponsored by the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology, the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the American Head and Neck Society.

“By combining conventional techniques with more modern techniques, we were able to better diagnose and determine the best options for patients with oral cancer,” said J.B. Epstein, lead author of the study and Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. “This approach to diagnosing oral cancer may lead to easier identification of serious pathology, significantly lessening the need for unnecessary biopsies without additional risk of false negatives.”

Patients with early stage oral cancer are typically examined by their doctor for suspicious areas in the mouth and throat area. Doctors in this study wanted to test the value of two diagnostic aids in evaluating lesions in the oral cavity. Chemiluminescent light, or brand name Vizilite and toluidine blue, a pharmaceutical grade dye, were used in addition to the conventional, visual and manual observations of the patient.

Patients were given routine visual examinations under incandescent light for suspicious lesions. The lesions that were deemed suspicious were then assessed with Vizilite, followed by the toluidine blue dye and then biopsied. Doctors then compared the findings from the conventional exam to the advanced, illumination and stain exam.

This study found that of the 84 patients studied, Vizilite improved either the brightness or sharpness of the identified lesions by 61 percent. Only biopsying lesions which retained the toluidine blue stain reduced the false positive rate by nearly 59 percent while maintaining zero false negatives.

Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Cancer Symposium
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For more information on radiation therapy for head and neck cancer, visit

www.rtanswers.org.

The abstract, “*Analysis of Oral Mucosal Biopsies Identified and Evaluated by Visual Examination, Chemiluminescence and Toluidine Blue,*” will be presented at the plenary session on January 19, 2007. To speak to the lead author of the study, J.B. Epstein, D.M.D., M.S.D., F.R.C.D.(C), please call Beth Bukata at 703-431-2332 January 18-21 in Rancho Mirage, Calif. You may also e-mail her at bethb@astro.org.

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