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Resource helps patients understand stereotactic cancer treatments

Fairfax, Va., April 6, 2009 – The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has recently updated its popular patient brochure, *Plain Talk for Radiation Therapy Patients: Stereotactic Radiation*.

Stereotactic radiation is a specialized type of external beam radiation therapy that uses focused radiation beams to target a well-defined tumor. With stereotactic treatments, radiation oncologists use detailed imaging, computerized three-dimensional treatment planning and precise treatment set-up to deliver the radiation dose with extreme accuracy.

Many clinics around the country offer some type of stereotactic radiation. However, treatment centers often call the treatment by the name of the company that manufactured the equipment, making it difficult for patients to compare treatments. In response, members of ASTRO wrote this short, two-page brochure to help patients and their families better understand how the technology works as they consider their treatment options.

“I am seeing more and more patients come in asking about a specific treatment by name that they have heard about on television or the radio or read in the news. Our hope is that this brochure helps patients and their families compare treatments and radiation oncology treatment teams,” said Gregory Patton, M.D., chair of ASTRO’s Communications Committee and a radiation oncologist at Northwest Cancer Specialists, P.C., in Portland, Ore.

Plain Talk for Radiation Therapy Patients: Stereotactic Radiation is one of 16 brochures in English, Spanish, Japanese and Arabic ASTRO offers to help patients better understand radiation therapy. Since 2003, ASTRO has distributed more than 650,000 hard copies of its brochures. Materials can also be downloaded free from www.rtanswers.org. Printed copies are sold at www.astro.org for \$7.50 for 50 copies.

To learn more about radiation therapy treatments, visit www.rtanswers.org. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

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ASTRO is the largest radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, biology and physics, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. For more information on radiation therapy, visit www.rtanswers.org. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

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