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(BW)(NY-VIATRONIX) Doctors Support Virtual Colonoscopy Screening to Save Lives as National Colon Cancer Awareness Month Kicks Off in March

Business Editors, Health/Medical Writers

Long Island, N.Y.--(Business Wire)--Feb. 20, 2003: *Doctors across the U.S. come to the same conclusion when asked about Virtual Colonoscopy.*

"It helps to save lives," states Kevin A. Kreeger, Ph.D. and Director Research and Development for Viatronix, a, FDA-approved 3-D Virtual Colonoscopy system developer.

Dr. C. Michael Wright, a cardiologist at The LifeScore Clinic in San Diego agrees, "People are risking their lives just to avoid the traditional procedure. Viatronix virtual colonoscopy provides a proven, accurate and more palatable alternative to standard colon exams."

Dr. Wright goes on to comment on the importance of colon screening as the absolute best way to substantially reduce the incidence of colon cancer, but admits that patients may be turning a deaf ear. "A lot of time and effort has been poured into awareness and public service campaigns with the best of intentions, but you can't change the fact that the traditional procedure is unpleasant, uncomfortable and people can't immediately return to normal activities."

Dr. James Ehrlich, medical director of Colorado Heart and Body Imaging, HeartCheck in Washington, DC and HeartScan of Indiana also sees virtual colonoscopy as a patient-friendly solution that should encourage more people to get the screening, without being concerned about sedation, lost work, and small, but possible risks including colon perforation. He points to other reasons why virtual colonoscopy comes much closer to an "ideal" screening test than its invasive traditional counterpart, conventional colonoscopy.

"Virtual colonoscopy can visualize 100 percent of the colon surface because of its ability to navigate in both directions. With the Viatronix system, we can document that excellent degree of surface visualization. The patient undergoes a much milder bowel preparation, receives no sedation and can return to normal activities immediately. It gives patients another option and gets more people in for screening. We have also found a few life-threatening extracolonic lesions before they became significant, an added bonus for this exciting new test. Traditional colonoscopy is an important procedure -- unfortunately it has been a failure of public acceptance. We think that the introduction of a safer and comparably accurate screening procedure will increase the numbers of those requesting a complete colon examination by at least 50%."

Dr. Mark Klein, a radiologist from Washington Radiology believes that a screening procedure should have no risk which is why he recently invested in a Viatronix Virtual Colonoscopy System. "Colon cancer is preventable in the vast majority of individuals by beginning total colon screening at age 50. There is a very limited risk (small, but real) with traditional optical colonoscopy from the sedation and the procedure. A screening test should have no risk. With virtual colonoscopy, there is no sedation, no day off, no risk. A patient is in and out in 15 minutes."

Doctors at other facilities throughout the U.S. from New York to California recognize the critical importance of colon cancer screening and believe virtual colonoscopies offer a more pleasant alternative that will motivate patients to get screened. Before Viatronix, colonoscopies were seen as time-consuming, uncomfortable and inconvenient procedures. This negative image has led to 70-75% of the population never getting screened. It also plays a large part in colorectal cancer being the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States, especially tragic, since colorectal cancer is 91% curable when detected early.

Viatronix Virtual Colonoscopy screening requires that a patient follow an easy, doctor recommended preparation prior to the scanning. The need for harsh purgatives are eliminated, especially with the recommended drink of contrast solution. Because there is no sedation required, it is not necessary to have a friend nearby to drive the patient back and forth.

The scanning which takes about 15 minutes has the patient lying on his/her back and stomach while a CAT Scan takes pictures of the abdomen and pelvis. Only a small tube is inserted in the rectum to inflate the colon.

With Viatronix system, a high quality 3-D image of the colon is constructed, eliminating the need for inserting and moving a scope through the colon. After the exam the physician can actually "fly through" the patient's colon, from beginning to end, and around all folds, searching for even tiny polyps.

With Viatronix Virtual Colonoscopy, 100% of the colon surface can be seen. It is estimated that physicians only see 80% of the colon surface area with conventional colonoscopy.

Viatronix is a global leader in diagnostic medical imaging and treatment through innovative 3-D computer imaging technologies. For more information, please visit www.viatronix.com or call 631/444-9700.

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