PR Newswire
United Business Media

 PRINT THIS

Click to Print

Colon Cancer Awareness Month Begins With the News That President Obama Selected 'Virtual Colonoscopy' For His Colon Cancer Screening

The Viatronix V3D-Colon system used in CTC screening

STONY BROOK, N.Y., March 8 /PRNewswire/ -- Viatronix Incorporated, a Stony Brook, New York, based company announced that its V3D-Colon software is used at the National Naval Medical Center where the President's annual physical was done. "Our software is being utilized at several DOD facilities since the landmark Virtual Colonoscopy clinical trial published in the New England Journal of Medicine back in December 2003," said Zaffar Hayat, President of Viatronix Incorporated.

"We are extremely proud that our system was used for the President's colon cancer screening exam." He went on to say that the Viatronix V3D-Colon software is the most clinically validated virtual colonoscopy (VC) software on the market.

Colon Cancer Facts: It is estimated that 150,000 new cases of colon cancer will be detected in the U.S. and over 50,000 Americans will die from colon cancer this year. Approximately one American life is lost to colon cancer every ten minutes.

The astonishing thing about colon cancer is that it is more than 90% preventable with early screening. Unfortunately, less than 50% of the screening age population (over 45 for African Americans and over 50 for others) is getting screened using the conventional screening exam – optical colonoscopy (OC).

One of the main reasons for this low screening compliance rate is the invasive nature of optical colonoscopy and the accompanying sedation that is generally required. People tend to delay and or stay away from this procedure altogether. In some instances OC is not readily available to all segments of the population.

We can either wait, do nothing and spend billions of dollars each year on the treatment of colon cancer risking over 50,000 Americans lives on a cancer that is preventable, or we can increase screening compliance by adding virtual colonoscopy to the list of reimbursed exams. Increased compliance of colon cancer screening would save lives and reduce the cost of treatment through prevention.

The virtual colonoscopy technology compliments optical colonoscopy for screening by offering the patients a different less invasive option. This is perfect for people who tend to shy away from optical colonoscopy. Virtual Colonoscopy can be offered wherever a CT scanner is available. This would offer an alternate method of screening for people who do not have access to optical colonoscopy and it would increase the screening capacity for colon cancer in our nation. Virtual Colonoscopy has proven to be cost effective and has helped screening compliance go up by as much as 70% in the past 5 to 6 years at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, the same place where our nation's President got his screening exam. Several other DOD medical facilities and some in the private sector have also shown widespread acceptance of VC by patients.

The reasons why VC was chosen for the President's exam is like any other patient/doctor decision; it is between them and based on individual circumstances. The only advantage the President had compared to most of us is his health plan covered it as an option.

Virtual Colonoscopy offers a minimally invasive, cost effective exam that only takes a few minutes to complete and does not require patient sedation. In several screening studies conducted over the past 5 years, patients have preferred this test over optical colonoscopy for screening. The test entails two quick CT scans with the data reconstructed in 3D so the physician can examine the colon using a virtual fly-through.

At present our healthcare system is spending billions of dollars for the treatment of colon cancer instead of on prevention. Virtual Colonoscopy offers a viable, less invasive option for colon cancer screening, and helps increase screening compliance. The

technology for this screening exam has been clinically tested and re-tested for close to 10 years in the U.S.

Last year the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) denied reimbursement of this procedure for screening in a controversial decision. They felt there was not enough evidence to show this exam was good for their constituents – people 65 and older; This despite there being no supporting evidence that colorectal cancer behaves differently based on the age of the patient. In a recently published independent clinical study, virtual colonoscopy was proven to be as effective for colon cancer screening in the age group 65 and older as it is for the rest of the population.

Both CMS and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force somehow did not seem to take into account certain key factors when it came to their decision on colon cancer:

1. The low screening compliance rate for colon cancer screening using the current reimbursed methods.
2. How to increase screening compliance and save lives from a cancer that is more than 90% preventable.
3. How to increase the screening capacity in the U.S.
4. Cost of treatment versus prevention: How to reduce the billions of dollars spent on the treatment of colon cancer and the cost saving through prevention in both human lives and dollars spent.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) has already endorsed the virtual colonoscopy as one of the front line screening exams for colon cancer since early 2008. The American Medical Association (AMA) has also approved and issued CPT codes for this procedure.

"We certainly hope the President's choice of virtual colonoscopy as his colon cancer screening exam will be a catalyst to make this important screening procedure available to the general public," said Mr. Hayat. He went on to say, "We hope CMS will reconsider its decision and make this life saving exam available for all of its constituents and private insurers will follow suit so that ultimately all Americans have the best health care options available to them."

About Viatronix

Viatronix is a leading innovator and developer of 2D/3D medical imaging and diagnostic software. The software enables physicians to interactively view vital organs and anatomical structures within the human body from data acquired by standard medical imaging equipment in minimally or non-invasive methods. Viatronix's user interface is well known for ease of use, efficient workflow and intuitive diagnostic tools.

Viatronix, through application of its V3D® technology is developing additional innovative products that will be useful in early detection of other diseases, treatment planning, intervention, and follow-up evaluation. Viatronix, Inc. is located in Stony Brook, NY. To learn more, call us toll free at 1-866-887-4636 or log on to www.viatronix.com.

SOURCE Viatronix Incorporated

Back to top

RELATED LINKS
http://www.viatronix.com

Find this article at:
http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/colon-cancer-awareness-month-begins-with-the-news-that-president-obama-selected-virtual-colonoscopy-for-his-colon-cancer-screening-86835167.html

Click to Print

SAVE THIS | EMAIL THIS | Close

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.