David Edmonson, MD, introduces MarginProbe™ System in lumpectomy to RI

PROVIDENCE – Women & Infants Hospital is the first in the state to offer breast cancer patients access to the MarginProbe™ System, which is three times more effective in identifying cancer on the margin of a breast mass during a lumpectomy than traditional methods.

DAVID EDMONSON, MD, a surgeon in the Breast Health Center, part of the Program in Women’s Oncology at Women & Infants, has been trained to use the new device, which provides him with real-time positive cancer detection for breast cancer patients during a lumpectomy. Two additional breast surgeons – DRS. ASHLEY STUCKEY AND JENNIFER GASS, co-director of the Breast Health Center and chief of surgery at Women & Infants – will also be trained to use the technology.

“During surgery, we always want to remove all of the cancer, but until this technology was developed, we couldn’t know for sure that we’d gotten it all until pathology tests were done after the procedure,” DR. Edmonson says. “Now, we are in the operating room and we are better able to assess whether or not we’ve gotten clean margins around the cancer and that we are not leaving any cancer behind.”

With MarginProbe, however, there has been a 56-percent reduction in reoperation versus the standard of care.

“Lumpectomy and radiation are as effective in combating breast cancer as mastectomy, but only if there is a clean margin with no remaining cancer cells at the edge of the removed tissue,” Dr. Edmonson explains. “Unfortunately, the rates of reoperation if there is a positive margin in the breast can be as high as 30 percent.”

To ensure the clean margins, the surgeon uses the head of the disposable MarginProbe along the edge of the cancer site. The head contains the proprietary Fringe Field Sensor [FFS], which can detect minute differences in bioelectric properties in tissue when the surgeon presses the probe to the specimen. This allows the sensor to capture the tissue’s electromagnetic signature, which is either healthy or cancerous. The surgeon runs a series of measurements on each margin, collecting data for the entire specimen. With such real-time results, the surgeon can extend the margins to remove additional tissue if needed.

“This takes three to five minutes but makes a tremendous difference in the results and, ultimately, the patient’s satisfaction,” Dr. Edmonson says.

Comprehensive Cancer Center launches Lung Cancer Screening Clinic

Multidisciplinary clinic offers timely, convenient access of care to patients who have a positive lung cancer screening CT scan

PROVIDENCE – The Comprehensive Cancer Center of Rhode Island, The Miriam and Newport hospitals has introduced the Lung Cancer Screening Clinic. The multidisciplinary clinic, which is staffed with experienced radiologists, pulmonologists and behavioral medicine staff, provides accurate interpretation of low-dose CT scans and coordinates treatment options for patients who need additional care.

“Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. and accounts for nearly 30 percent of all cancer deaths or more than 150,000 a year,” said TERRANCE T. HEALEY, MD, director of thoracic radiology at Rhode Island Hospital. “Early and accurate detection is essential and through the Lung Cancer Screening Clinic, we are able to utilize the most advanced diagnostic imaging technology to accurately interpret low-dose CT scans of those patients who have had an abnormal or positive scan.”

He added, “While an abnormal or positive screen does not mean a patient has cancer, there could be other conditions that warrant treatment. For those who do have cancer, early detection before symptoms appear is critical to successful lung cancer treatment.”

Early screening is especially important for those most at risk for developing lung cancer because of how successful low-dose CT is in detecting an abnormality,” said MELISSA TUKEY, MD, director of interventional pulmonology at The Miriam and Rhode Island hospitals. “Once referred to the clinic, patients will be seen by our staff within two weeks where we will interpret their scan and have the patient evaluated by a pulmonologist and a behavioral medicine staff member, who can help patients who are smokers find the right smoking cessation program. Our goal is to facilitate timely care for our patients and their families, while working closely with each patient’s primary care physician.”