

# NEWS RELEASE

## MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

*An affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System*

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Monmouth Medical Center Urologists Perform Cutting-Edge Surgery for Kidney Cancer**

LONG BRANCH, N.J., March 10, 2010 – According to the National Kidney Cancer Foundation, there are more than 30,000 cases of kidney cancer diagnosed in the United States each year.

While doctors have typically treated the disease by removing part, or all, of the kidney, new technology is allowing urologists at Monmouth Medical Center to leave the kidney in, while taking the cancer out.

At Monmouth, urologists Arnold Grebler, M.D., and Ilan Waldman, M.D., recently performed the hospital's first cryosurgical cases, a kidney-sparing alternative to traditional surgery to remove renal tumors.

Cryosurgery is a minimally invasive technique that uses the application of extreme cold to kill cancerous tissue. The procedure uses a slender needle known as a cryoprobe inserted through a small incision into the center of the tumor, which is then frozen to a temperature of about -90 to -100 degrees Celsius.

The procedure is used in patients with small renal tumors whose cancer has not spread to distant sites. The urologist or radiologist inserts a long, thin probe directly into the tumor, and argon gas is delivered through the probe and

an “ice ball” is created. Tumor cells and those just around the outside of the tumor are destroyed by several freeze and thaw cycles.

“The tumor is frozen, allowed to thaw, and then refrozen again,” says Dr. Grebler, section chief of urology at Monmouth. “Almost immediately, you can see the tumor’s blood supply disappear. You can actually see the tumor turn pale.”

Dr. Waldman says cryotherapy is a kidney-sparing alternative to major surgery. “It is an especially good alternative for older patients with small tumors and other medical problems, as the procedure results in minimal pain and bleeding, and offers a shorter recovery time,” he says.

Long Branch resident Giovanna Avagliano, 78, was among the first to undergo the procedure at Monmouth, and, according to Dr. Grebler, recovered well and was back to normal activities within two weeks.

“Especially with elderly patients, we want to do as little surgery as possible, and this surgery is much less taxing than traditional surgery,” he says, adding that cryosurgery preserves more kidney function. “By avoiding major surgery, most patients are able to go home the next day, report minimal pain, fewer complications and a more rapid recovery. And because only a small part of the kidney containing the tumor is frozen, typically the rest of the kidney will continue to work as usual, allowing the patient to avoid dialysis.”

Minimally invasive procedures are techniques that allow physicians access to the internal organs without the customary large incision. Cryotherapy is an established, minimally invasive procedure for prostate, kidney, liver and other tumors.

Kidney cancer is the eighth most common cancer in men, and the 10<sup>th</sup> most common in women. Risk factors include cigarette smoking, exposure to chemicals such as petroleum, cadmium, asbestos, and arsenic, heavy analgesic use, hypertension and obesity.

For Monmouth, a regional leader in advanced laparoscopic surgery, the breakthrough procedure is among a number of recent milestones in the treatment of kidney cancer. In 2003, urologist Jules Geltzeiler, M.D., teamed with Frank Borao, M.D., section chief of minimally invasive surgery at Monmouth, to pioneer laparoscopic partial nephrectomy, an effective minimally invasive technique to treat small renal tumors without having to remove the entire kidney.

To learn more about cryosurgery or other minimally invasive treatment options at Monmouth Medical Center, call 888-SBHS-123.

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