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Contact: Christopher Miller  
Media Relations  
414- 385-2362

**ST. LUKE'S LAUNCHES STUDY OF RADIOFREQUENCY  
ABLATION TO RELIEVE BONE CANCER  
Only Wisconsin Hospital included in National Clinical Trial**

MILWAUKEE, Wis., Jan. 4, 2002 -- St. Luke's Medical Center has enrolled its first patient in a research study to evaluate the effectiveness of radiofrequency ablation in relieving the often-intolerable pain associated with metastatic bone tumors.

Preliminary results of the ongoing clinical study show that proprietary radiofrequency technology from RITA Medical Systems appears to be safe and may dramatically relieve unrelenting pain caused by metastatic bone cancer.

St. Luke's is the only center in Wisconsin, and one of five sites across the country, to be involved in the trial. The other prestigious centers involved in the clinical trial are Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York City, and Northwestern University Medical Center in Chicago. Patients are being sought for the trial at all sites.

The adult patients involved in the study have painful metastatic bone tumors, which have not responded to either conventional radiation and/or chemotherapy treatments.

The patients are subsequently treated with the RITA Medical Systems' radiofrequency ablation system, which is a minimally invasive procedure enabling physicians to deliver monitored and controlled levels of radiofrequency energy through

## **Bone cancer study/Add one**

an array of thin electrodes inserted into a cancerous tumor that heats and destroys the tumor.

Following treatment, the protocol requires a patient's pain response to be measured one day following the procedure, then once a week for the month following the procedure, then every other week for a total of six months following the procedure. Thus far, there have been no serious complications reported and the patients have experienced a dramatic reduction in pain.

Donna McKay, a 63-year old Franklin resident, is the first patient enrolled at St. Luke's Medical Center. She was diagnosed with colon cancer in January of last year. The cancer eventually metastasized, or moved into, the area of her sacrum, affecting the bones of her lower back. The pain became so intense that even daily doses of several narcotic pain relievers would not provide adequate relief. In December of last year she received RF ablation. Within a week, on a scale of one to ten, her pain had gone from ten to zero. McKay's quality of life has improved significantly as she focuses on beating cancer.

"It's great. I feel better than I have in a long time," said McKay. "I've got my life back a little. I'm really thrilled with the idea that I don't have that horrible pain. I've also cut out most drugs. I now take only one pain medication, three times a day. Before I was taking five medications a day."

"In preliminary studies, radiofrequency ablation was shown to provide patients with significant pain relief from localized bone cancer and their quality of life was markedly improved," according to Robert Beres, the interventional radiologist at St. Luke's Medical Center who performed the procedure on Donna McKay. Dr. Beres is also the Principal Investigator of the study at St. Luke's.

Dr. Beres noted that the bone is the most common site of metastases, or the spread of cancer, and that as many as 50 percent of patients with this condition do not get adequate relief for the often intractable pain that accompanies it through conventional therapies such as chemotherapy, radiation or other drug therapies.

## **Bone cancer study/Add two**

For more information about the trial, please call the Vince Lombardi Cancer Hotline at 1-800-252-2990. St. Luke's Medical Center is part of Aurora Health Care, a community-owned Wisconsin health care provider and a nationally recognized leader in efforts to improve the quality of health care. Aurora has care sites in 65 communities in eastern Wisconsin.

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