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Spaces Still Available in Clinical Study That Examines Vitamin D Drug in Those at High Risk for Prostate Cancer

CINJ Team to Test Effectiveness of Calcitriol on Rate of Cell Development

New Brunswick, N.J., October 4, 2007 – Researchers at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey are reminding residents that a clinical study focusing on cell development in prostate cancer still has spaces available. One in six men will be diagnosed with the disease; it is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in men, other than skin cancer, and the second leading cause of cancer death in men. The American Cancer Society estimates that in New Jersey, 8,070 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed, while 750 will die from the disease this year alone. That is why CINJ investigators are testing the effectiveness of the Vitamin D drug calcitriol in the medical condition known as High Grade Prostate Intraepithelial Neoplasia (HGPIN).

A diagnosis of HGPIN means there are changes in the cells of the prostate gland, but that those changes are not enough for a patient to have cancer. Earlier studies have shown that men between 40 and 60 years old who were diagnosed with HGPIN showed a 40-percent chance of developing prostate cancer by the time they reached their 80s. The calcitriol clinical study aims to test the drug's effectiveness on the prevention of prostate cancer development.

Robert DiPaola, M.D., chief, Division of Medical Oncology, executive director of the Dean and Betty Gallo Prostate Cancer Center at CINJ and professor of medicine, UMNDJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, is the lead researcher on the study. "It is our hope that through clinical research studies we will continue to develop new therapies so that we can eventually reduce an individual's risk of developing this potentially deadly disease," stated Dr. DiPaola.

Selected patients will take calcitriol by mouth and keep a pill diary as well as follow certain dietary restrictions. A biopsy of prostate tissue also will be taken, and patients will be required to maintain a schedule of clinic visits.

Patients with the diagnosis of HGPIN are eligible to take part in the study, although other criteria must be met. The study is part of the CINJ Oncology Group (CINJOG), which is comprised of physicians throughout New Jersey from the CINJ Network of hospitals. For additional information on how to participate, individuals should call 732-235-8990.

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Cancer clinical research studies test new treatments and new ways of using existing treatments for cancer. At CINJ, researchers use these studies to answer questions about a treatment and to make sure it is safe and effective. There are several types of clinical research studies including treatment, prevention, screening and behavioral that are currently underway at CINJ. As New Jersey's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, patients at CINJ have access to treatment options not available at other institutions within the state. CINJ currently enrolls more than 1,000 patients or approximately 15% of all new adult cancer patients and approximately 70% of all pediatric cancer patients on clinical trials. Enrollment in clinical trials nationwide is only 2% to 4% of all adult cancer patients.

About The Cancer Institute of New Jersey

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is the state's first and only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and is dedicated to improving the prevention, detection, treatment and care of patients with cancer. CINJ's physician-scientists engage in translational research, transforming their laboratory discoveries into clinical practice quite literally bringing research to life. The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is a center of excellence of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. To support CINJ, please call the Cancer Institute of New Jersey Foundation at 1-888-333-CINJ.

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Network is comprised of hospitals throughout the state and provides a mechanism to rapidly disseminate important discoveries into the community. Partner Hospitals: Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Atlantic Health (Morristown Memorial Hospital and Overlook Hospital). Affiliate Hospitals: Bayshore Community Hospital, CentraState Healthcare System, Cooper University Hospital*, Jersey Shore University Medical Center, JFK Medical Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton (CINJ-Hamilton), Saint Peter's University Hospital, Somerset Medical Center, Southern Ocean County Hospital, The University Hospital/UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School*, and University Medical Center at Princeton. *Academic Affiliate

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