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Clinical Trial Could Improve Outcomes for Women with Metastatic Breast Cancer
Therapy available at CINJ and CINJ Network Hospitals Across New Jersey

New Brunswick, New Jersey, August 3, 2007 – One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. It is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in women, other than skin cancer and is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer. Breast cancer death rates are going down, however metastatic breast cancer still remains an incurable disease. Once metastases (spread of the disease to other body parts) are discovered, median survival for all patients is only two to three years. Researchers at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) are currently investigating a new way to treat women who have metastatic or advanced breast cancer with a large amount of HER2 protein present.

Antoinette Tan, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine, UMNDJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, is the lead researcher on a clinical study that is testing the effectiveness of adding an investigational drug called lapatinib to the standard, approved type of chemotherapy treatment (capecitabine) for breast cancer. An investigational drug is one that has not been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for sale as a prescription or over-the-counter medication. Although not previously proven, it is believed that lapatinib may slow or stop cancer cells from growing by inhibiting the growth of cancer cells. It is thought that the combination of the two drugs (lapatinib and capecitabine) may help stop cancer cells as well as or better than the standard chemotherapy treatment alone.

Women with advanced or metastatic breast cancer with a lot of the protein HER2 present and who have not received chemotherapy may be eligible for the study. This 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 in the study, individuals should call 732-235-8990.

“Through collaborations with oncologists out in the community, we are able to address trends they may be seeing among their patient population through the development of new clinical research studies that will improve cancer treatment,” stated Dr. Antoinette Tan. “My colleagues and I at CINJ and our Network of hospitals continue to study new ways to advance the medicine of cancer treatment,” she continued.

Cancer clinical trials are medical studies that test new treatments and new ways of using existing

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treatments for cancer. At CINJ, researchers use these clinical trials to answer questions about a treatment and to make sure it is safe and effective. There are several types of clinical trials including treatment, prevention, screening and behavioral that 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 in clinical trials 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.

In 2007 the American Cancer Society estimates that 178,480 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in the United States with 40,460 dying from their disease. 6,080 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in New Jersey with 1350 dying from their disease in 2007.

About The Cancer Institute of New Jersey

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is New Jersey's 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, Mountainside Hospital, 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