

# SYNERGY REPORT

## TREATING INOPERABLE LIVER TUMORS **from the Inside Out**

*SRA Interventional Radiologists Treat Inoperable Liver Tumors with Minimally Invasive Technique to Improve Survival, Quality of Life*

Primary and metastatic hepatocellular carcinoma – liver cancer – is among the most difficult types of cancer to treat. Inoperable liver cancers are particularly challenging, marked by extremely low survival rates along with poor quality of life<sup>1</sup>.

A recent advance in the treatment of primary and metastatic liver cancer is [Selective Internal Radiation Therapy \(SIRT\)](#), or Y-90 radioembolization, which can be combined with chemotherapy to aggressively attack liver tumors. This treatment is now available to SRA patients.

Working with multidisciplinary teams at area hospitals, SRA interventional radiologists inject millions of tiny beads (microspheres) coated with the radioactive isotope Y-90 into the hepatic artery through catheterization of the femoral artery. The microspheres become lodged in the capillaries that surround and supply blood to the liver tumors, delivering targeted radiation<sup>2</sup>.

SRA Interventional Radiologist Michael Richter, M.D., said the procedure is another tool in the arsenal of weapons being developed to fight difficult-to-treat cancers.

“The great thing about these radioactive beads is that they deliver a high dose of short-range radiation to the tumor,” said Richter. “The radiation is very localized, it can’t travel very far, and that allows medical teams to spare healthy liver tissue and leads to fewer side effects than other treatments.”

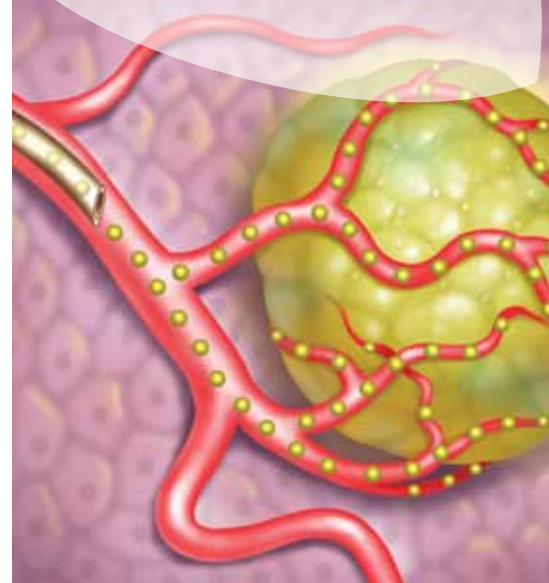
Radioembolization is somewhat of a misnomer. Embolization means “to block” the artery or vein, but SIRT microspheres don’t actually block the blood supply, they simply become lodged in the blood supply at or near the liver tumor, delivering radiation to that immediate area.

“Multidisciplinary efforts are the future of advanced treatments such as SIRT radioembolization,” said SRA President Walid Adham, M.D. “Working in coordination with the hospital’s clinical and nuclear medicine teams, our talented interventional radiology team helps ensure the safe and successful vascular delivery of SIRT, making the benefits of this treatment available to Houston-area residents.”

SIRT is now being performed by SRA radiologists at [Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Hospital](#) and [Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital](#). The procedure (in combination with chemotherapy) has shown good results in controlling cancer, with research demonstrating an increase in average progression-free survival (the length of time during and after treatment that a patient’s condition does not get worse) of nearly eight months, while maintaining a good quality of life.

Often used for both primary and metastatic tumors in the liver, SIR-Spheres® microspheres are the only fully FDA-approved microspheres for colorectal cancer that has

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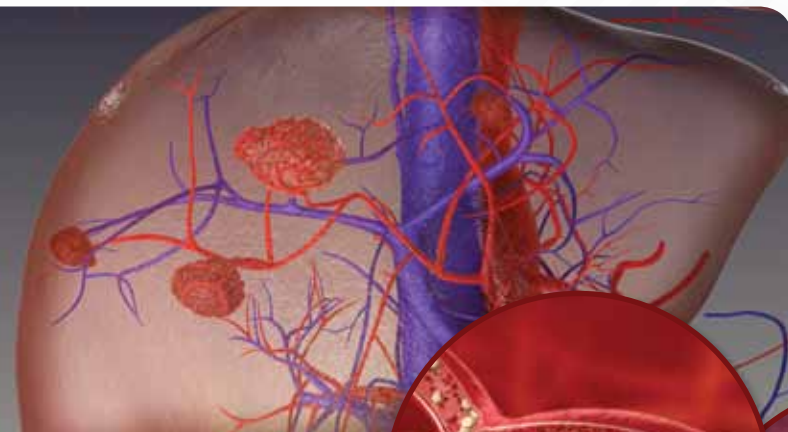
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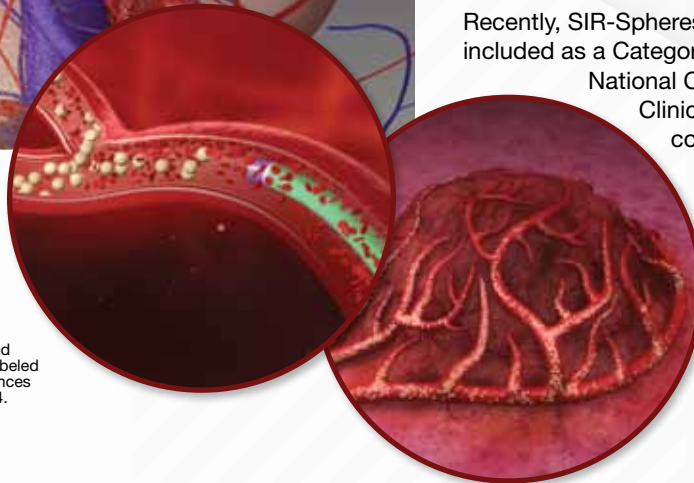
## LIVER TUMORS: *(continued)*

metastasized to the liver. Most patients are usually able to go home four to six hours after the procedure, and the reported side effects are few. Most patients experience mild, flu-like symptoms for a period of one to two weeks after the procedure. SIRT can be used for primary liver cancers as well as metastatic disease in the liver, such as colorectal and breast cancer.

Recently, SIR-Spheres Y-90 resin microspheres has been included as a Category 2A recommended treatment in the latest National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology for colon cancer and rectal cancer.

For more information on SIRT and other minimally invasive procedures, visit the [Vascular & Interventional](#) section of our website under services. Physician practices interested in learning more about Y-90 radioembolization should contact the Synergy Radiology interventional team at (713) 897-5853. 

1. Qiao, C., Zhai, X., & Lin, C. (2012). Health-related quality of life evaluated by tumor node metastasis staging system in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma. *World Journal of Gastroenterology*, 18(21), 2689. doi:10.3748/wjg.v18.i21.2689
2. Westcott, M. A., Coldwell, D. M., Liu, D. M., & Zikria, J. F. (2016). The development, commercialization, and clinical context of yttrium-90 radiolabeled resin and glass microspheres. *Advances in Radiation Oncology*, 1(4), 351-364. doi:10.1016/j.adro.2016.08.003




## PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

### Saenz Earns Physician of the Year Recognition from Memorial Hermann The Woodlands

J. Armando Saenz, M.D., was recently named as 2016 Physician of the Year at The Woodlands Campus of the Memorial Hermann Health System. Saenz, who joined SRA in 2006, specializes in Body Imaging and Musculoskeletal Imaging.



After graduating the University of Texas Houston Medical School, Dr. Saenz conducted a general surgery internship at St. Joseph Hospital (Houston). He completed his residency at the University of Texas Houston Medical School, where he subsequently earned his fellowship in Body Imaging. Dr. Saenz is board certified by the American Board of Radiology.


Dr. Saenz has served as SRA Radiology Medical Director since 2013 and is now Vice Medical Director for Radiology at SRA and Chief of Staff for Memorial Hermann The Woodlands. 

## TEXPAC RECOGNIZES SYNERGY RADIOLOGY ASSOCIATES

Synergy Radiology Associates has been recognized by the Texas Medical Association's Political Action Committee (TEXPAC) for 100 percent group participation in 2016. Synergy was one of just three radiology practices statewide to be recognized as a 100 percent participation group.



Created in 1962, TEXPAC is the bipartisan political arm of the Texas Medical Association. Its objective is to help to elect medicine-friendly candidates at the local, state and federal level and to advocate on issues of importance to the Texas medical community.


All of Synergy's physicians are active members in TEXPAC, which has more than 3,000 total members. TEXPAC works to advance the Texas Medical Association's mission to improve the health of all Texans through political education and activism. Key areas of interest for TEXPAC include: medical liability reform; Medicaid; scope of practice issues; taxation; regulation; and health insurance. 

# TOMOSYNTHESIS NOW AVAILABLE IN CLEAR LAKE



SRA radiologists have now added breast tomosynthesis exams, also known as 3D Mammography, to their repertoire at [Clear Lake Regional Breast Diagnostic Center](#).

3D Mammography is an innovative, FDA-approved digital technology that helps detect smaller tumors at the earliest stages of breast cancer. The procedure is similar to a regular mammogram except that during breast compression, the X-ray tube rotates around the breast to provide additional images without a significant increase in exam time or radiation.


These extra images – or slices – allow for a more detailed exam, enabling physicians to detect breast cancer an earlier, smaller and more treatable stage. Tomosynthesis has also been shown to reduce unnecessary follow-up exams (callbacks) for dense, overlapping breast tissue that may look suspicious on traditional mammograms. 

***For more information on 3D mammography available through SRA and the Clear Lake Regional Breast Diagnostic Center, ask your doctor or visit the [Breast Imaging page](#) on our website.***

## SRA LAUNCHES PHYSICIAN INTRANET

SRA has launched its new Synergy Intranet Platform (SIP), a completely private physician network that allows SRA radiologists communicate more easily and efficiently, leading to better physician support and patient care.

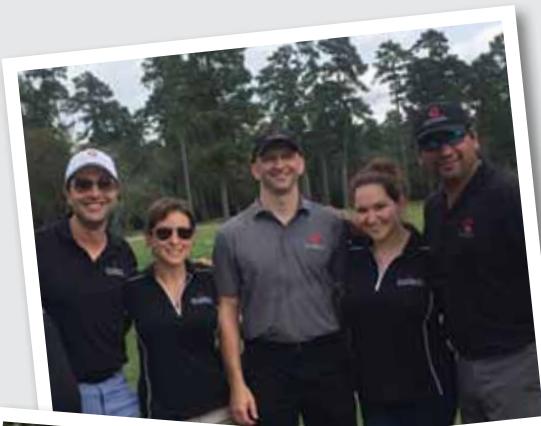
SRA radiologists can now confidentially share information, collaborate on patient care, post important organizational announcements, manage meetings and events, conduct polls, and gain access to important information and resources.

The SIP intranet can be accessed anywhere, anytime from any web-enabled PC or device, and includes a downloadable mobile app so that our radiologists are able to stay up-to-date with important information 24/7. 





# SYNERGY RADIOLOGY ASSOCIATES COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 2016



We have been busy supporting wonderful events across the greater Houston area over the past year. Being involved in our community is one of our core values, and it doesn't hurt that we get to have fun in the process.

Our 2016 community involvement kicked off in February with our participation in the Memorial Hermann booth at the 20th annual Texas Lunar Festival, a fun-filled event celebrating the Asian Lunar New Year. In March, SRA was a proud sponsor of the Memorial Hermann Heroes in Health Clay Shoot and also the bowl sponsor for the Memorial Hermann Northeast Chili Cook-off.

May got off to a busy start as a team from Synergy took part in the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk. The Synergy Starlets descended on Discovery Green decked out in team t-shirts, feather boas and pink tutus! We even convinced a few brave guys on our team to walk in tutus. The event was great fun, and we're proud to have helped raised money for breast cancer research.

The month of May also found us enjoying time with our families at Dave and Busters for Synergy's Annual Family Outing. It's one of our favorite events of the year. We enjoyed spending time with everyone's families. Games were played, lots of great food was eaten, and copious amounts of prizes were taken home.

September found us as one of the proud sponsors of the 6th Annual Pampered Pink event, benefitting the Breast Diagnostic Center at Clear Lake Regional Medical Center. The event took place at South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center in League City. Highlights included a fashion show and silent auction with proceeds from the event going towards women who need financial help with mammograms or breast cancer treatment costs.

In October we headed out to the Senior Health Fair at Memorial Hermann Northeast. The health fair is a one-stop shopping event that connects seniors to all of the health services they may need at Memorial Hermann. October also saw staff members and radiologists hit the links as a sponsor of the Memorial Hermann "Partners in Caring" Golf Tournament at Cypresswood Golf Club. SRA was the on-course snack and drink sponsor. Congratulations to our foursome of radiologists who teed up to play the tournament and were First Place winners!

Also in October, SRA sponsored a table and gifts for attendees at "In The Pink of Health" at MHNE, which supports the Northeast Hospital Foundation & Cancer Center.

We wound down our community involvement in November by supporting our hospital and outpatient radiology department's American Heart Walk teams and celebrating National Radiologic Technology Week. Funds raised for the American Heart Walk support heart disease and stroke prevention efforts. National Radiologic Technology Week is celebrated in honor of Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen's discovery of the X-ray on November 8, 1895. The talented radiology techs we work with received special gifts and were recognized throughout the week for their outstanding contributions to health care.

Thanks to everyone who helped make our community a better place in 2016. We look forward to another exciting and rewarding year of community involvement in 2017. 🍀

