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NOT ALL VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY SYSTEMS ARE EQUAL

IN COLON CANCER DETECTION, STUDY REVEALS

-- *NEJM* 2003 Study Hails the Reliability of Virtual Colonoscopy in 3D, While *JAMA* Study Conducted in 2D in 2001 Cites Poor Results --

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**STONY BROOK, NY** – Demonstrating clearly that not all virtual colonoscopies are equal, the study – published in the December 2003 issue of the *The New England Journal of Medicine* and the *American Journal of Roentgenology* – found the results found using the Viatronix V3D-Colon system for primary 3D reading to be equal to or better than optical colonoscopy results. One of the major differentiating factors between the two studies is that Dr Peter Cotton’s earlier study was based upon 2D as the primary read while Perry Pickhardt’s trial published in the *NEJM* utilized live 3D as the primary read. The DOD multi-center trial utilized 1,233 patients as opposed to 615 patients utilized in the recently published study in *JAMA* (*Journal of American Medical Association*) conducted by Dr. Peter Cotton. While Dr. Cotton’s results have been disappointing, Dr. Perry Pickhardt’s results published in *NEJM* for a much larger patient group are dramatically different.

“The study recently published in *JAMA* was completed in 2001 prior to the time our study began in 2002 and utilized techniques that are outdated,” says Dr. Pickhardt. “The main deficiencies in the two are that Dr. Cotton’s study relied on primary 2D reading with a lack of oral contrast tagging of barium resulting in poor reading results. Also, it appears that some of the study radiologists were inadequately trained.”

The *JAMA* study reports that the two studies showed “remarkable differences.” It further states “that the armed services study [conducted by Dr. Pickhardt] had excellent results.” “The combination of electronic cleansing and faster 3-dimensional reconstruction appears promising,” concludes the *JAMA* report. These features have been available on the Viatronix V3D-Colon system for many years, were used by Dr. Pickhardt’s team and led to better outcomes.

The Viatronix V3D-Colon technology used in Dr. Pickhardt’s *NEJM* study provides the highest-quality images and the most thorough screening, it offered physicians the most features and greatest ease of use in viewing, manipulating, and examining 100% of the colon to detect and identify polyps, the most common precursor of colon cancer. In addition, in some cases, V3D-Colon outperformed optical colonoscopy, long considered the “gold standard” of colorectal cancer screening.

“After performing a direct comparison of three different virtual colonoscopy systems, we determined that only one system, the Viatronix system, was capable of a primary time efficient 3D reading, which I believe is necessary for sensitive detection of polyps,” said Perry J. Pickhardt, M.D., author of the *NEJM* study, whose credentials include Staff Radiologist for the National Naval Medical Center, Assistant Professor of Radiology for the Uniformed Services

University of the Health Sciences, and currently Associate Professor of Radiology at the University of Wisconsin Medical School.

Contrary to the one of the conclusions of the JAMA-published trial, Virtual Colonoscopy has already been proven to be as good as or better than optical colonoscopy. It is readily available for clinical practice today, and there are several training courses being offered by experienced radiologists such as Dr. Perry Pickhardt. The NEJM trial proved that radiologists adopting this new procedure with “relatively little prior experience” were successfully able to achieve superior results. This NEJM trial was conducted after the one published in JAMA recently, proving that 3D virtual colonoscopy has improved and can now provide the necessary clinical outcomes.

Virtual colonoscopy offers a non-invasive alternative to the traditional optical colonoscopy, which requires that a long, flexible fiber-optic scope be inserted into the rectum and maneuvered up to five feet along the length of the colon. V3D-Colon combines the sophisticated computer imaging of a CT scan with breakthrough medical diagnostic software technology to provide a patient-friendly yet incredibly accurate tool for viewing the colon. With the Viatronix system, a thin rubber tube is inserted only one inch into the rectum in order to distend the colon with carbon dioxide. Then, two 20-second CT scans send the patient’s data to a computer system, where the Viatronix preprocessor reconstructs a three-dimensional model of the patient’s colon and electronically “cleanses” the data of debris (stool) remnants in the colon. The data is then transmitted to a reading station where physicians can automatically conduct an interactive, three-dimensional “fly through” examination of the patient’s colon on the computer screen.

“With our V3D-Colon procedure, virtually all of the risk and discomfort of a colonoscopy is eliminated, while, equally important, the physician’s ability to visualize polyps is greatly enhanced,” says Zaffar Hayat, COO of Viatronix, Inc.

The non-invasiveness of the V3D procedure is itself a benefit to patients, eliminating not only the physical discomfort of a conventional colonoscopy, but also the inherent risk of the colon walls being perforated by the optical scope. Adding to that, however, is the fact that a Viatronix virtual colonoscopy requires no sedation, so patients can resume normal activities immediately after the short 15-minute procedure. Plus, there is no pre-exam fasting or harsh colon-cleansing necessary. Patients simply follow a special low-residue diet of easily digestible foods, accompanied by a pleasant-tasting drink containing a small amount of barium, two days prior to the procedure. The barium enables the system’s software to electronically remove any stool remnants from the bowel images, so there is no need for enemas or vigorous laxative purging.

For further information regarding Viatronix V3D-Colon, call 1-866-887-4636 or log on to [www.viatronix.com](http://www.viatronix.com). Dr. Perry Pickhardt may be contacted at 608-263-8969 or by email at [PPickhardt@mail.radiology.wisc.edu](mailto:PPickhardt@mail.radiology.wisc.edu)

#### FAST FACTS ABOUT COLON CANCER ...

- Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in North America, and leading cause of cancer death among non-smokers.

- Although colorectal cancer can strike at any age, 90% of cases are diagnosed in individuals over 50. Both men and women are at equal risk for colorectal cancer.

- Most colon cancer begins as small, non-cancerous polyps in the lining of the large intestine. Polyps grow very slowly, usually at the rate of 1mm per year, making this type of cancer very preventable.

- As a polyp grows larger than 10mm, the likelihood of becoming cancerous dramatically increases, which is why screening every few years is strongly recommended. There

are usually no symptoms until the cancer has progressed.

· When detected at an early, localized stage, colon cancer has a 5-year survival rate of approximately 90% -- yet only 37% of cancers are discovered at that early stage.

· Fewer than 35% of people 50 and older have had a colonoscopy.

### **... AND THE VIATRONIX VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY**

· Virtual colonoscopy is rapidly becoming the preferred diagnostic tool for colorectal cancer by both doctors and patients. According to a study reported in the March 2003 issue of the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, almost 58 percent of patients experiencing both a traditional optical colonoscopy and a virtual (CT) colonoscopy said they would prefer CT colonography in the future.

· The Viatronix V3D system carries negligible risk and is non-invasive. The thin rubber tube is inserted only 1" into the rectum, while two 20-second CT scans collect data that offers physicians a 3D computerized "fly through" of the patient's colon.

· The procedure takes only 10-15 minutes (vs. 45-60 for conventional colonoscopy); and because no sedation is necessary, patients can resume normal activity immediately afterward.

· No rigorous pre-exam fasting is required; patients follow a special two-day diet of easily digestible foods along with a pleasant-tasting drink containing a small amount of barium.

· With the Viatronix V3D system, physicians can view the entire surface of the colon, versus only 70% with an optical colonoscopy. Segments of the scan can be turned, rotated, and enlarged as desired, to detect polyps as small as 3mm, even when they are hidden behind folds; and a technique called translucent rendering even provides a look inside a suspected polyp.

· In an independent study published in the December 2003 issue of the *American Journal of Roentgenology* and *The New England Journal of Medicine*, Viatronix V3D-Colon far outperformed two other virtual colonoscopy systems – GE's Navigator and Vital Images' Vitrea 2 – in image quality, accuracy, reliability, navigational features and capabilities, and image evaluation tools, among other attributes. V3D-Colon was favored in more than 92% of responses for polyp conspicuity, 3D effect, and likeness to optical colonoscopy.

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