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New Jersey's Most Comprehensive Brain Tumor Center at the New Jersey Neuroscience Institute at JFK

May 22, 2009 (Edison, NJ) -- The unexpected diagnosis of a tumor of the central nervous system can be a profoundly confusing and frightening experience. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) reports that approximately 40,000 people are diagnosed with a primary brain tumor each year. In addition, there are approximately 170,000 patients with metastatic brain tumors. Such a diagnosis raises questions for the patient and their loved ones about what the future holds.

Research indicates that the best chance at beating a brain or spinal cord tumor is at a comprehensive brain tumor center. In fact, experts add that a multidisciplinary team approach involving physicians from many specialties is equally vital to successful treatment. The New Jersey Neuroscience Institute (NJNI) Brain Tumor Center stands at the forefront in the diagnosis and treatment of primary and metastatic tumors of the brain and spinal cord. With the most comprehensive, multidisciplinary program in New Jersey, it offers the entire continuum of care for tumors of the central nervous system in a single location. "Our internationally recognized interdisciplinary team of board certified specialists is assembled from around the country, working together under one roof -- a distinctive strength that enables us to determine and implement effective strategies to detect, diagnose and treat tumors", says Dr. Landolfi, D.O, Director of Neuro-Oncology at the Brain Tumor Center of NJNI.

JFK is one of only a few community hospitals in the country with an integrated neuro-oncology program specializing in leading-edge diagnostic approaches, treatment and research for tumors of the central nervous system. Led by a renowned neuro-oncologist (one of only 280 in the United States), board certified in neurology with subspecialty training in neuro-oncology, the interdisciplinary team is comprised of a broad range of dedicated fields including neurosurgery and pediatric neurosurgery, radiation oncology, neuroradiology, radiation physics, neuropsychiatry, neuropathology, nursing, and physician assistants. "This level of expertise and specialization can have a powerful effect on a patient's chances for the successful diagnosis, treatment and management of the tumor," Dr. Landolfi stresses.

"Making an accurate diagnosis is critical to establishing the right treatment protocol for our patients. We employ cutting-edge diagnostic tools to locate and identify tumors combined with state-of-the-art laboratories to help determine which treatments are most appropriate. In fact, our imaging center utilizes technologically-advanced imaging not readily available at all institutions," Dr. Landolfi points out. The superb reliability of the 3T MRI allows board-certified radiologists to differentiate between benign and potentially hazardous medical conditions with confidence while the Functional and Diffusion Tensor Imaging MRI scans delineate critical areas of function and their relationship to the tumor. Other specialized diagnostic procedures available at JFK include MR spectroscopy and PET imaging to better distinguish between tumor and non-tumor lesions of the brain.

Tumors of the central nervous system are extremely diverse both biologically and in response to treatment. In the past, the prognosis for people diagnosed with brain tumors has been poor, but now interdisciplinary collaboration at the NJNI Brain Tumor Center offers the latest, most sophisticated treatment modalities to give patients the best chance for positive outcomes. Treatment for these brain and spinal cord tumors includes surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy -- delivered alone or in

combination. However, the goal of the NJNI Brain Tumor Center is to provide care across specialties for patients, retaining these established approaches while placing emphasis on new developments in treatment and participation in clinical trials.

Treatment depends on the potential effects on quality of life and the specific tumor diagnosis, among others. The NJNI Brain Tumor Center offers a wide spectrum of advanced strategies for the treatment of tumors. Improvements in surgical techniques -- Intraoperative Imaging, Awake Brain Mapping, and Neuro-endoscopic procedures -- have revolutionized brain and spinal cord surgery at JFK. But, in the past two decades, new modalities that may be used in conjunction with surgery have been developed for the effective delivery of radiation that targets the brain tumor while protecting nearby healthy tissues. These more progressive therapies -- Intensity-Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), 3-D Conformal Radiation Therapy, High-Dose Rate Brachytherapy and Gamma Knife stereotactic radiosurgery -- ensure patients access to optimal treatment options with greater precision of more complex tumors. (The NJNI was the first facility in the state to offer Gamma Knife surgery, the treatment of choice among neurosurgeons for a multitude of tumors, vascular malformations and functional neurological disorders.) Moreover, the NJNI Brain Tumor Center provides patients access to new superior treatment options under investigation through our participation in pharmaceutical-sponsored and investigator-initiated clinical trials as well as Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) clinical trials and Cancer Institute of New Jersey Oncology Group (CINJOG) clinical trials.

The NJNI Brain Tumor Center focuses not only on survival but also on the quality of the patient's life during and after treatment. In addition to this core team, the program incorporates other disciplines, such as hematology/oncology, physical rehabilitation medicine, adult and pediatric critical care specialists and support services. This continuum of care has been recognized by the Society of Neuro-Oncology as a Center of Excellence.

To schedule an appointment or to learn more about the NJNI Brain Tumor Center call 732.321-7010 or visit www.njneuro.org.

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JFK Medical Center, an affiliate of Solaris Health System, is a 535-bed full-service, acute care hospital, consisting of The Anthony M. Yelensics Community Hospital and the adjacent JFK Johnson Rehabilitative Institute. Located in the heart of Edison, NJ, it has remained at the forefront of quality care in the region since its inception in 1967. Today, JFK accommodates more than 20,000 admissions, 3,000 births and 50,000 Emergency Room visits on a yearly basis. The Medical Center features a complete array of services, including general surgery, emergency medicine, mental health, orthopedics, maternity and pediatric care. It is home to the New Jersey Neuroscience Institute, Regional Cancer Center, Haven Hospice, JFK Imaging Center and the JFK Family Practice Center. Affiliated with UMDNJ -Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Seton Hall University School of Graduate Medical Education, JFK offers residency programs in physical and rehabilitation medicine, family practice and dentistry.