



FDA Establishes Guidelines to Rein in Excessive Radiation-based Medical Scanning

Small Sensors to Play Big Role in Reducing Radiation Exposure for Patients and Physicians

BURLINGTON, VERMONT; March 8, 2010: Ascension Technology's micro-miniaturized sensors are helping physicians navigate medical instruments while minimizing patient and clinician exposure to the harmful effects of radiation.

The ever-increasing sophistication of imaging systems over the past 20 years has led to revolutionary new accuracy in diagnosing and treating disease. But with greater visualization has come the cost of increased radiation exposure and dangerous longer-term health risks to physicians and patients.



The FDA is adapting new guidelines to include safety controls that prevent patients from receiving excessive radiation dosages. Image-guided procedures are an emerging technique that complies with FDA standards while providing accurate navigation of medical instruments to internal targets.

One way to reduce the risk is to incorporate image guidance into procedures. Its integration of imaging studies, instrument toolsets, magnetic navigation, and visualization software, provides physicians with graphic displays of the real-time location and trajectory of instruments.

Jack Scully, Ascension's Vice President states: "The good news, for patients and clinicians alike, is the emergence of image-guided procedures. A number of user-friendly devices, enabled in part by Ascension's miniaturized magnetic sensors, are greatly simplifying the navigation of needles, catheters, and scopes to targets within the body. And, in the process it reduces the risk of radiation exposure."

With radiation levels almost doubling since the 1980s, mainly due to CT scans, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is now working to require safety controls to reduce physician and patient exposure. One strategy within the FDA's overall mandate is to promote "smarter" imaging devices and technologies. Ascension Technology's magnetic guidance systems and micro sensors represent one such technology that is on the forefront of safer systems. ATC guidance systems measure the instant position and orientation in 3-D space of tiny sensors embedded in the tips of medical instruments.

Dr. Isador Lieberman, Chairman of the Spine Center, Cleveland Clinic, notes: "Navigation systems are beneficial because they essentially work without radiation. You take your first X-ray at the beginning of the case, and you do not need any other X-rays for the rest of the case because you can reference off the first one."

About Ascension

Ascension Technology Corporation is a world leader in magnetic 3D localization and guidance for medical applications. Its third generation magnetic sensors represent the key enabling technology for image-guided procedures. More information about Ascension trackers along with streaming video is available at www.ascension-tech.com.

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