



**Park Nicollet**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Steven McCarthy  
952-993-6726; 952-231-5029 (pager)

## **NEW GAMMA IMAGING HELPS IN FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER**

*Park Nicollet first in Twin Cities to use Breast-Specific Gamma Imaging to diagnose tumors faster, less invasively*

**ST. LOUIS PARK, Minn., (February 28, 2007)** – A new tool is helping clinicians at the Park Nicollet Jane Brattain Breast Center diagnose and treat breast cancer. Breast-Specific Imaging is an easier, more comfortable method of detecting breast cancer in women who have a questionable finding on their mammogram, who have dense breast tissue, scar tissue from previous surgery, or breast implants.

A small amount of radioactive tracing agent is injected in a patient's arm. The agent is temporarily absorbed in the body and then concentrates in cancer cells because they have a higher metabolic rate. A specially designed camera takes pictures of the breast to help radiologists see any abnormal cellular activity. "This imaging detects anatomy, not just density, so we get a clearer picture of what's really going on," said Mary Lechner, MD, medical director of the Park Nicollet Jane Brattain Breast Center. "It's faster, less invasive and less expensive than other forms of diagnosis."

Breast-Specific Gamma Imaging works in conjunction with mammograms and other diagnostic tests. It can improve diagnosis if a mammogram is difficult to read, if a patient is in a higher risk category, or if a patient has dense breast tissue, surgical scars or implants. It's also considered less invasive than mammography because breast compression is not required.

"I used to get really nervous during my annual breast exam. I worried so much about finding something, I'd sweat," said Andrea Johnson, a breast cancer survivor who is both a patient and an employee at the Park Nicollet Jane Brattain Breast Center. Andrea, a radiology technician, says the new imaging gives her peace of mind "because I know the gamma imaging is so good at detecting hard to spot tumors."

**Park Nicollet Health Services** is an integrated care system that includes Methodist Hospital, Park Nicollet Clinic, Park Nicollet Foundation and Park Nicollet Institute. Park Nicollet Health Services is based in St. Louis Park and has more than 8,000 employees, including 690 physicians on staff.