

Rx briefs

CT scan is cutting-edge diagnostic technology

BY KIMBERLY A. MORTSON
STAFF WRITER

Imagine radiology technology so advanced it has the ability to stop all motion and produce such high resolution images it's as if you're looking inside the human body with a three-dimensional view.

Advanced Imaging of Michigan, located in Troy, was the first facility in the state to have the 16 slice Multi-Detector Siemens CT scanner. According to Dr. Roger Fenton, AIM medical director, he and his staff began offering this state of the art technology in March to physician-referred patients as well as individuals wanting wellness scans.

The technology of a CT or CAT scan (computed tomography) allows radiologists to capture hundreds of X-rays taken from numerous angles in the body. The integration of the images together creates an likeness so clear and realistic it gives doctors a view of the body "in the same way they would in an operating room."

"The technology is amazing,"

said Fenton, medical director at AIM in Troy and the MRI Center of Oakland. "This will undoubtedly revolutionize diagnostic readings, the quality of the scans and the turn around time for a diagnosis. Not only that but we're giving patients the opportunity to detect issues early enough, long before we could have seen things with traditional scans and X-rays, so that they can deal with the disease before it becomes a matter of life and death."

"This gives us a lot more options and there are a lot more things we can see in just one exam."

According to Fenton, CT was first offered in the early 1980s and it provided physicians with more definite images than X-rays provided of both bone structure and soft tissues. "This improvement in the quality of the CT gave us a clearer picture of the body's organs but it had its drawbacks, too. It was a lengthy process that could take almost an hour and we could only view the images in one dimension."

Fast forward 20 years and

Fenton is looking at scans in three dimension with more accuracy than he could have ever imagined.

"It's like you're driving through the body providing patients with the most accurate diagnosis possible in a fraction of the time it took two decades ago. This is the latest and greatest in CT scan technology," he said. "The frames are as thin as a pathology slice, about 1 mm, and can be viewed at any dimension. We can manipulate the image any way we want in the highest quality possible with exquisite definition. This is high-tech medicine."

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

The Multi-Detector Siemens CT Scanner captures 32 slices a second creating in excess of 1,200 images for a full body scan. The frames or images can be viewed individually or together to see how an organ relates to other structures in the body.

Most importantly, the technology turns many procedures that were previously invasive into non-invasive virtual scans, eliminating the risk associated with procedures such as a colonoscopy and diagnostic cardiac arteriogram.

During a virtual colonoscopy, the CT technology captures images of surrounding organs that can provide early warning signs of gall bladder, kidney and pancreatic disease in addition to creating the most realistic and up-close view of the colon ever seen. While doctors recommend individuals over 50 having the test done every three-to-four years, physicians are aware that the preparation and discomfort many people feel before and during the exam create enough anxiety that they are willing to accept the risk and go without the test.

Sixty-year-old Southfield attorney Richard J. Maddin had



The scan of a patient's broken shoulder can be viewed in two and three dimensions in the highest resolution possible.

a CT scan and virtual colonoscopy done earlier this year at Advanced Imaging of Michigan after striking up a conversation with Fenton at the facility where they both work out.

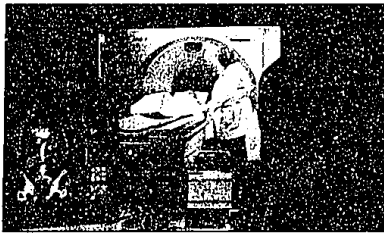
"Ironically, I had a traditional colonoscopy already scheduled, because I have a concerned and loving wife, but I started talking with Dr. Fenton and he was telling me about this new technology. I had heard the traditional procedure for a colonoscopy wasn't too user-friendly. I'm not afraid of medicine or procedures but the idea of the anesthesia, missing a day's worth of work and the invasiveness of the scope didn't make me want to sign up, but I was going to do it anyway," said Maddin.

The West Bloomfield resident

made another appointment at AIM and says he was "awestruck" by the definition of the images. "They produced a winner with this one. I was blown away at what the scan showed. I think the benefits outweigh any cost issue. They didn't sell me on this... I sold myself."

Maddin's results were positive all around. "It showed me what I wanted to see and took away the apprehension because it wasn't invasive," added Maddin. "A CT Angiography is also less invasive thanks to the Multi-Detector scanner. In the past if a cardiologist wanted to take a look at a patient's vascular system, he or she had to make an incision and insert a rubber catheter through the femoral

PLEASE SEE SCAN, CT



A patient at Advanced Imaging of Michigan in Troy passes through the Multi-Detector Siemens CT scanner while a radiologist (foreground) views the body scan.

Fibromyalgia

A local authority will be appearing at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 10, at the Carl Sandburg Library for a free workshop that reveals the truth behind what can be causing fibromyalgia.

He is a member in the National Wellness Foundation. To register for the free workshop, call (248) 426-0201 (24-hour recorded message).

Get the red out

Holding anger and grudges can have physiological effects on the mind and body. Biochemist Sandy Baumann will teach you these effects and discuss the many emotions often vented as anger. Learn to identify the steps of escalating anger in another person. \$5 material fee due to instructor the first session. Center for Lifelong Learning, Tuesday, June 10, 17 and 24 at Henry Ford Community College, 22586 Ann Arbor Trail (at Warren), Dearborn Heights, 6:30-8:40 p.m.

Cost: \$59. Nurses may register for nursing contact hours at an additional fee. To register, call (313) 317-1500.

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