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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Digital Mammography Now Available at St. James Mercy Hospital

Hornell, NY...June 20 , 2011...St. James Mercy Hospital is pleased to announce that the latest in digital mammography technology is now available in its medical imaging department, with the installation of Fuji's Computed Radiography for Mammography (FCRm) system.

"Screening mammography is still recognized as the most effective tool available for the early detection of breast cancer," said Dr. Bradley Truax, Chief Medical Officer at St. James Mercy. According to research, digital mammography offers significant benefits to certain groups of women.

Digital mammography, a mammogram that uses new detection technologies and computers instead of film, was found in a landmark clinical study of more than 42,000 women to be better than film-screen mammography in detecting breast cancer in three groups: women under age 50, pre- and peri-menopausal women, and women with dense breasts. Digital mammograms are 15 percent more accurate among women under age 50 or not yet in menopause, and 11 percent more accurate among women with dense breasts.

"We're proud to be able to provide Hornell-area women with the most advanced screening technology available to identify cancers early when they are most treatable," said Dr. Truax.

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From the patient's perspective, the procedure for a digital mammogram is the same as for a conventional film mammogram. However, since the images are available almost immediately and no film development time is necessary, the wait time for the patient is less.

In addition, St. James Mercy Hospital uses GE Centricity PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication System), which enables the digital mammograms to be electronically viewed, transmitted and stored. Its Cedara software enables an interpreting physician to use digital tools to electronically enhance and magnify the images, and to adjust the contrast to better examine any suspicious areas. This reduces the need for the patient to be called back for additional exposures.

The PACS also facilitates long-distance consultations with other specialists since the digital images can be readily transmitted to other facilities. They can also readily be transferred to a CD if a patient needs to take them to another facility.

"The benefits we are experiencing with Fuji's digital mammography are not only allowing us to do our jobs more effectively and efficiently but, more importantly, they enable us to provide the top level of care for our breast imaging patients," said Dr. Truax.

According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women between the ages of 15 and 54, and the second cause of cancer death in women 55 to 74. In New York State, nearly 15,000 are diagnosed with breast cancer annually over 2,500 women die each year from the disease. Fortunately, 96 percent of women who find and treat breast cancer early will be cancer-free after five years. A breast exam by a doctor should also be part of a periodic health exam every year for women 40 and above.

To enhance local breast cancer services, St. James Mercy Hospital partners with The Cancer Services Program of Steuben County to offer free mammograms as well as cervical and colorectal cancer screenings and treatments to uninsured or under-insured individuals. For information call 607-324-8690 (toll-free 877-778-6857), email sjmhwellness@sjmh.org, or visit www.St.JamesMercy.org.

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Tracy Phillips, Mammography Technologist at St. James Mercy Hospital, and Radiologist Stephen Raskin, MD, demonstrate the new digital mammography technology.

