



[Home](#) > [News Room](#) > [More Press](#) > [Intra-Operative Staging of Lung Cancer](#)

Intra-Operative Staging of Lung Cancer

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Roswell Park Awarded Funds to Study Intra-Operative Staging of Lung Cancer

BUFFALO, NY – [Chukwumere E. Nwogu, MD](#), Department of Surgery at Roswell Park Cancer Institute, has been awarded grants from the National Cancer Institute and the Thoracic Surgery Foundation for Research and Education totaling nearly \$1.2 million to investigate the effectiveness of an intra-operative gamma probe in staging of lung cancer.

“Accurate staging of lung cancer is an important criterion used to determine treatment following surgery,” said Dr. Nwogu, a member of the RPCI Lung Cancer Team. “Current staging methods often lack sensitivity and specificity in early-stage lung cancer. We hope that this method will give surgeons a new tool to identify cancer metastases to lymph nodes with greater accuracy, which would then guide clinical decisions leading to more effective post-surgical treatment options.”

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) has emerged as a valuable tool in cancer staging for thoracic malignancies and is now available intra-operatively using a hand-held gamma probe. This study will investigate the ability of this probe to intra-operatively identify lymph nodes likely to harbor micrometastases and thereby significantly improve the accuracy of lymph node staging. The results of the study may help to determine the utility of the gamma probe as a tool to enhance detection of early spread of the disease, and guide therapeutic decisions regarding adjuvant care, thereby improving patient survival.

“Accurate lymph node staging of lung cancer is one of the most important prognostic factors and is critical in determining future adjuvant therapies for patients. We hope this study will help us identify metastases in a much more sensitive manner and will be predictive of patient outcome,” added Dr. Nwogu.

Lung cancer is the most frequent cause of cancer death in both men and women in the United States. An estimated 215,020 new cases will be diagnosed in 2008. The five-year survival rate is only about 15%.

Roswell Park Cancer Institute, founded in 1898, is the nation’s first cancer research, treatment and education center. The Institute was one of the first cancer centers in the country to be named a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center and remains the only facility with this designation in Upstate New York. RPCI is a member of the prestigious National

Comprehensive Cancer Network, an alliance of the nation's leading cancer centers; maintains affiliate sites; and is a partner in national and international collaborative programs. For more information, visit RPCI's website at www.roswellpark.org, call 1-877-ASK-RPCI (1-877-275-7724) or email askrpci@roswellpark.org.

-30-

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