



Salina Regional
Health Center

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact – John Berggren

Public Relations Coordinator
Salina Regional Health Center
(785) 452-7830

Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy proving to detect lung cancer earlier, more safely

(February, 06 2025) – Last week Salina Regional Health Center Special Procedures staff members and Salina Pulmonologist Jorge Cedano, MD, celebrated surpassing the 50th procedure using the Ion Robotic-Assisted Bronchoscopy System. The technology is used to evaluate suspicious tissue throughout the lungs and diagnose lung cancer.

Since Ion first became available in Salina late last summer, the hospital has made 27 lung cancer diagnoses with the technology, and 54% of those were found to be Stage I cancers. Cancer found early in Stage I or Stage II is often highly-treatable and even curable.

“Finding this high of a percentage of early, Stage I cancers is unusual,” Dr. Cedano said. “Lung cancers found early are curable. I think it’s a credit to the primary care providers and physicians in the region who are doing a good job with their lung cancer screening programs. We hope to see lung cancer screening efforts continue to grow so more patients can find lung cancer early.”

Many people at risk for lung cancer including current and former smokers undergo regular screening for lung cancer with a low-dose CT scan. When the screenings – or other tests – find suspicious nodules or lesions in the lungs, a biopsy is often recommended to assess for cancer.

Usually, early stage lung cancer has no outward symptoms. When symptoms do develop like coughing, wheezing, chest pain, shortness of breath or hoarseness, lung cancer has often reached an advanced stage. People with interest in screening for lung cancer should talk with their primary care

provider. Medicare and many private insurances offer coverage for lung cancer screenings when specific criteria are met.

The Ion system uses an ultra-thin, highly-maneuverable catheter through the mouth and airways to reach deep within the lungs to collect samples of suspicious tissue. To date, no Salina patients have had any complications following an Ion bronchoscopy. The safety and accuracy of the technology means patients no longer have to “watch-and-wait” when a suspicious lung nodule or lesion is detected or undergo difficult biopsy procedures through the chest wall.

“Nationally the complication rate for Ion bronchoscopy is less than 2%,” Dr. Cedano said. “We’re following standard protocols for the procedure and the fact that we’ve had no patient complications since implementation just speaks to how safe this procedure is for patients.”

According to a report from the National Institutes of Health, patients who undergo traditional forms of biopsies using image guidance through the chest wall experience complications 24% to 38% of the time.

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