



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Patients Can Get Faster Lung Cancer Diagnosis, Treatment with New Robotic Biopsy System

Ion® Technology Offers Less Invasive, More Precise Access to All 18 Segments of Lung

O’FALLON, III. — Time matters – especially when you or a loved one is waiting for the results of a lung cancer biopsy.

HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Hospital is now offering the latest leading-edge technology for lung cancer biopsies with the Ion® endoluminal system. The new robotic-assisted procedure can reduce or even eliminate the need for more-invasive lung cancer biopsies or even surgery to determine a cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment.

The result: A faster diagnosis and treatment plan, which can lead to a better survival rate for patients.

According to the [American Cancer Society](#), 44% of lung cancer cases are not caught until a late stage when the five-year survival rate is only 8%. If the cancer is caught in an early stage, the survival rate jumps to 63%.

“We are excited to equip our pulmonologists with leading edge robotic technology as they care for their patients. This investment in the latest lung screening and therapeutic technology defines our longstanding commitment to offering the very best clinical tools and solutions for our physicians and patients. I am proud of our clinical and operational teams for continually pushing us to be market leaders in specialty areas such as pulmonary medicine,” said Chris Klay, HSHS Southern Illinois Market President and CEO, HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Hospital President and CEO, and HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital – Highland President and CEO. “This medical innovation continues our mission of providing the highest quality and compassionate care to those we are privileged to serve.”

The key to the new system is an extremely thin, maneuverable catheter that allows pulmonologists easier and pinpointed access to suspicious nodules in deep lung tissue detected by an initial lung cancer CT scan.

Dr. Brian A. Reichardt, a pulmonologist at HSHS Medical Group Multispecialty Care in O'Fallon and HSHS Medical Group Pulmonology Specialty Clinic in Breese, said the Ion® system outperforms a traditional bronchoscopy because of its access to all 18 segments of the lung.

"The catheter's ability to move 180 degrees in any direction and maneuver into hard-to-reach areas of the lung during an initial biopsy is a game-changer," Reichardt said. "This can decrease diagnosis time, allowing me to develop and implement a course of treatment more quickly for a patient if the biopsy indicates cancer."

Reichardt noted that [pulmonologists at the University of Michigan Health-West](#) who analyzed 399 cases using the Ion® system from 2020 to 2023 found a diagnostic accuracy of 92%. Additionally, there was a nearly 23% increase in the percentage of early lung cancer diagnoses.

Plus, the technology is less invasive than a traditional bronchoscopy, making the procedure easier on patients.

"Patients experience less discomfort, and recovery time is reduced," Reichardt said.

Individuals whose lung cancer CT scans have indicated suspicious areas should talk with their doctor about the Ion® endoluminal system as the next step in their journey to improved lung health.

For more information about HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital, visit steliz.org.

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About Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS)

HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital, O'Fallon, celebrating 150 years of serving the Metro East area, is part of Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS), a Catholic health care ministry founded in 1875. Dedicated to our Mission to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through high-quality Franciscan health care, HSHS clinicians provide exceptional care centered on the whole person. Based in Springfield, Illinois, HSHS employs nearly 11,000 colleagues who provide care in 13 acute-care, children's and critical-access hospitals and home health and hospice programs in Central and Southern Illinois and Eastern Wisconsin. HSHS is aligned with more than 1,000 primary and specialty physicians and advanced practitioners through its owned affiliates [HSHS Medical Group](#) and [Prairie Cardiovascular](#) and its partnership with [Prevea Health](#). For more information about HSHS, visit hshs.org.