

Society of Interventional Radiology Features Radiofrequency Ablation in Press Release

SIR Press Release Highlights Three-Year Clinical Data Showing Radiofrequency Ablation Treatment Effective as Surgical Resection in Select Primary Liver Cancer Patients

FREMONT, Calif., March 31 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- RITA Medical Systems, Inc. (Nasdaq: RITA), a publicly-traded medical device company focused solely on cancer therapies, today announced the distribution of a press release by the Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR) entitled, "Minimally Invasive Radiofrequency Ablation Equally Effective As Surgical Resection for Small Liver Tumors." The press release highlights clinical study results presented by Dr. Riccardo Lencioni, Professor of Radiology at the University of Pisa, Italy. Dr. Lencioni presented his results at the SIR 31st Annual Scientific Meeting in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

In the matched, case-control study of 162 patients treated with surgical resection or radiofrequency ablation (RFA), researchers reported overall survival rates were 72% at 3 years in the RFA group, versus 65% at 3 years in the surgical resection group. The scientific abstract of the presentation is available on the SIR Annual Meeting website, at www.SIRmeeting.org. Click on "Program," then "Scientific Presentations," and then "Abstract Presentations," and search for abstract number 1021. The same link may be used to do a subject search for other presentations on the topic of radiofrequency ablation.

Dr. Jelle Kylstra, Vice President and Medical Director of RITA Medical Systems commented, "According to the case-control study, for this group of patients with solitary primary liver tumors, radiofrequency ablation provides survival comparable to the traditional "gold standard" treatment of surgical resection. We believe that patients realize this benefit without the complications and morbidity often associated with surgery, and typically return home within 24 hours after the procedure."

About RITA Medical Systems, Inc.

RITA Medical Systems develops, manufactures and markets innovative products for cancer patients including radiofrequency ablation (RFA) systems for treating cancerous tumors as well as percutaneous vascular and spinal access systems. The Company's oncology product lines include implantable ports, some of which feature its proprietary Vortex® technology; tunneled central venous catheters; and safety infusion sets and peripherally inserted central catheters used primarily in cancer treatment protocols. The product line also includes the HABIB 4X resection device which coagulates a surgical resection plane and is designed to facilitate a fast dissection in order to minimize blood loss and blood transfusion during surgery. The proprietary RITA RFA system uses radiofrequency energy to heat tissue to a high enough temperature to ablate it or cause cell death. In March 2000, RITA became the first RFA Company to receive specific FDA clearance for unresectable liver lesions in addition to its previous general FDA clearance for the ablation of soft tissue. In October 2002, RITA again became the first company to receive specific FDA clearance, this time for the palliation of pain associated with metastatic lesions involving bone. The RITA Medical Systems website is at www.ritamedical.com.

The statements in this news release related to the efficacy, benefits and safety of RFA technology, including without limitation physician adoption of RFA treatment for liver cancer, are forward-looking statements involving risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in such forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to: the Company's ability to compete with companies with greater resources; the existence of alternative therapies that could prove to be superior to RFA; the lack of long-term data regarding the safety and efficacy of its RFA products; delay of product introductions or modifications as a result of the FDA regulatory process; and the Company's success in its physician training efforts. Information regarding these risks and other risks and uncertainties is included in the Company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

SOURCE RITA Medical Systems, Inc. CONTACT: media, Steve DiMattia, +1-646-277-8706, or sdimattia@evcgroup.com, or investors, Doug Sherk, dsherker@evcgroup.com, or Jennifer Beugelmans, both at +1-415-896-6820, all of EVC Group for RITA Medical Systems, Inc.; or Stephen Pedroff, VP Marketing Communications of RITA Medical Systems, Inc., +1-510-771-0400, or spedroff@ritamed.com/