

PET Unleashed

The Central Valley's Dedicated PET News Source

Welcome to Valley Metabolic Imaging—*The VMI Difference*

We are pleased to provide you with the first edition of **PET Unleashed**. As Fresno's first and only fixed and dedicated PET imaging center, we hope these newsletters will be a valuable resource, providing up to date information regarding the latest in PET imaging to the Valley's healthcare providers.

A word about who we are: Valley Metabolic Imaging, or VMI, opened it's doors in September 2002 under the direction of Daniel Stobbe, MD, FACNP. We think your patients will find us different than other PET imaging services you may be familiar with. Our pledge is to exceed your expectations of service and quality in every way possible; that's the Valley Metabolic difference.

The VMI Difference—It's not just about the high quality of our PET imaging system, or the unequalled qualifications of our physician and our technical staff; it's our commitment of service to physicians and patients that defines Valley Metabolic. Only VMI can offer the total program of services that consistently exceeds the PET imaging needs of your practice and your patients.

- **Your patients need...** ...a dedicated PET center that offers the comfort and safety of a convenient fixed site.
- **Your practice demands...** ...five day a week availability and same day delivery of final reports and images.

- **Your patients deserve...** ...the carefully monitored quality, reliability, and reproducibility that comes from having a stable technologist staff; ...direct bedside physician supervision by Fresno's only Board Certified, Fellow of the American College of Nuclear Physicians.
- **Your office staff needs...** ...streamlined scheduling, with no unnecessary office visits required to schedule an exam. They will appreciate a PET center that will obtain preauthorization on your behalf whenever possible.

VMI is conveniently located in the Fresno Surgery Center West Building at 6121 N. Thesta Avenue, Suite 207. Call 559-449-2640 for more information or to schedule a PET scan today.

Meet the VMI Staff

Valley Metabolic Imaging may be a new practice in the Central Valley but Dr. Stobbe's staff are seasoned medical professionals, experienced in providing the highest quality of care to their patients.

Upon arriving patients are greeted by our patient care coordinator, Diane Davis. Diane began her medical career in 1992, and has a special knack for helping to make visitors feel welcome. Diane is responsible for maintaining all front office duties, including scheduling and obtaining pre-authorizations.

Gary Abbott, our Nuclear Medicine Technologist, performs all of our PET scans, assuring consistent and reliable studies. Gary spends additional

time educating each patient about PET, ensuring each patient a safe, calm and comfortable experience. Gary has been in the health care industry for 27 years.

Diana Scott recently joined our team as practice administrator. Diana relocated from the Bay Area and brings with her over 15 years of experience in health care. Diana assists Dr. Stobbe with practice management & development. Additionally, she works closely with the community and physicians to ensure consistent patient and physician satisfaction.

Dr. Stobbe, Diane, Diana & Gary extend a welcome to those of you who may have missed their open house — feel free to drop by anytime to view VMI's beautiful new center.



"Our goal is to exceed your expectations of service and quality in every way possible"

—Dan Stobbe, MD, FACNP

Improving Cancer Care with PET Imaging

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One in three people will experience cancer in their lifetime. According to the American Cancer Society, 1.3 million new cases of cancer will be diagnosed this year alone. Despite the great advances in diagnostic and therapeutic techniques, cancer mortality and morbidity continues to place a heavy burden on patients everywhere, and the search for ways to improve oncologic care continues.

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) is the latest imaging technique that is changing the world of oncology. This exciting new imaging procedure uses radioactive pharmaceuticals linked to biological compounds, such as glucose or water, to produce images depicting biochemical function. PET imaging's unique ability to visualize metabolic function now affords physicians the ability to detect cancers that may be undetectable on routine medical imaging. By providing images depicting cancerous changes at the molecular level, PET imaging has become a powerful ally in the fight against cancer.

Although a PET scanner looks

similar to a CT scanner, the information PET provides is very different from either CT or MRI. While CT or MRI excel at providing detailed images of the shape and location of a known abnormality, only PET can directly evaluate the metabolic function of an abnormality to more directly detect the presence and extent of cancer.

According to Daniel Stobbe, MD, FACNP, Medical Director of Valley Metabolic Imaging Center, "PET helps physicians identify cells that grow at a very fast rate. In cancer patients, changes in cell metabolism occur before a tumor mass is seen. In many cancer types, early detection of the cancer has been directly linked to the success of the patient's outcome." PET can often see the spread of disease through metastases before this becomes apparent on CT or MRI.

In the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, PET scans help by:

- Evaluating & staging the extent of the disease
- Earlier cancer detection, thus earlier treatment, and better outcomes
- Possibly lower the need for additional surgeries, chemotherapy or radiation therapy through more precise imaging
- Assess ongoing disease management effectiveness

PET scans have been extremely beneficial in helping guide the

choice of therapy or the decision to undergo surgery. PET scans performed after treatment demonstrate the effectiveness of the treatment. In light of PET imaging's proven diagnostic power Medicare began paying for them in 2001 to help in the diagnosis of various cancers.

PET scans are particularly helpful in the detection and treatment of lymphoma, lung, colorectal, head & neck, uterine and breast cancer. PET scans can save lung and esophageal cancer patients from difficult surgery by helping to determine whether the cancer had spread to the lymph nodes. PET scans can also be useful in evaluating the spread of the disease in melanoma and cancers of the mouth and throat, where the removal of lymph nodes can improve the outcome.

Because of its dramatic impact on treatment, the widespread commercial availability of radioisotopes and the fact that many exams are now reimbursable, whole-body PET scans are now considered an essential component of the diagnostic work-up for many cancer patients.

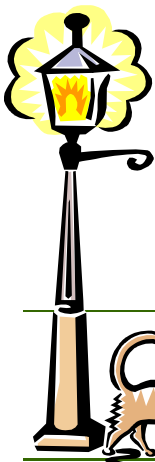
For more clinical information on PET and its benefits in the diagnosis, staging and monitoring of oncology, please call Valley Metabolic Imaging at 559-449-2640.

**PET Scans
are now an
essential component of the
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CPET Plus — State of the Art Technology

Valley Metabolic Imaging has selected a Phillips/ADAC CPET Plus imaging system—a state of the art, full ring PET tomograph that delivers exceptional image clarity. The outstanding sensitivity and spatial resolution offered by the CPET Plus enables us to produce images of striking quality and resolution—resulting in greater diagnostic power and the highest quality patient care.



By coupling the power of CPET Plus with the amenities of a fixed, dedicated site, **VMI offers advantages that mobile PET providers can't match...** Only VMI can offer your patients the safety, reliability, and easy accessibility of a convenient fixed site—paired with the top notch diagnostic power of the CPET Plus, and the careful, constant on-site supervision of Fresno's finest PET physician.

Insurers See the Light -- Expanding Reimbursement for PET Imaging

As of 12/01/02, Medicare has expanded their coverage for PET imaging to include the following clinical indications:

Solitary Pulmonary Nodule	Lesion characterization
Lung cancer	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Colorectal Cancer	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Lymphoma	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Melanoma (but not for evaluation of regional nodes)	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Head and Neck Cancer (excludes central nervous system or thyroid cancers)	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Esophageal Cancer	Diagnosis, staging and re-staging
Breast Cancer	Staging, re-staging and monitoring therapy
Refractory Seizures	Pre-surgical evaluation
Myocardial Viability	Evaluation of Myocardial Viability

2003 Medicare update: During the coming year Medicare will consider expanding PET coverage to include testicular, cervical, ovarian, brain and thyroid cancer, gastro-intestinal stromal tumors, soft tissue sarcoma and evaluation of suspected Alzheimer's disease. Keep an eye out for details in future issues of **PET Unleashed**.

****Additional indications such as brain, thyroid, ovarian, pancreatic cancers, testicular & unknown primary tumors, certain sarcomas, and evaluation of certain dementias, are other common indications for PET imaging.** Private insurers recognize the usefulness of PET imaging and often provide coverage for these studies not covered by Medicare. **Preauthorizations are often required; should you have questions regarding PET coverage or would like our help in obtaining preauthorization, please contact us at 559-449-2640.**

VMI - The Valley's P.E.T



Valley
Metabolic
Imaging, LLC

VMI—PET WALL OF FAME

We not only do P.E.T. imaging,
but we're all pet lovers too!

Send us a picture of your pet
(dog, cat, bird, pig, iguana...)

to add to the **PET Wall of Fame**
at the VMI office

Help Us Help Others at Our January Blood Drive

On Wednesday, January 22, 2003, VMI will be hosting a blood drive. We are hoping our efforts can assist the Central California Blood Center's goal of 250 units of blood per day required to meet patient needs throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

The center relies completely on volunteers—Please help assist us in our efforts by volunteering to donate. The blood drive will be conducted between 11:00 a.m. & 2:30 p.m. All donors will be entered in VMI's drawing to win various gift certificates & prizes! To participate please contact Diana Scott at 449-2640.

Valley Metabolic Imaging

6121 N. Thesta Avenue, Suite 207
Fresno, CA 93710

Phone: 559-449-2640

Fax: 559-432-7020