



Medical News

Nuclear Medicine Helps Patients Avoid Pain

(NAPS)—Once upon a time, doctors used exploratory surgery to investigate health problems.

Today, nuclear technologies offer noninvasive diagnostic techniques that help patients avoid the pain of surgeries while their physicians gain more insight on how the body works.



Photo credit: U.S. Dept. of Energy

Nuclear technologies gain data once available only through surgery.

One out of three patients admitted to hospitals undergoes at least one medical procedure that uses radioisotopes. These substances are useful because they emit radiation that can be located in the body.

A gamma camera captures images from isotopes that emit radiation in the body. Then, computers can enhance the images, allowing physicians to detect tumors, measure blood flow, or determine thyroid and pulmonary functions—even examine organ structure.

Unlike an x-ray, nuclear diagnostics provide additional data for more accurate diagnosis and early treatment.

For more information, visit the American Nuclear Society at www.ans.org/pi/np/diagnosis.