

OBEY

August 28, 1998

SEP 01 1998

The Honorable Jay Johnson
US House of Representatives
1313 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

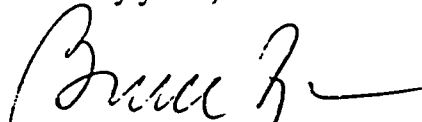
Dear Congressman Johnson:

I am writing to encourage you to contact the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and ask them to support the "risk-based" approach as they consider revising the training and experience necessary for the medical use of radioisotopes in a very specific type of interventional cardiology procedure. The procedure in question is termed intravascular brachytherapy. The NRC's Advisory Council for the Medical Use of Isotopes encouraged the NRC to classify intravascular brachytherapy as an emerging technology. This certainly reflects the status of this investigational procedure. The procedure is discussed in the attached news report from an August issue of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. As you can see, two centers in the state of Wisconsin are currently conducting clinical trials of intravascular brachytherapy in which radioactive seeds are implanted in the coronary artery in an attempt to reduce the likelihood of closure or recurrent blockage following percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty. The article makes it quite clear that this is indeed an experimental therapy. It is unrealistic, therefore, for the NRC to argue that fully-trained interventional cardiologists would have to go through extensive radiation oncology training in order to use a radioisotope in this very limited and specifically localized way. The experimental protocols incorporate a radiation oncologist fully in the design of the procedure.

In summary, this is very promising technology that has the potential for broad patient application. On the other hand, it is an extraordinarily limited use of very low dose radiation (far less than patients are exposed to when they have a routine fluoroscopic examination).

I sincerely hope that you will contact the NRC about this important issue.

Sincerely yours,



W. Bruce Fye, M.A., M.D., F.A.C.C.
Medical Director, Marshfield Heart Care

WBF:mkt
Enclosure

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