

1997 Annual Meeting Press Conference Produces Nationwide Coverage of Nuclear Medicine



Figure 1.



Figure 2.

Figure 1. Jack Ziffer, MD, Baptist Hospital of Miami, addresses reporters at the press conference during the SNM's 44th Annual Meeting held in San Antonio in June.

Figure 2. At the SNM's 44th Annual Meeting Press Conference in San Antonio in June, Jack Ziffer, MD, PhD, Baptist Hospital of Miami, illustrates the effectiveness of using nuclear medicine heart imaging in the emergency room to diagnose patients with acute chest pain.

National news media interest in the use of scintimammography for women with dense breasts and high risk factors and the use of nuclear heart imaging to diagnose chest pain in emergency rooms was extremely high at the Society of Nuclear Medicine's 44th Annual Meeting held in June in San Antonio, TX. With the timely FDA approval of Miraluma just days prior to the press conference, the news value of scintimammography was heightened. As a result of the Monday, June 2 news conference

held during the meeting and satellite distribution of b-roll video about nuclear medicine, television stations around the country aired more than 50 segments about the new research, reaching 4.6 million viewers. These news reports aired during the week following the news conference, many listing the SNM's headquarters' office phone number. Consequently, dozens of phone calls continue to come into the SNM's office requesting more information about nuclear medicine and local facilities. In addition, more than a dozen daily and weekly newspapers throughout the United States ran articles on these nuclear medicine topics. Major trade publications for the nuclear medicine and radiology fields also published a series of articles before, during and after the annual meeting.

With television cameras and reporters filling the news conference room, spokespersons Naomi Alazraki, MD and Jack Ziffer, MD, PhD had a captive audience to release the news about scintimammography and the use of nuclear heart imaging in emergency rooms. Following the news conference, the San Antonio television stations all aired news stories throughout the day and into the next. The San Antonio Express News featured two articles on the front page of the Metro section and distributed them to affiliate newspapers in the

New York Times Newspaper Group. Three San Antonio news talk radio stations aired drive-time reports, and the Associated Press ran an item on its wire. The national cable network Kaleidoscope Television spent one and a half hours in the exhibit hall interviewing Dr. Alazraki, Dr. Ziffer and Robert Carretta, MD, about nuclear medicine's role in breast and prostate cancers, heart disease and thyroid disease.

The satellite distribution of b-roll video enabled the SNM to reach millions of viewers around the country, as television stations were able to feature news segments, with video footage of nuclear medicine images, about the advances in nuclear medicine even though they could not attend the press conference. Stations in Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Denver, San Diego, Atlanta and Miami were among those news outlets that used the b-roll. This was the first time in its history that the SNM used the satellite distribution process, which was made possible by an educational grant from Dupont Radiopharmaceuticals.

In the trade press, the May issue of *Advance for Administrators in Radiology* had four articles and editorials about nuclear medicine, specifically mentioning the SNM. At the trade press briefing held later in the afternoon Monday, June 2, Dr. Carretta served as spokesperson and moderated a roundtable discussion among trade reporters and Drs. Dan Berman, Steven Larson, Holger Palmedo, Peter Valk and Jack Ziffer. The trade press briefing provided an informal setting for our experts to discuss the latest advancement and highlight research in the areas of breast, lung and colorectal cancers, as well as heart disease. Industry journals represented at the briefing included *Diagnostic Imaging*, *Diagnostic Imaging Scan*, *Applied Radiology*, *Advance* and *Future Oncology*. Post-convention coverage has, to date, resulted in articles in *Medical Imaging News*, *Radiology & Imaging Letter*, *Decisions in Imaging Economics* and *RT Image*.

This type of extensive news coverage in both the consumer and trade press continues to help the SNM educate the public and referring physicians about the value and benefits of nuclear medicine. The widespread news coverage from the San Antonio meeting means that millions of people heard about nuclear medicine, many of whom may not have ever known this type of imaging was available to them.