

## FDA Approval for Myocardial Perfusion Imaging Agent

A new radionuclide for myocardial perfusion imaging, <sup>99m</sup>Tc-tetrofosmin (Myoview™), was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in February. One advantage of the new agent is that it clears rapidly from the liver, enabling images to be taken 15 minutes postinjection, according to William Ehmgig, vice president of professional affairs for Medi-Physics, Inc., the manufacturer of tetrofosmin. The rapid acquisition time allows nuclear physicians to perform stress and rest images in single-day protocols. The kit is

also easy to prepare since it does not require a boiling step, he said.

In clinical trials, researchers reported "very good" sensitivity and specificity values for tetrofosmin, according to Ehmgig. Technetium-99m-sestamibi (Cardiolite) from Dupont Merck is another technetium-based heart imaging radionuclide available in the U.S. ■

## Company Invests \$14 Million for PET

Syncor International Corporation, which runs a network of nuclear pharmacies, announced in January that it is investing \$14 million for the development of a nationwide network for PET. Syncor currently operates

four PET distribution centers in the U.S. and anticipates expanding to more than 20 centers by the end of 1998.

"Our decision to invest in our core business, overseas expansion and PET confirms our belief that the growth in the nuclear medicine market will be accelerated by the introduction of new products, the expansion of managed care and a continuing focus on healthcare cost reduction," said Gene McGravin, vice chairman and chief executive officer of Syncor International who will lead Syncor's effort in PET. The company will also be investing \$8 million over the next three years to redesign business processes and improve its information technology and linkages to customers and suppliers. ■

## OVERHEARD |

UCLA researchers used PET scans were able to confirm that behavioral modification and cognitive therapy are effective treatments for obsessive-compulsive disorder. They found that the therapies alter the biology of the brain to decrease the activity of the caudate nucleus, the region responsible for compulsive urges.

—*Archives of General Psychiatry (February, 1996)*

PET offers little clinical advantage for evaluating ischemic heart disease over less costly nuclear imaging technology, according to a report from ECRI, a healthcare information firm in Plymouth Meeting, PA. More specifically, the report concluded that PET offers no clear advantage over SPECT.

—*SNM Network News (February, 1996)*

Two dentists at the University of Maryland Dental School believe they have discovered a previously unidentified muscle behind the human eye. The muscle is about 1.25 inches long and runs from behind each eye socket to the inside of the jawbone and appears to assist in chewing. Anatomists have yet to confirm if the finding can indeed be classified as a "previously undescribed" muscle.

—*Proceedings from the 1996 American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in February*

In a recent survey, 81% of female doctors said they believe there's too little research done on women's health problems; 37% of male doctors agree.

—*The 1995 Scientific American Poll*