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NEW SOFTWARE ENABLES CLOSE DIAGNOSIS OF LIVER, GALLBLADDER

A new software package to assist with the clinical diagnosis of liver and gallbladder diseases has been approved for distribution by the Federal Food and Drug Administration.

The system was co-developed by the physician husband-and-wife team of nuclear medicine specialists Gerbail T. and Shakuntala Krishnamurthy of Tuality Community Hospital at Hillsboro, Ore.

The recent FDA approval means that for the first time nuclear medicine departments around the world will have access to universal standardized imaging of liver and gallbladder functions.

The "Krishnamurthy Hepatobiliary Software" (KHBS) system is used for the prompt diagnosis of acute and chronic liver disease (cirrhosis) and gallbladder diseases.

KHBS is a comprehensive, PC-based software program that reads and analyzes dicom images from a "gamma camera" for an in-depth analysis.

"The availability of this rigorous quantitative tool will help the entire field and is long overdue," according to Dr. Sanjiv Sam Gambhir, chief of the nuclear medicine division and professor of radiology at the Stanford University School of Medicine and director of Stanford's molecular imaging program.

"This software package (KHBS) allows physicians to interpret studies in precisely the same way, whether in California or Alaska," agrees Dr. Christian Schiepers, professor of radiology and nuclear medicine specialist at the University of California Los Angeles Medical Center and editor of the textbook, "Diagnostic Nuclear Medicine."

"There previously has been no universal standard in data collection and analysis to compare results from one medical center to another. This new software fills this important need," adds Dr. Diwakar Jain, professor of medicine and director of nuclear cardiology at the Drexel University College of Medicine at Philadelphia, Pa. Dr. Jain also is an editor of London-based Nuclear Medicine Communication.

Dr. Gerbail Krishnamurthy notes that ultrasound, computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) are the primary imaging procedures used to detect liver and gallbladder diseases, "Their results are limited in providing functional assessments.

"Ultrasound, CT and MRI provide excellent morphologic information, but the earliest manifestations of liver diseases can occur unobserved and escape detection," he says.

Use of KHBS will permit critical functional changes to be identified earlier, he adds.

"A patient can be diagnosed as having a certain liver or gallbladder disease by comparing their test results with the normal database," he says.

His partner, Dr. Shakuntala Krishnamurthy, adds, "Previously, there has been no universal standard in data collection and analysis in nuclear hepatology to compare results from one medical facility to another because of the lack of reliable hepatobiliary software."

The Krishnamurthy team has pioneered in the field of liver and gallbladder disease. In 2000, they co-authored the textbook "Nuclear Hepatology" for use in nuclear medicine to diagnose the diseases.

Earlier, in 1981, Gerbail Krishnamurthy developed the first non-invasive test to understand how effectively a patient's gallbladder empties bile. His "gallbladder ejection fraction" technique is now used worldwide to help determine the cause of painful gallbladder disease when gallstones are not present or detectable.

Medical institutions that participated in the initial validation of the KHBS system include Tuality Community Hospital, UCLA Medical, Stanford Medical and Kings College in London.

For additional information, contact L&G Medical Software at <http://www.lgmds.com> or call 503-924-2429.

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