LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER STUDIES/YEAR: 6,600

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CLINICAL PROFILE

GENERAL NUCLEAR MEDICINE

2020TC IMAGER

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

ENJOYS THE SIMPLICITY AND CONVENIENCE OF THE DIGIRAD 2020TC SINGLE-HEAD MOBILE IMAGER

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At a large medical center, smaller can be better. That's the case at Loma Linda University Medical Center, a sprawling 822-bed facility where nuclear medicine staff are finding that Digirad's compact 2020tc Single-Head Mobile Imager is fast becoming the tool of choice for a wide range of studies>

Patients at the Southern California medical center also have noted its advantages. "They really like the small size of the head, and the unit seems to ease claustrophobia," said David Utt, chief radiologic technologist. "Our staff here have really taken to the 2020 as well—they'll often have multiple choices as to which camera they can use and they often seem to migrate toward this one."

The 2020tc Imager®, a compact and lightweight solid-state gamma camera, offers maximum clinical versatility, flexibility and convenience almost anywhere that planar, dynamic and SPECT imaging of large or small organs are required. Designed as an overflow unit for the broad range of studies that demand a single-head camera in a typical nuclear medicine department, the 2020tc Imager is excellent for lung and thyroid studies, scintimammography, and bedside imaging throughout a hospital or medical center. The system has high resolving power, is clinically adaptable, and its portability means imaging can be performed anywhere in the hospital. These features combined with the fact that the 2020tc's images are comparable to those produced using dual-head whole-body systems costing far more introduces a unique value proposition for medical facilities.

At Loma Linda, where six cameras ranging from one to three heads are in play, the 2020tc Imager can be used with a reclining chair for added comfort. Utt, whose division had been without a mobile system for five years, uses the camera primarily for multi-gated cardiac, thyroid and gastric emptying studies; it also is used to perform dynamic cerebral blood flow studies in critically ill or injured patients and to identify complex infections, often patients in isolation that must be imaged bedside.

The 2020tc Imager was acquired in part to meet the division's need for a portable gamma camera at a time when funding in the department had tightened and the department had observed a slight decline in cardiac procedures. "Obviously, we wanted to shore up our mobile capability," Utt said. "Our physical plan also was a factor: the 2020 fits so well in our existing space. We didn't want to go through any permit or siting processes, we could just roll it in, and there weren't any anchoring issues—it just fit well."

While the camera is used within the department about 90% of the time, staff consider it much more than a stationary unit. The 2020 has been transported to the pediatric intensive-care unit numerous times for cerebral blood flow performance confirmation; it also has been wheeled to the cardiac care unit for similar procedures. The camera also has been transported to the hospital's trauma unit and elsewhere in the multi-facility medical center, enabling Loma Linda to complete an additional 15 to 20 studies per month on patients who would have been incapable of being imaged within the department. The added procedure volume the 2020 created was a very positive upside benefit of having the system.

According to Utt, the system's overall popularity is a result of its simplicity as well as its portability. It is easy to operate, easy to transport, easy to load patients in and out of, and easy to position them for imaging. In fact, its compactness minimizes the risk of bumping a chin during positioning or the need to force patients with rotator cuff conditions to excessively move a painful shoulder into place for optimal imaging. "The detector fits in places where a large detector doesn't," Utt said.

Because of that, patients have quickly grown to appreciate the machine, which was acquired in 2006. Many patients with back and other pains are unable to lie prone, and the 2020 enables them to lie semi-reclined with their legs slightly elevated for additional comfort. Pinhole bone, thyroid, and gastric emptying studies all can be done with greater ease and comfort than with larger dual-head systems, Utt said.

"The patients that we use the 2020 on upstairs are better served being cared for at the bedside," Utt said, adding that the risk of an adverse event is heightened once patients leave their room. "In a facility this size, I believe it would be selling the patient short not to have a portable gamma camera. If you're going to use the word 'full-service' in a department, you really should have a portable gamma camera."

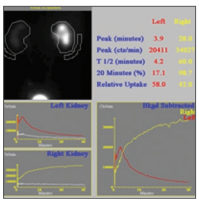
The bottom line: the single-head 2020tc Imager offers added clinical flexibility for a nuclear medicine service at much lower capital and service costs than adding another dual-head camera. The system provides a more cost effective solution than using a dual head to perform studies that only require a single head. You also eliminate the expense of tying up nursing personnel and having to transport critically ill patients to the department. In today's cost-conscious health-care environment, that's a big deal.

2020tc Single-Head
Mobile Imager from Digirad

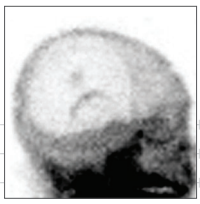
"It's helping to hold down costs," Utt said. "And, we're getting good studies when and where we need them in a patient-friendly manner. In my mind, Loma Linda University Medical Center comes out a winner in every respect using the 2020."

BONE

RENAL



BRAIN STATIC/FLOW



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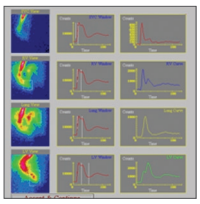

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