

Radiologists Dr John Mayo and Dr. Savvas Nicolaou improve patient care through 24/7 radiology services in the Emergency Department at VGH

TOOLS

take five

HOW FIVE SECONDS CAN SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR PATIENTS

On any given day, up to 275 patients walk, wheel or are carried through the doors of Vancouver General Hospital's (VGH's) Emergency Department (ER). While their conditions vary drastically – a woman experiencing chest pain, an unconscious man with severe injuries from a car accident, a disoriented senior with slurred speech – more than half will have at least one thing in common.

Approximately 50 per cent of ER patients will draw on the expertise of VGH's Radiology team to swiftly and accurately pinpoint the cause of their illness or injury. Medical imaging, such as CT scans and MRIs, are critical components in the diagnosis and treatment of patients.

"In five seconds, we can scan a patient from head to toe," explains Dr. John Mayo, Medical Director, Department of Medical Imaging. "And in five minutes, we can interpret that data."

In an emergency department setting – where every moment counts and many patients are not able to articulate their symptoms – having a highly specialized radiology team equipped with advanced technology is key to saving lives. "We can sort out very complicated issues quickly and ensure patients get the interventions they need right away."

VGH was the first in Canada to establish the sub-specialty of Emergency Trauma Radiology, with a team of radiologists that receive specialized training to image and diagnose acutely ill patients on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The team is part of VGH and UBC Hospital's Department of Radiology, which is internationally recognized as a leader in medical imaging.

The department consults with emergency physicians and trauma surgeons from around the province using specialized video networks to view images of patients across BC. Additionally, they offer one of the largest Emergency Trauma Radiology Fellowship programs in the world and have trained physicians as far away as Saudi Arabia and New Zealand.

As BC's largest and busiest medical imaging team, the Department of Radiology conducts 360,000 examinations a year, including more than 50,000 computerized tomography (CT) scans, which provide detailed images of bones, soft tissues and blood vessels. On an average day, about 140 CT scans are used to help detect and treat a wide range of injuries and illnesses, including cancer, broken bones, strokes, renal stones and heart disease.

The Foundation is raising funds to purchase three critically needed CT scanners for VGH and UBC Hospital. These new state-of-the-art scanners will transform medical imaging by providing faster, more precise images, reducing radiation exposure by more than half and enhancing our research capacity.

Thanks to the leadership and generosity of our donors, as well as government and fundraising events, we have raised enough funds to purchase two of the three CT scanners.

Donate now to help us reach our goal of funding the final CT scanner for VGH's Emergency Department by visiting vghfoundation.ca/ct-scanner