

Coia, Lawrence, R. M.D.

“Elderly and Clinical Radiation Trials”

[This study will help determine some of the reasons why elderly patients with cancer (age 65 or older) do or do not participate in nationwide clinical studies involving radiation therapy (administered by the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group) at two community based radiation oncology practices in New Jersey.]

This study will take place at the Radiation Oncology Departments of Community Medical Center and Monmouth Medical Center. It is designed to help understand why people age 65 and over are not as apt to participate in research trials as their younger counter parts. Since cancer cases increase with age, it is important to have the elderly well represented in clinical trials.

Using Radiation Oncology Protocols, administered by the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG), this study will gather information about factors that might make participation in research trials difficult for the elderly population. Some of the factors to be analyzed are the patient's physical condition: medical condition, insurance and/or financial needs, transportation problems, patient's and/or physician's attitude toward research trials, cultural, racial, gender, educational status, psychological and social issues.

The results of this study will provide additional knowledge about why elderly people are underrepresented in research studies. With this information, researchers may be able to design studies that are more acceptable and accessible to the aged population.