



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virginia Mason's Center for Hyperbaric Medicine Earns National Honor

SEATTLE – (May 26, 2010) – Virginia Mason's Center for Hyperbaric Medicine is the first hyperbaric facility in the United States to be accredited with distinction twice by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS). Virginia Mason was first accredited with distinction in 2006 and again this month.

Virginia Mason is a long-time leader in hyperbaric medicine with seven Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine board-certified physicians, more than any other facility in the country. Virginia Mason team members will be giving seven presentations at the UHMS Annual Scientific Meeting in St. Pete Beach, Fla., June 3 to 5. One presentation will include the largest report to date on patient outcomes following hyperbaric treatment of chronic radiation tissue injury, which develops in some patients with cancer who received radiation therapy.

A hyperbaric chamber was first installed in 1969 at the Virginia Mason Research Center for the purpose of conducting diving physiology research and providing medical treatment. Virginia Mason Hospital later assumed administrative management of the hyperbaric program in 1981, and the focus changed from research to clinical hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

Patients from Washington and throughout the region, including Alaska, Idaho and Montana, benefit from the team's more than 40 years of hyperbaric medicine experience and expertise. Under the leadership of Neil Hampson, MD, the facility is nationally recognized for its research in carbon monoxide poisoning, treatment of decompression sickness, and treatment and research in the late effects of radiation on tissue injury.

In 2005, the Center for Hyperbaric Medicine moved to an 18-person chamber and led the region as the only multiplace hyperbaric facility, enabling it to treat more than two patients at a time.

About Virginia Mason Medical Center

Virginia Mason Medical Center, founded in 1920, is a non-profit comprehensive regional health care system in Seattle that combines a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 440 physicians with a 336-bed acute-care hospital. Virginia Mason operates a network of clinics throughout the Puget Sound area; manages Bailey-Boushay House, a nursing residence and Chronic Care Management program for people living with HIV and AIDS; and operates Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason, internationally recognized in autoimmune disease research. Virginia Mason is known for applying manufacturing principles to health care to improve quality and patient safety. For more information, visit VirginiaMason.org or [Facebook/VMcares](https://www.facebook.com/VMcares) or follow @VirginiaMason on Twitter.

For media inquiries, contact:

Alisha Mark
(206) 341-1509

###