

ITART 2010 – June 22, 2010

## Quantitative Imaging Symposium: How Can We Improve Quantification?

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson  
Cancer Center**  
Making Cancer History®



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## The promise of quantitative imaging

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Patient stratification in order to decide on alternative treatments</li> </ul>	Predict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Analysis of heterogeneity within and across lesions (can assess varying pharmacokinetics, receptor status, proliferative/apoptotic rates, ...)</li> </ul>	Virtual Biopsy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Early prediction of treatment response</li> <li>•Basis for modifying therapy</li> </ul>	During Tx
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Monitoring for Treatment Efficacy</li> </ul>	After Tx
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Longitudinal monitoring and evaluation (can be done before then after treatment, substituting for longitudinal tissue biopsy)</li> </ul>	Follow-up

Buckler, et al., A Collaborative Enterprise for Multi-Stakeholder Participation in the Advancement of Quantitative Imaging, submitted, Radiology

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## Objectives

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- Ultimate goal: Translating single site successes to clinical practice!
- MR will be the modality used in this session to illustrate some specific morphological and functional applications and their associated challenges.
- General themes and challenges illustrated for MR are applicable to all quantitative imaging biomarkers, regardless of modality.
- The overall challenges discussed address the following situations:
  - single vendor, single site applications
  - multiple vendor, single site applications
  - multiple vendor, multiple site applications

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## So...what is Quantitative Imaging?

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The Toward Quantitative Imaging (TQI) task force of the RSNA definition:

– “Quantitative imaging is the extraction of quantifiable features from medical images for the assessment of normal or the severity, degree of change, or status of a disease, injury, or chronic condition relative to normal. Quantitative imaging includes the development, standardization, and optimization of anatomical, functional, and molecular imaging acquisition protocols, data analyses, display methods, and reporting structures. These features permit the validation of accurately and precisely obtained image-derived metrics with anatomically and physiologically relevant parameters, including treatment response and outcome, and the use of such metrics in research and patient care.”

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## What are the issues?

- Limitations of the selected imaging biomarker technique
- Data acquisition
  - Optimization, standardization, harmonization
  - Agent selection and standardization
  - Patient prep and injection technique (site, rate, delay, etc.) standardization
  - Acquisition protocol implementation
  - Motion mitigation, if necessary
  - Site qualification
  - Ongoing QC
- Data analysis and display
  - Optimization, standardization, harmonization
  - Motion mitigation / registration
  - Validation against vetted databases
  - Ongoing QC
- Structured reporting
- Imaging biomarker qualification / validation

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## OK, so what are the challenges?

General quantification challenges

- Lack of standards (acquisition, analysis, and reporting)
  - Varying measurement results across vendors and centers
- Lack of support from imaging equipment vendors
  - No documented competitive advantage of QIB (regulatory or payer)
    - Varying measurement results across vendors
    - Varying measurement results across time for any particular vendor
- Highly variable quality control procedures
  - QC programs, if in place, not specific for *quantitative* imaging
    - Varying measurement results across centers

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## Why use MR measures as imaging biomarkers?

- Exquisite soft tissue imaging with multiple contrast mechanisms
  - Lesion size / volume assessment
  - “Multispectral” data for image segmentation ( $T_1$ ,  $T_2$ , post-Gd  $T_1$ , etc.)
- No ionizing radiation
- Functional imaging assessments
  - Dynamic Contrast Enhanced MRI (DCE-MRI)
    - Microvascular volume, flow, permeability (extraction-flow) measures
  - Diffusion MRI
    - Cell density/volume measures
  - MR Spectroscopy
    - Biochemical measures
  - Others, including blood oxygen level dependent (BOLD) MR for hypoxia

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## General challenges in MR quantification

- Arbitrary (and spatially- / temporally-dependent) signal intensity units
- Magnitude and homogeneity of the main magnetic field ( $B_0$ )
    - Higher  $B_0$  better signal-to-noise; homogeneity impacts image uniformity and spatial accuracy
  - Magnetic field gradient nonlinearity and/or miscalibration
    - Spatial accuracy depends strongly on gradient subsystem characteristics
  - Radiofrequency (RF) coil dependency: RF coil type, sensitivity profiles, subject positioning within the coil
    - Image signal uniformity; impact on longitudinal signal intensity measures
  - Slice profile variations (with RF pulse shape, flip angle, etc.)
    - Slice thickness depends on pulse sequence and RF pulse shape; prescribed thickness and measured thickness differ, especially for fast imaging techniques
  - System stability issues (RF & gradient subsystems,  $B_0$ , RF coils, etc.)
    - Quality control programs are critical for reproducible measures!

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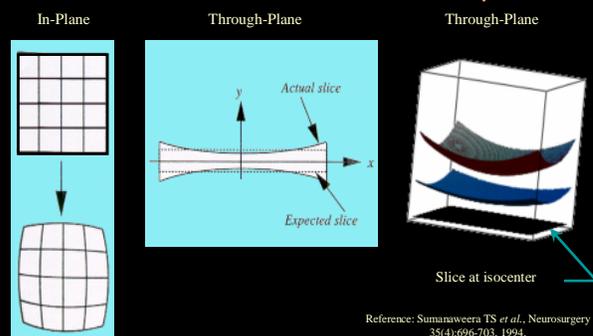
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## Gradient field nonlinearity effects



Reference: Sumanaweera TS *et al.*, Neurosurgery 35(4):696-703, 1994.

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### Precision / accuracy not just scanner dependent

- System Limitations
  - Poor  $B_0$  homogeneity
  - Linear scale factor errors in the gradient fields
  - Field distortion due to induced eddy currents
  - Nonlinearities of the gradient fields
- Object-Induced Effects
  - Chemical shift effects (fat / water displacement, in-plane and slice)
  - Intravoxel magnetic susceptibility differences (particularly air-tissue)
  - Effects are minimized with non-vendor specific appropriate acquisition parameters, but at the expense of SNR. (Importance of acquisition protocol optimization and standardization!)

Even if the scanner is "perfect", the measured value may be inaccurate...

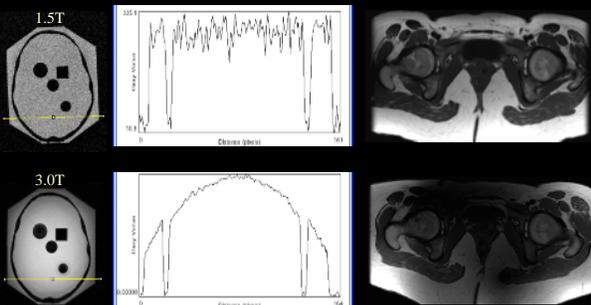
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### $B_1$ coil response non-uniformity

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### General challenges in MR quantification

Slice profile variations (with RF pulse shape, flip angle, etc.)

5 mm spin-echo

5 mm fast gradient-echo

Typically, faster imaging sequences use increasingly truncated RF pulses resulting in thicker slice profiles for a given prescribed slice thickness. This gives rise to increased partial volume averaging effects and a concomitant loss of spatial resolution.

Flip angle calibrations can also be negatively affected.

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### General challenges in MR quantification

System stability issues (RF & gradient subsystems,  $B_0$ , RF coils, etc.)

For quantitative imaging, particularly in longitudinal studies, a rigorous quality control program is critical.

Key components of frequent QC tests:

- Geometric accuracy
- Signal-to-noise ratio (or low contrast object detectability)
- Uniformity
- Contrast response
- Slice thickness
- High contrast spatial resolution
- Center frequency
- Transmit gain

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### Difficult? Perhaps, but it can be done!

| Sphere ID | Color  | Number of Spheres | Grains of Copper Sulfate Powder (Hydroxy per liter) | Target T1 (ms) |
|-----------|--------|-------------------|---|----------------|
| 1-Sph     | white  | 100               | 0.020   |                |
| 2-Sph     | white  | 5                 | 0.020   |                |
| 3-Sph     | green  | 1                 | 0.220   | 300            |
| 4-Sph     | yellow | 1                 | 0.295   | 250            |
| 5-Sph     | red    | 1                 | 0.430   | 600            |
| 6-Sph     | orange | 1                 | 0.190   | 450            |
| 8-Sph     | white  | 1                 | 0.010   |                |

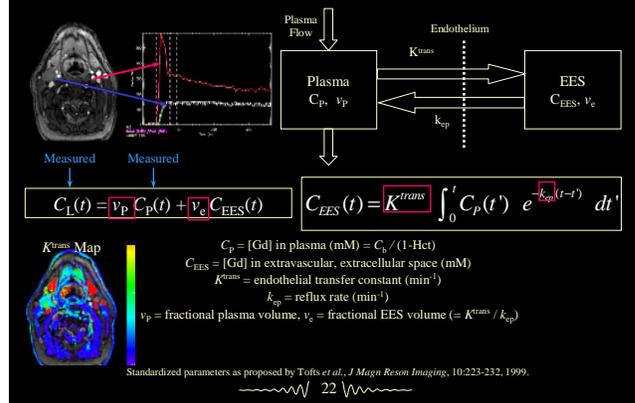
- Multicenter, multivendor study
- Optimized pulse sequence / acquisition parameters for each platform
- MagPhan/ADNI phantom scan at each measurement point
- Access to vendor gradient correction parameters
- With full correction for gradient nonlinearities and optimized acquisition strategies, spatial accuracies of ~0.3 mm can be obtained over a ~180 mm diameter spherical volume

<http://www.loni.ucla.edu/ADNI/>

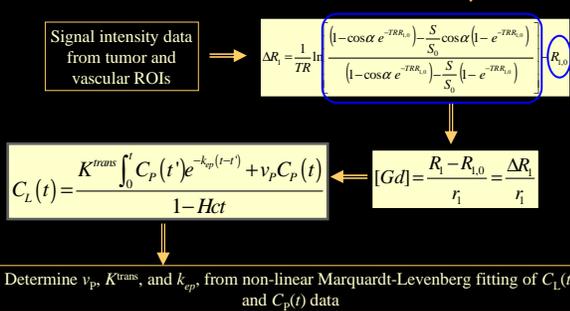
### Raising the bar – Functional MR measures

- General MR quantification challenges
  - Lack of standards (acquisition, data processing, and reporting)
    - Varying measurement results across vendors and centers
  - Lack of support from imaging equipment vendors
    - Varying measurement results across vendors
    - Varying measurement results across time for any particular vendor
  - Highly variable quality control procedures
    - Varying measurement results across centers
- Raising the bar: From morphological to functional MR biomarkers
  - DCE-MRI and DSC-MRI (microvascular extraction-flow, volume, etc.)
  - Diffusion MRI (cellular density, cell volume fraction)
  - MR Spectroscopy (biochemical concentrations)
  - BOLD MRI (oxy- / deoxyhemoglobin ratio)

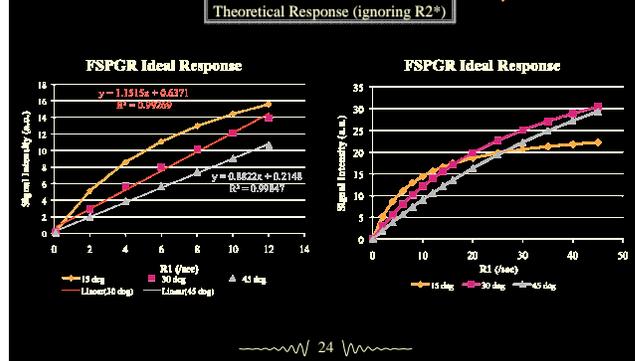
### Dynamic contrast enhanced MRI



### What are the challenges with DCE-MRI?



### What are the challenges with DCE-MRI?



## DCE-MRI data acquisition challenges

- Pulse sequence
  - Contrast response must be well characterized and maintained for duration of study (or a process for compensation for changes must be developed)
- Temporal resolution
  - Must match choice of pharmacokinetic model and parameters of interest
    - Must be rapid ( $\leq 2\text{-}5$  s) for generalized kinetic model with estimation of  $v_p$
    - Recommended to be  $\leq 10$  s for any pharmacokinetic model
- T1 measurements
  - Required if contrast agent concentration is used in modeling
  - Must be obtained in reasonable scan time
  - Must be robust as uncertainties in T1 estimates propagate to output measures

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## DCE-MRI data acquisition challenges

- Spatial resolution
  - Must be adequate for target lesion size and application
- Anatomic coverage
  - Should fully cover target lesion(s) & include appropriate vascular structure
- Motion
  - Effects should be mitigated prospectively during acquisition and/or retrospectively, *e.g.*, rigid body or deformable registration

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## DCE-MRI data analysis challenges

Many choices to be made:

- Mitigation of motion effects (if necessary)
  - Retrospective (rigid body, deformable)
- Vascular input selection
  - Manual ROI vs. automated identification of vascular structure pixels
  - Reproducibility
- Lesion ROI(s)
  - Definition criteria
  - Reproducibility
- Fits of single averaged pixel uptake curve or pixel-by-pixel fits
- Modeling of: gadolinium concentration (requiring T1 mapping) or simple change in signal intensity data
- Reporting of results (structured reporting)

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## Single-vendor, single-site studies

Major challenges:

- Acquisition protocol optimization
  - Pulse sequence and acquisition parameter optimization for:
    - contrast response
    - temporal resolution (for dynamic imaging)
    - spatial resolution
    - anatomic coverage
  - Application specific phantom needed for initial validation scans and ongoing quality control
    - phantom acquisition and data analysis protocols
    - established frequency of assessment and data reporting
- Mechanism for detecting and addressing changes in measured response due to system upgrades (Quality Control)
  - Vendors focused on “competitive advantage” in radiology, not on quantitative imaging applications; no focus on maintaining signal response characteristics over time

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## From single- to multi-vendor studies

### Major challenges:

- Acquisition protocol harmonization
  - Pulse sequence and acquisition parameter selection for matched:
    - contrast response
    - temporal resolution (for dynamic imaging)
    - spatial resolution
    - anatomic coverage
  - Application specific phantom needed for initial validation scans and ongoing quality control
    - phantom acquisition and data analysis protocols
    - established frequency of assessment and data reporting
  - Can be achieved, but requires effort at start up and, subsequently, constant monitoring for changes in hardware/software (need for ongoing quality control)
- Vendors focused on “competitive advantage” in radiology, not on quantitative imaging applications

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## From single- to multi-center studies

### Major challenges:

- Acquisition protocols
  - Harmonization across centers and vendors
  - Distribution and activation of protocols
    - Distribute/load electronically (ADNI)
    - Provide expert training and initial protocol load/test
    - Develop / utilize local expertise
  - Compliance with protocol
    - Local radiologists, technologists
- Widely varying quality control
  - Ranging from specific for a given imaging biomarker, to ACR accreditation, to none
  - Even if QC program is in place, it may not test parameters relevant to the study
- “Scanner upgrade dilemma”
- Data management and reporting

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## How can we move forward?

To move MR imaging biomarkers from exploratory / secondary endpoints to primary endpoints:

- To quote George Mills (former Director, FDA/CDER): “Precision is the goal.” However, “multi-center trial designs = variations in imaging.” Do not assume anything but, instead, “discover and adjust for differences”.
- Standardized data acquisition and analysis techniques are needed.
- Vetted phantoms should be available to quantitatively characterize vendor-specific acquisition techniques for a particular MR imaging biomarker (lesion morphology, perfusion, diffusion, MR spectroscopy, *etc.*).
- Application specific phantoms should be used in the site validation phase for every clinical trial and periodically during the longitudinal study.
- Vetted test data need to be publically available to users in order to test new releases of analysis software.

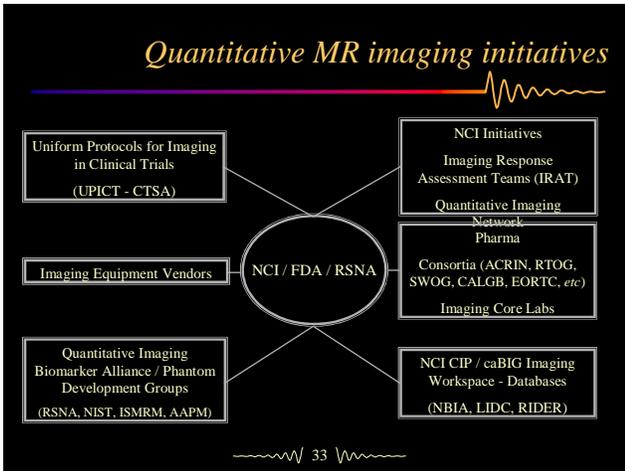
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To move MR imaging biomarkers from exploratory / secondary endpoints to primary endpoints:

- Repeatability (test/retest) studies are needed for any new MR-based imaging biomarker.
- Additional imaging biomarker to tissue-based and outcome measure comparisons are needed.

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- ### What are we doing to get there?
- #### Quantitative MR Imaging Initiatives
- NCI: RIDER and Academic Center Contracts
  - NCI: Imaging Response Assessment Team (IRAT) / MR Committee
  - RSNA: Quantitative Imaging Biomarker Alliance MR Committee
  - ISMRM: Ad Hoc Committee on Standards for Quantitative MR
  - AAPM: Committee on Quantitative Imaging / Working Group for Standards for Quantitative MR Measures
  - NCI: Quantitative Imaging Initiative (QIN)
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**ISMRM Ad Hoc Committee**

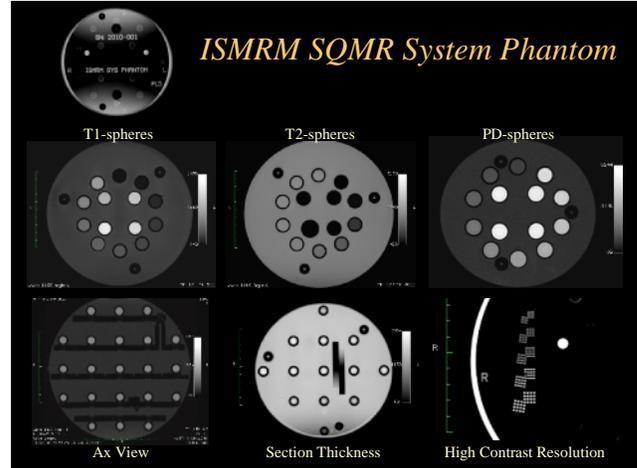
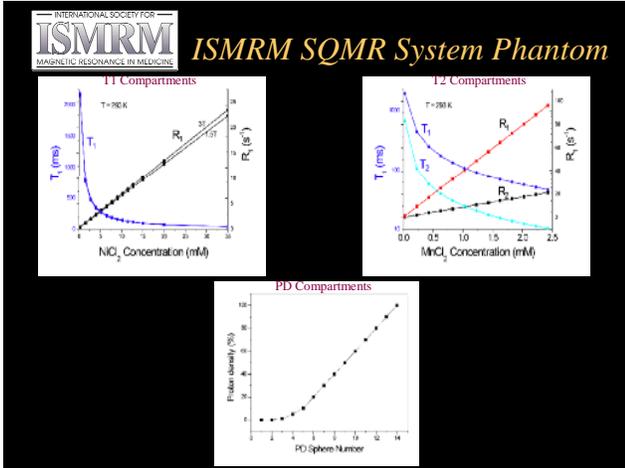
ISMRM: *Ad Hoc Committee on Standards for Quantitative MR (SQMR)*

- Membership includes MR physicists, technologists, radiologists, NIST staff, NCI/CIP staff, vendors, and pharma. Expertise in research trials using quantitative MR.
- Current status:
  - White paper on quantitative MR
  - Design specifications & construction of an "open source" MR system phantom (collaboration with and funding by NIST)
  - Initial multicenter / multivendor phantom pilot studies began in June 2010.

<http://wiki.ismr.org/wiki/bin/view/QuantitativeMR/>

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**RSNA Quantitative Imaging Biomarker Alliance**

RSNA QIBA: DCE-MRI Technical Committee

- Multiple subcommittees:
  - Phantom development / selection
  - Scan protocol / data analysis
  - Synthetic DCE-MRI test data
- Acquisition and phantom designed to mimic typical Phase I / II applications to liver using phased array receive coils
- Modified version of the ADNI MagPhan, as previously modified by IRAT MR Committee
- 1-cm fiducial spheres for spatial accuracy assessment
- Eight 3-cm contrast response spheres (same as IRAT modified version)

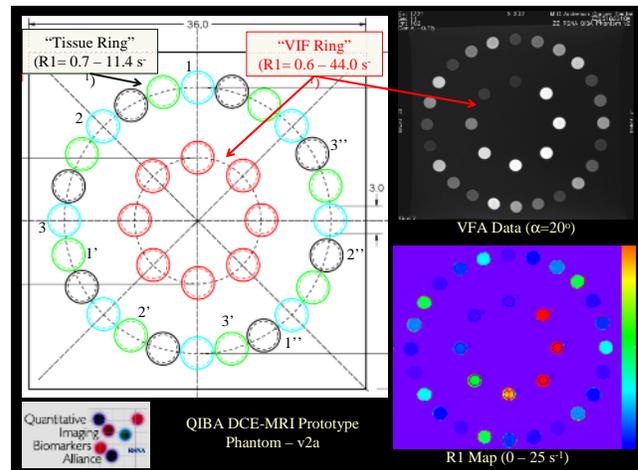
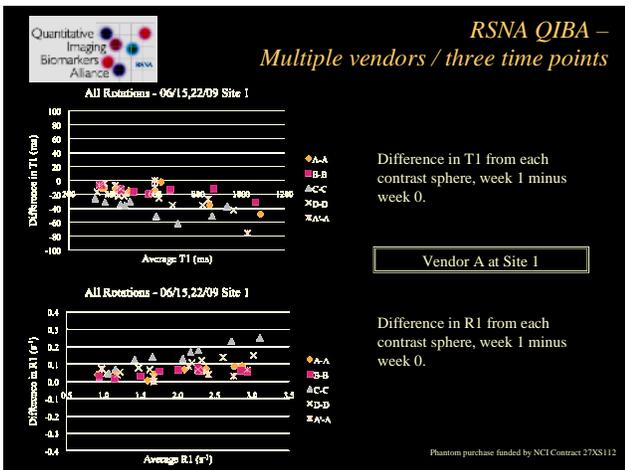
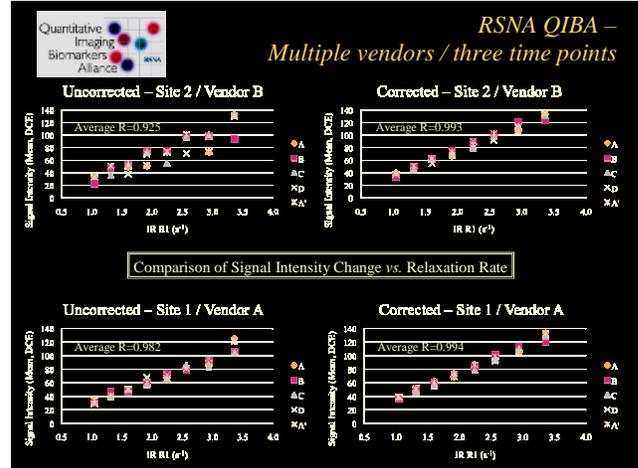
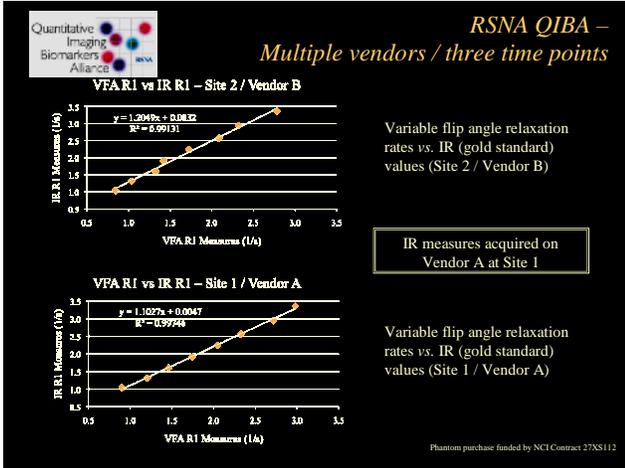
<http://qibawiki.rsna.org/index.php?title=DCE-MRI>

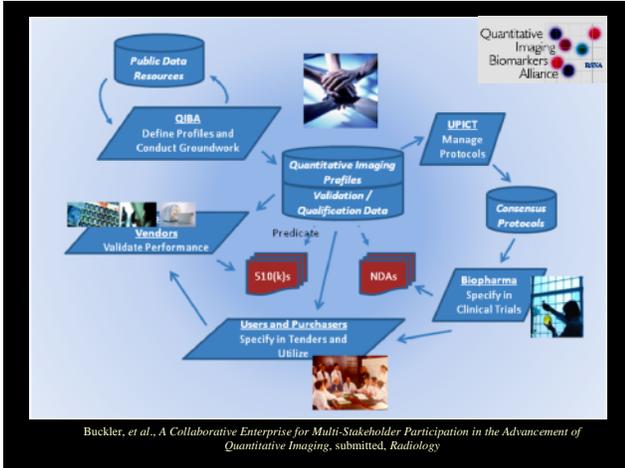
Phantom purchase funded by NCI Contract 27X5112

**QIBA DCE-MRI Phantom v1 Studies**

- Phantom measurements (overview):
  - Phased array acquisition
  - Body coil acquisition
  - SNR acquisition
  - Variable flip angle T1 measurement acquisition
  - DCE acquisition
- Each of the above acquisitions repeated with phantom rotated by 90, 180, 270, and 360°
- All acquisitions repeated one week later
- Sites / vendors
  - MDACC
  - UPenn
  - Univ Chicago
  - Duke Univ
  - Univ CA Davis
  - Site 1 / Vendor A, B
  - Site 2 / Vendor B
  - Site 3 / Vendor C
  - Site 4 / Vendor C
  - Site 5 / Vendor A

Ratio map correction for RF coil sensitivity characteristics





Imaging - Cancer Imaging Program  
**RIDER**

**NCI RIDER**

NCI Cancer Imaging Program **RIDER**

- Reference Image Database to Evaluate Response\*  
Collaborative project for development and implementation of a caBIG public resource

Data and meta analyses made publically available through NBIA (phantom and anonymized human subject data, including DCE-MRI, diffusion-weighted, and diffusion tensor MRI)

Series of manuscripts in *Translational Oncology* in Dec 2009

RIDER: <https://wiki.nci.nih.gov/display/CIP/RIDER>  
NBIA: <https://imaging.nci.nih.gov/ncia/login.jsf>

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Imaging - Cancer Imaging Program  
**RIDER**

**NCI RIDER**

**3.1 ACADEMIC SITE COLLECTIONS: Focus on methods for data analysis**

**MSKCC**  
Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: RIDER Lung CT  
 • Repeat CT Measurements: Human subject: Lung  
 • Download the related image name: NBIA\_Quantitative\_LungData.msx by RIDER.ms  
 • Download the related publication: 22493-StatSoftCT-20090205.pdf

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON**  
Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: Dwarfen  
 • Repeat measurements: F12/CT phantom  
 Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: RIDER Lung PET CT  
 • Lung tumor PET/CT Human studies: Lung

**DUKE UNIVERSITY**  
Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: RIDER Navy MRI  
 • Repeat human subject studies: Navy  
 • Dynamic Contrast Enhanced studies: DCE MRI  
 • Diffusion weighted imaging: DWI MRI  
 • Diffusion tensor imaging: DT MRI

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**  
Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: RIDER Breast MS  
 • Repeat measurements: Human subject: Breast  
 • DCE MRI  
 • **ADDITIONAL INFO:** Descriptions for each of the "diffusion based" scans were used as an indicator of each subject's cell hypothesis, in a distribution associated with its response, and that supports the estimate of the null 97.5 percentile for subsequent estimation of early response to neoadjuvant chemotherapy or an individual patient basis.

**MDACC**  
Download as NBIA by searching Collection name: RIDER Prostate MRI  
 • Repeat measurements: Phantom studies  
 • DCE MRI  
 • **RIDER MRI Phantom Data:** Summary.pdf provides a summary of the images in this collection.  
 • **RIDER PhantomPIL:** README provides a key for understanding their presentation in NBIA.

**AAPM Committee**

- AAPM: *Ad Hoc* Committee on Quantitative Imaging (Science Council)  
- Charge
  - To assess the role of AAPM and its members in the growing field of quantitative imaging as, e.g., it relates to imaging biomarkers, assessing disease states and/or response to therapy.
  - To determine mechanisms for clarifying quantitative imaging, CAD, and quantitative image analysis.
  - To determine mechanisms for promoting AAPM and medical physics activities in QI in basic science research, translational research, clinical trials, and ultimately clinical practice (e.g., at annual meeting, in the *MEDICAL PHYSICS* journal [guest editorial], etc.).
  - To further advance the field by interacting with other organizations (such as RSNA, ACR, etc.)

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## AAPM Working Group

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- AAPM: Working Group for Standards for Quantitative MR Measures
  - Charge
    - Development of quantitative MR phantoms and acquisition techniques / parameters specific to a given quantitative measure. Obtaining repeat measures on each phantom at multiple centers and using current high-field scanners from all major vendors.
    - Develop signal response characteristic standards for relevant pulse sequences. These response characteristic standards will allow ongoing QC at individual centers on a given platform (across upgrades) and comparisons between vendor platforms (and hardware/software versions).
    - Develop sets of annotated test data that can be publicly distributed (via the NBIA, for example) and used to validate image analysis software tools.

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## AAPM Task Group

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- AAPM: TG189: Validation of software tools for quantification of DCE MRI data
  - Charge
    - To provide to the community:
      - A robust validation methodology for testing DCE MRI-based quantification strategies.
      - Analysis of existing methods.
      - Guidelines for image acquisition.
      - A conceptual framework for generalized analysis of models based on dynamic MRI data

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## NCI CQIE Program

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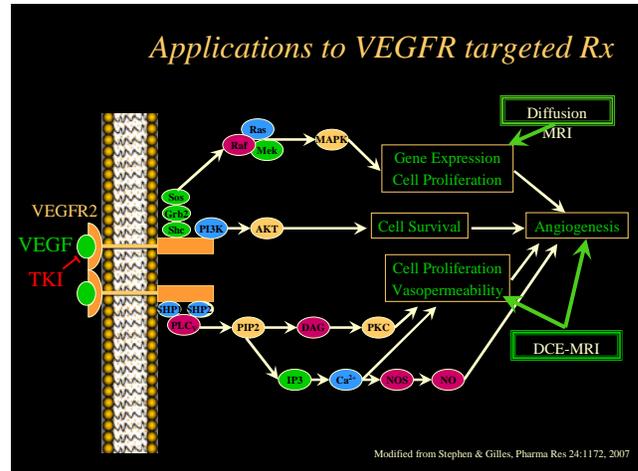
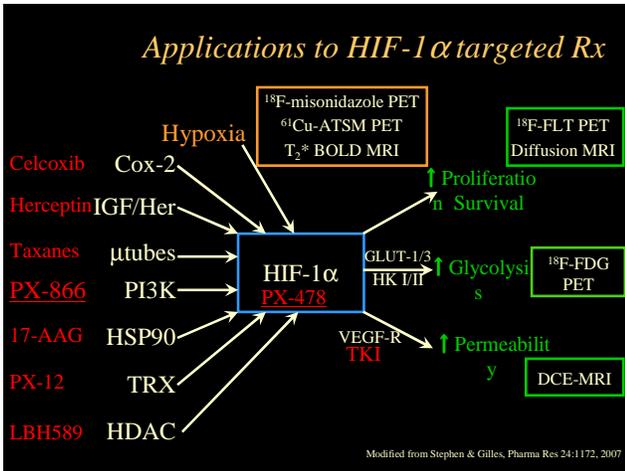
The screenshot shows the National Cancer Institute website with a news article titled "News Note: NCI Launches Centers of Quantitative Imaging Excellence Program". The article text is partially obscured by a red box. The article discusses the launch of a program to qualify existing NCI designated Cancer Centers with an added attribute – as Centers of Quantitative Imaging Excellence. It mentions that this program will significantly decrease potential variability in image procedures done while a patient is undergoing treatment as part of a NCI-sponsored clinical trial. Advanced imaging plays a pivotal role in cancer care by providing the ability to detect tumors early and to guide therapy as well as subsequent disease monitoring and surveillance. The American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN) and the American College of Radiology will coordinate this program for NCI. The article also states that the 58 clinically focused NCI designated Cancer Centers represent the optimal sites to support and promote advanced quantitative imaging for measurement of response. Currently there exist significant delays in the time required to open a clinical trial with advanced imaging as an essential component. In order to try to shorten the process, NCI and its partners will develop standard operating procedures and a corresponding guideline for the qualification of a Cancer Center as a Center of Quantitative Imaging Excellence. The procedures will include both brain and body imaging for volumetric computed tomography (VCT) or MR (VMR), positron emission tomography (PET), and dynamic contrast-enhanced magnetic resonance imaging (DCE-MRI). For more information on NCI's Cancer Imaging Program, please go to <http://imaging.nci.nih.gov>.

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- Robert Jeraj, PhD and AAPM WGITA
- ISMRM *Ad Hoc* Committee on Standards for Quantitative MRI
- Steve Russek, PhD and colleagues at NIST Boulder (MR)
- Ryan Bosca, MS

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### $B_0$ homogeneity

In general: Larger  $B_0$   $\Rightarrow$  higher signal-to-noise

$B_0$  inhomogeneity yields spatially variant signal intensities in general and spatially variant fat suppression when chemically selective saturation methods are utilized.

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### Gradient field nonlinearity effects

20 cm FOV, white: w/correction, black: w/o correction

Isocenter

20 cm off isocenter

**Error<sub>max</sub> with correction: < 1 mm @  $\pm$  10 cm**

**Error<sub>max</sub> w/o correction: ~ 4.5mm @  $\pm$  10 cm**

**Error<sub>max</sub> with correction: < 2 mm @  $\pm$  10 cm**

**Error<sub>max</sub> w/o correction: ~ 5.5cm @  $\pm$  10 cm**

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