



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROTON THERAPY HONORS HARVARD'S HERMAN SUIT WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – March 27, 2018—In recognition of his pioneering work in the field of radiation oncology and proton therapy, Herman Suit, MD, Msc, D.Phil. has been awarded the National Association for Proton Therapy's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Suit, founding Chair of Radiation Oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital, began practicing while the field of radiation oncology was still in its infancy and served as a key leader in development of proton therapy as an effective, mainstream tool for treating cancer.

Suit worked closely with famed medical physicist Dr. Michael Goitein at Harvard University in treatment of some of proton therapy's first patients. The work received funding from the National Cancer Institute in 1972, a research grant that remains active to this day. This early research led to the establishment of proton therapy as a mainstream medical modality. There are now 26 proton therapy centers open and 9 under construction across the country.

Among his accomplishments are his work with limb-preserving treatment for sarcoma patients and proton treatment for spine, sacral, and skull base tumors.

"Dr. Suit's work has been invaluable in making proton therapy a medical reality, and we are thrilled to recognize him with this honor," said Vickie Miller, chair of the National Association for Proton Therapy. "Cancer patients across the country owe him a debt of gratitude for his vision and pioneering work in the field of radiation oncology."

Prior to his work with proton therapy, Suit graduated from Baylor University with his M.S. and MD, starting medical school at the age of 19. He went on to Oxford University where he studied the use of human bone marrow cellularity and its effect by radiation. He returned to the U.S. as one of a handful of radiation oncologists in the country and practiced at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. There he established fundamental principles in the management of soft tissue sarcomas using radiation and conservative surgery rather than the customary treatment of that time, amputation. His work there also included development of the Fletcher-Suit applicator for intracavitary radiation for women with cervical and endometrial cancers. And he established one of the most important mouse colonies worldwide for radiobiologic studies on tumors *in vivo*,



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establishing important principles of radiation cancer treatment including the relationship of radiation dose to tumor control probability, conservative surgery combined with radiation, and radioresistance related to hypoxia.

Suit has served as president of the American Society of Therapeutic Radiation Oncology and president of the Radiation Research Society. He continues to study tumor microenvironment and angiogenesis of tumor and normal tissue in the lab and has won numerous award for his work. These include the Gold Medal of the American Society of Therapeutic Radiation Oncology and American College of Radiology, the Sloan Award for clinical research and two citings in “the one hundred” award from the Mass General Cancer Center. In 2017 Suit was named a Giant of Cancer Care by OneLive in the Radiation Oncology Category.

“...Being a physician and having an opportunity to treat patients that we can cure, and that couldn’t be cured otherwise without horrendous surgery, is one of the nicest experiences a human being can have,” said Suit in a Q&A at ASTRO’s Conference in New Orleans last year. “I know that now I see patients that I’ve treated 25, 28 and 29 years ago, and to see those people come back and know what was recommended for them before we treated them, and looking just splendidly is just great.”

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About The National Association for Proton Therapy (NAPT):

The National Association for Proton Therapy is an independent nonprofit organization founded in 1990 to educate and increase awareness about the clinical benefits of proton therapy. The NAPT’s mission is to;

- i. work collaboratively to educate and raise awareness of the clinical benefits of proton therapy among patients, providers, clinicians, payers, policymakers, and other stakeholders;
- ii. ensure patient choice and access to affordable proton therapy;
- iii. and encourage cooperative research and innovation to advance the appropriate and cost-effective utilization of proton therapy.

The NAPT’s supporting members are world-renowned cancer centers, a number of whom are National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers and National Comprehensive Care Network (NCCN) members. A full list of our members may be found at: <http://www.proton-therapy.org/>.