



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DEPUY SPINE INTRODUCES NEW MINIMALLY INVASIVE SYSTEM
FOR COMPLEX SPINE PROCEDURES**

New VIPER™2 Pedicle Screw Fixation System Launched at AANS

CHICAGO – April 24, 2008 – DePuy Spine, Inc., a Johnson & Johnson company, today announced the launch of the VIPER™2 Pedicle Screw Fixation System (VIPER2), a new minimally invasive spine system offering comprehensive instrumentation and implant options that can be used on a wide range of spinal pathologies including deformity, trauma, tumor and degenerative disc disease.

DePuy Spine made the announcement here at the 76th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), where it will showcase the VIPER2 System and its full line of minimally invasive spine products and solutions.

“The VIPER2 System will help surgeons bring the benefits of a minimally invasive approach to a much broader range of complex spinal pathologies,” said Robert F. Heary, MD at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. “This is clearly a revolutionary next generation product.”

VIPER2 is the first and only complete minimally invasive rod and pedicle screw system that can be used to perform minimally invasive spinal fixation across the length of the entire thoracolumbar spine (T1 to Pelvis), with rods of any curvature and lengths from 30 to 480 mm.

The VIPER2 System consists of two unique delivery options and an innovative screw design that reduces screw assembly and insertion steps by nearly 50 percent compared to competitive systems.

The new advanced rod insertion technique allows surgeons to utilize existing incisions to deliver any curvature rod up to 480 mm long, eliminating the need for remote rod insertion and complicated alignment jigs. This allows surgeons to treat complex cases such as deformity, trauma and tumors with minimal tissue trauma and blood loss.

“VIPER2 is the latest addition to our comprehensive line of minimally invasive spine solutions, which includes the SPOTLIGHT™, PIPELINE™ and CONCORDE™ systems,” said Gary Fischetti, World Wide President of DePuy Spine. “Minimally invasive spine surgery is one of the fastest growing areas for DePuy Spine.”

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VIPER2 includes two screw options: traditional cannulated polyaxial screws that can be attached to standard screw extensions or innovative, new extended tab (X-Tabs) screws. X-Tab screws eliminate the need for complicated extension loading procedures in the OR, require smaller (12mm) incisions and feature built-in reduction threads. They are available in multiple diameters from 5 to 7.5 mm and lengths from 30 to 55 mm.

The system's 5.5mm diameter titanium rods come in straight, pre-lordosed, and pre-kyphosed configurations or can be contoured on-site to match the patient's anatomy, including dual curves. Rod placement can be immediately confirmed as it passes through each screw extension using visual markers and tactile feedback. Their Bulleted Hex-End design provides 360 degrees of rotation control during and after rod placement. VIPER2 is fully compatible with the EXPEDIUM™ 5.5 Rod System for hybrid construct options.

About DePuy Spine

DePuy Spine has worked and partnered with leading clinicians, researchers, and thought leaders to develop products to treat spine disorders for over 20 years. Today, DePuy Spine stands in the forefront of the worldwide spine market, with a substantial sales organization in the U.S. and an expanding worldwide distribution network. The company is committed to advancing the knowledge of all health care professionals and their patients in addressing spinal pathologies.

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