



## The Australian Thyroid Foundation Ltd

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### **An upgrade and a warning on Thyroid Cancer**

There is a disease dramatically impacting upon the lives of Australian women with Thyroid cancer increasing by 84% [and 40% in men] during the last 10 years, according to Beverley Garside, president of the Australian Thyroid Foundation (ATF).

The big question is – what is this thyroid cancer and why are women more at risk?

“Thyroid cancer can be found in the development of a lump in or on the thyroid gland which caused the gland to enlarge. It needs to be surgically removed and followed up with radioactive iodine therapy and lifelong thyroxine replacement therapy,” said Professor Eastman Chief Medical Adviser to the ATF.

“Women are five times more likely than men to develop a thyroid condition because, in part, of the hormone imbalances that can affect the thyroid”

“This year the primary reason behind the foundation’s annual Gold Bow Day fundraising campaign on September 1, 2008, is specifically aimed at raising the awareness of thyroid cancer and thyroid cancer treatments available in Australia,” Beverley said.

According to Professor Eastman, also a leading Endocrinologist, believes at present conditions of RAI rooms are not conducive to a comfortable and restful recovery for patients receiving radioactive iodine capsules post surgery.

“These patients are required to stay in isolation for four days whilst receiving their treatment to kill off any remaining malignant cancer cells”, Professor said.

Professor Eastman says, “This period of quarantining is emotionally and physically demanding for a patient and it is important that these rooms provide a relaxing and welcoming environment to help them deal with their stay”.

Money raised from the sale of Gold Bows nationally goes towards improving the environment and conditions of Radioactive Iodine Treatment Rooms (RAI) in public hospitals throughout Australia.

On Monday 1 September, Gold Bow Day marks the beginning of this commitment from the ATF. Two RAI treatment rooms at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney are earmarked to be the first RAI rooms upgraded. Bree Amer, ATF Ambassador and thyroid cancer survivor will open these rooms on behalf of The ATF, once the upgrade has been completed.

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“The increase in thyroid cancer has led to an increased demand for modern, comfortable treatment rooms providing the best facilities for patients requiring radioactive treatment”, Beverley said.

“We hope these first two RAI rooms will be the first of many to be upgraded by The ATF with funds raised from Gold Bow Day. RAI Treatment is used as the follow up after surgery to remove the diseased thyroid gland”, Beverley said.

Research released earlier this year indicated thyroid cancer ranked number nine most common cancer in women and twenty first for men. The alarming fact reflected in the report is the consistently increasing incidence over the last 10 years of this disease and its associated conditions.

“Funds raised on Gold Bow Day will provide the opportunity to improve RAI treatment rooms available for patients diagnosed with this disease”, Beverley said.

Gold Bows may be purchased from The ATF website [www.thyroidfoundation.com.au](http://www.thyroidfoundation.com.au)

### Interviews available:

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- **Professor Creswell Eastman**, Endocrinologist and Chief Medical Adviser to the ATF;
- **Bree Amer**, Thyroid Cancer survivor, host of Friday Night Download; and
- **Beverley Garside**, President of the ATF.

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