



# PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ASCENSION<sup>®</sup> PYROHEMISPHERE<sup>™</sup> TMC JOINT IMPLANT RECEIVES FDA APPROVAL**

**AUSTIN, TX — September 17, 2004:** Ascension Orthopedics, Inc. has received FDA approval to market the Ascension<sup>®</sup> PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup>, a hemi-arthroplasty implant designed to replace the base of the metacarpal bone of the trapeziummetacarpal (TMC) joint of the thumb. This is the first PyroCarbon TMC joint implant to receive FDA market clearance. Significantly, the PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup> is also the first PyroCarbon hemi-arthroplasty device to receive market clearance by the FDA. The Ascension<sup>®</sup> PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup> will be available in the U.S. beginning October 2004.

The Ascension<sup>®</sup> PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup> was developed in collaboration with Robert Beckenbaugh, M.D., hand surgeon at the Mayo Clinic. Following approval, Dr. Beckenbaugh stated, "It is very rewarding to bring this new concept in replacement of arthritic thumb joints to the public. Use of strong, low-friction, biologically fixed, and biologically inert PyroCarbon represents a significant breakthrough in hand surgery. Patients now have the opportunity to replace diseased joints with an implant design similar to their own joints made from a material friendly to their bodies that does not require fixation with cement or other compounds."

Early clinical results demonstrated the Ascension<sup>®</sup> PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup> is effective in relieving pain, improving or preserving motion, and reducing dislocated or subluxated TMC joints in patients suffering from osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and arthritis due to trauma.

"The prevalence of arthritis in the TMC joint of the thumb is extremely high," said Robert Martin, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Ascension. "The material properties of PyroCarbon and the design of the PyroHemiSphere<sup>™</sup> offer important advances in the treatment options for this problem," he continued.

Ascension Orthopedics is dedicated to the design, manufacturing and distribution of small joints to relieve the symptoms of debilitating arthritis of the small joints of the upper extremity.

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