



Transformations

Construction has begun on UCI Medical Center's new university hospital, a seven-story tower that will provide a state-of-the-art and patient-friendly setting for the latest advancements in health care, education and research.

At a gala event in June, dignitaries and officials from UC Irvine and the community gathered to break ground for the \$372 million hospital, which is being built on the north side of UCI Medical Center. Patient care will continue uninterrupted during construction, which is expected to conclude in late 2008.

"The new university hospital will represent a significant and meaningful contribution to the Orange County community and will enhance patient care, medical education and research," said **Dr. Ralph W. Cygan**, chief executive officer for UCI Medical Center.

As part of the construction, the drive-up entrance and parking for the Emergency Department have been moved. Drivers dropping off patients should ask for instructions at the information kiosk on UCI Medical Center Drive or watch for signs.

UCI thanks patients and visitors for their understanding during this time of transformation.

For more information about UCI Medical Center's campaign to transform the future of health care, please call 714-456-3768 or visit www.ucihealth.com/newhospital.

www.ucihealth.com

Seniors: Ask the Doctor

Recovering from a Stroke

Each year, about 750,000 Americans suffer a stroke. The care they receive in the days, weeks and months following the stroke can determine their quality of life for years to come. As the only hospital in Orange County certified as a Primary Stroke Center by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), UCI Medical Center is a national leader in stroke treatment and rehabilitation. Join Dr. Steven C. Cramer, co-director of the UCI Stroke Center, as he discusses the opportunities and challenges of stroke recovery.

Q What happens during a stroke?

A An artery supplying blood to the brain becomes damaged or blocked, obstructing blood flow. Brain cells in the stricken area begin to die within minutes. This may affect a person's ability to move, speak, see and think.

Q What are the first steps toward recovery?

A During the first three months following a stroke, a patient is at highest risk for having another attack. For this reason, medical therapy and lifestyle changes to treat the cause of the stroke are a major emphasis. Contributing factors can include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, excessive cholesterol levels and an irregular heartbeat. Additionally, managing the medical complications that can occur following a stroke is also important. During the early months, pneumonia, urinary tract infections, bedsores and pressure ulcers can be problems. Later, it's urinary incontinence, falling and balance problems.

Q Are there any other common stroke complications?

A Yes, depression affects up to half of all patients. It can be triggered by biochemical changes in the brain or a response to the circumstances. Depression can seriously hamper rehabilitation efforts and is typically treated with antidepressants.

Q What other challenges do stroke survivors face?

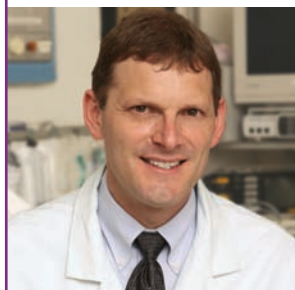
A Feelings of isolation are an ever-present possibility with stroke patients. Friends may fall by the wayside, and limited mobility may make it difficult to get out. At UCI, the stroke team works with patients to develop a sense of empowerment. This comes from learning how to cope with their new circumstances so they can begin to restore their quality of life.

Q What's the key to a successful recovery?

A Getting into an excellent long-term rehabilitation program, treating depression, working hard, and having a strong support group. Family members play a critical role. They know how to motivate the patient better than anyone else and offer unconditional love at a time when people need to be loved for themselves—not for what they can do.

Q Does rehabilitation influence a patient's final outcome?

A Emphatically, yes. Rehabilitation helps to restore a person's overall function and prevent many serious complications. This includes falls, which happen to 40 percent of patients during the first year after a stroke. These accidents often occur because the stroke weakens one side of the body, affecting balance and gait. Rehabilitation specialists address these problems and many others. Relearning how to walk, talk, swallow, understand, bathe, dress and use a toilet are crucial to regaining functional independence.



Dr. Steven C. Cramer will discuss stroke prevention at a free seminar on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 1 p.m. at the Merage Jewish Community Center, 1 Federation Way, Irvine. For reservations or information, call 1-877-UCI-DOCS. For information on Cramer's stroke research and how you can participate, visit www.ucihealth.com/trials.