



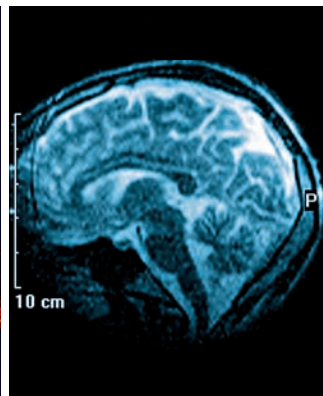
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UCI Health www.ucihealth.com

Staying Abreast of Surgery

Surgery for breast cancer has entered a kinder and gentler era. Today, women have access to procedures that are far less invasive than before—and much more cosmetically acceptable.

“**Eliminating cancer is the overriding objective,**” says **Dr. Karen Lane**, a breast surgeon at the Breast Health Center located in the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center. “But aesthetic concerns are also important. A woman’s quality of life after surgery is often influenced by her body image.”

In approximately 80 percent of cases, Lane is able to eradicate the cancer without removing the entire breast. “Oncoplastic techniques—a combination of cancer surgery and plastic surgery—are used with lumpectomies, which involve removal of only the tumor along with a margin of healthy tissue,” says Lane. “In this case, the surgeon remolds the breast to avoid an unsightly indentation where the cancer once was.”

Sparing the breast. Due to advances in breast cancer surgery, even the once-disfiguring mastectomy has evolved into a more cosmetically pleasing procedure. In the past, this operation involved removal of the entire breast, as well as the chest muscles. But today, cancer surgery combined with plastic surgery has resulted in clinical and cosmetic results that were only dreamed about a few years ago.

A new option called the skin-sparing mastectomy, for example, results in a near-normal appearance after surgery. The procedure involves removing the breast cancer and



almost all of the breast tissue, but leaving as much skin as possible. Then the breast is reconstructed using the patient’s own tissue—usually from the abdomen, but sometimes from the back or buttocks. During this

Even the mastectomy has evolved into a more cosmetically pleasing procedure.

procedure, the nipple and areola are removed because they have a high probability of harboring cancer cells. But they’re reconstructed at a later time using techniques that result in a realistic look.

Curative chemotherapy. These advances are supported by new chemotherapeutic regimens that shrink tumors before surgery, allowing patients to have less invasive procedures. UCI medical oncologist **Dr. Rita Mehta** recently discovered that a herceptin-based chemotherapy cocktail completely resolved tumors in

87 percent of patients with large tumors when given before surgery. This unprecedented complete remission rate has made it possible for many women to have smaller procedures with better cosmetic results. More importantly, they beat the odds of dying from breast cancer.

To assess the progress of women undergoing presurgical chemotherapy, breast specialists use a handheld optical-laser scanner developed at the UCI Beckman Laser Institute by **Bruce Tromberg, Ph.D.**, and his colleagues. Noninvasive, safe and extremely accurate, the scanner is currently in Phase 2 clinical trials. It employs near-infrared light to measure molecular and functional changes in the breast that are indicators of cancer. The device is also very effective in detecting breast cancer in women with dense breast tissue. For more information about UCI’s Breast Health Center, visit www.ucihealth.com/breast.

A Heartsaver: The 64-Slice CT Scanner

It's amazing technology that's expected to revolutionize the way heart disease is diagnosed.

UCI's new 64-slice CT scanner can visualize the entire heart in less than 10 seconds, revealing blockages in blood vessels and other heart problems that are sometimes not easily detectable with other tests.



Photo courtesy of Cardiovascular Imaging Center for Education and Research

UCI's new 64-slice CT scanner enables doctors to examine the heart in unprecedented detail. Above, a three-dimensional reconstructed image reveals a high-grade narrowing (indicated by arrow) of the left anterior descending coronary artery, which supplies blood to a section of the heart.

"This technology will dramatically change the way coronary disease is assessed," says **Dr. Jagat Narula**, chief of cardiology at UCI Medical Center. "It is expected to eliminate the need for cardiac catheterization in many patients by giving doctors an accurate but noninvasive way to look into the heart." Cardiac catheterization involves threading a thin tube from an incision in the groin to the heart, where a contrast solution is injected and X-rays are used to identify the blockages in coronary arteries. The procedure takes about 45 minutes to perform—and several hours of recovery time.

A 64-slice CT scan, on the other hand, is less invasive and requires no preparation except for an intravenous injection of contrast solution—and no recovery time. "Patients can go shopping afterward," says Narula. The machine produces exquisitely detailed, three-dimensional images of the heart that can be viewed from every angle.

Educating doctors. CT technology has advanced so quickly that UCI and Toshiba recently teamed up to create the Cardiovascular Imaging Center for Education and Research—or CVICER, pronounced "quicker." In addition to sharing a strong focus on cutting-edge technology and research, they have another common bond: physician education. As a major university with an affiliated hospital, UCI is dedicated to providing the best education possible for its 600 resident

The 64-slice CT scanner is one of the most important advances in cardiology over the past few decades.

physicians, 400 medical students, and thousands of community doctors. "Most members of the Orange County medical community have either been trained at UCI, or rely on it as a medical education resource," says Narula. "UCI will provide physicians with the training they need to incorporate multi-slice CT technology in their practice."

Early detection. Many clinicians agree that multi-slice CT technology is one of the most important advances in cardiology in many years. "The education that CVICER provides to community physicians about 64-slice technology can improve the care of thousands of people in the greater Orange County area," says Narula. "The ultimate goal is to prevent heart attacks through the early detection of plaque deposits in coronary arteries."

Another important mission of CVICER is research. The UCI-Toshiba team will monitor patients whose probability of heart attacks is determined by a 64-slice CT scan. Individual treatment plans will be created for patients, and their progress will be monitored over an extended period of time. The study will assess the overall effectiveness of the 64-slice CT scanner in the management of coronary disease.

"Our hope is that CVICER will become an important resource for cardiologists, radiologists and referring physicians," says Narula. "We believe we can change the way doctors provide patient care, moving them over time preferentially from invasive to noninvasive practices."

Located on the UC Irvine campus, CVICER houses UCI's 64-slice CT scanner. For information on how to arrange for a scan, call 714-456-6699.

More CT Facts

The 64-slice CT scanner:

- Captures high-resolution images of the heart and coronary arteries so quickly that it freeze-frames the heart while it's beating, the lungs while they're expanding and contracting, and the blood as it circulates throughout the body.
- Provides the same information as a diagnostic coronary angiogram, in a noninvasive manner.
- Helps detect atherosclerosis (the disease process that causes heart attacks, strokes, and claudication) at its earliest stages.
- Can complete an entire heart scan in nine seconds while patients briefly hold their breath, making the test easier for the elderly, people with respiratory problems and those not able to remain in one position for longer periods of time.
- Is especially helpful for patients with chest pain, multiple cardiovascular risk factors, and those who need follow-up after coronary bypass surgery, angioplasty or coronary stent placement.
- Can accommodate larger patients.

Operating on the Brain

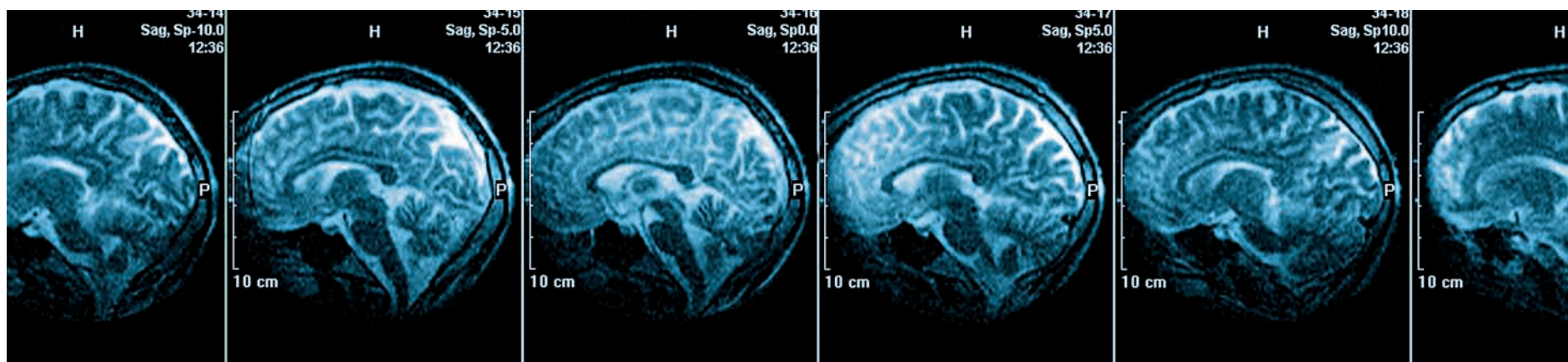


Photo courtesy of Medtronic Surgical Navigation Technologies

Until recently, neurosurgeons had to rely on images of the brain taken just before surgery to guide them through complex procedures.

But now a breakthrough in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is allowing doctors to perform tumor surgery while viewing the brain in real time—before, during and after the procedure.

The shifting brain. Called intraoperative MRI, the system utilizes electromagnetic waves to produce highly detailed pictures of the brain as the operation unfolds. “Because the brain is composed of soft tissue, it constantly shifts during surgery,” says **Dr. Mark Linskey**, chairman of the UCI Department of Neurological Surgery and co-director of the multidisciplinary Neuro-Oncology Program at UCI Medical Center’s Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center. “As a result, the brain is never in precisely the same position before an operation as during it.” Now, instead of relying on scans taken pre- and post-surgically, doctors can see the brain in three-dimensional detail during all stages of an operation. This allows them to monitor subtle shifts in brain tissue as they occur, resulting in increased surgical precision.

Before, during and after. Here’s how it works: Scans taken before the first incision pinpoint the location of the tumor in exacting detail. This helps doctors determine the best surgical pathway to minimize contact with healthy tissue. During surgery, the intraoperative MRI system alerts surgeons to the slightest movement of the brain within the skull. This can arise from the surgical manipulation necessary to access a tumor, or the shifting of tissue due to other causes. Based on this information, doctors can make minor adjustments in their approach to the tumor, remaining meticulously on target. The MRI machine also optically tracks the doctor’s surgical instruments, showing their precise location in relation to the patient’s anatomy. This information allows neurosurgeons to avoid delicate structures within the brain.

[The intraoperative MRI machine allows surgeons to perform tumor surgery while viewing the brain in real time.](#)

“Another major benefit of the intraoperative MRI system is that it gives doctors an incredibly detailed look at brain tumors,” says Linskey. “We can see exactly where the tumor ends and normal tissue begins.” Having access to this information allows neurosurgeons to verify that the entire growth has been removed without increasing risk to nearby

healthy brain tissue. “In the past, surgeons had to rely on scans taken after surgery to confirm that the entire malignancy had been removed,” says Linskey. “If part of the tumor remained, another operation was needed.” The intraoperative MRI system helps avoid this situation, resulting in safer surgery—and fewer follow-up operations for patients.

The new system can be wheeled in and out of a surgical suite much like a portable X-ray machine. When not in use, it’s stored under the operating room table, lifting into position at the press of a button. But best of all, it allows doctors an unprecedented view as they navigate deep within the brain—an advantage that can improve patient outcomes, reduce hospital stays and help avoid complications.

The intraoperative MRI is being installed during the spring and is expected to be functional by this summer, making UCI the only medical center south of Los Angeles to have such technology. “This state-of-the-art navigational system has made surgery an option for some brain tumor patients who were previously considered too high risk to operate,” says Linskey. “As it enters the mainstream, intraoperative MRI will have a major impact on the way brain surgery is performed worldwide.”

For referral to a UCI neurosurgeon, call 1-800-UCI-DOCS.

Toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS

the UCI Education Connection

Classes are free of charge to UCI Medical Center patients and their families, UCI employees and volunteers. Exceptions are the Joslin Diabetes Center, Mind Over Mood, FallProof!, meditation, yoga, and health-care skills programs. Certain classes are also available in Spanish (S) & Vietnamese (V). Unless otherwise indicated, all classes are located at UCI Manchester Pavilion, 200 S. Manchester Ave., Suite 840, Orange. Registration is required. Call toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS or (877) 824-3627 for registration and information.

FAMILY HEALTH

Asthma and Children (1 Session)

For children with asthma and their families to help them understand the disease and the steps to control it. Topics include what is asthma, how to control it, triggers, peak flow meters, how to use an inhaler, medications, going to school and exercising with asthma. Cost: \$20. Free peak flow meter. Tuesday, May 9 5-7 p.m.

Asthma and Adults (1 Session)

Learn how to control asthma and not have it control you. Cost: \$20. Free peak flow meter. Friday, April 28, May 12, June 23 5-7 p.m.

Attention and Behavior Problems (10-Session Series) (S)

Support and education for parents of children ages 3-5 with attention and behavior problems offered through a joint project of UCI and Children's Hospital of Orange County. Information: 949-824-2462 or www.cuidar.net. Call for meeting dates, times and locations throughout Orange County.

Breastfeeding (1 Session) (S)

Includes process of milk production, how to breastfeed, avoiding potential problems and returning to work. Cost: \$20. Thursday, April 13, June 8 6-8:30 p.m.
Spanish
Tuesday, May 9 5:15-7:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Family Health Center Santa Ana

Diabetic Diet (1 Session) (V)

Food choices, portions and how they affect diabetes. Cost: \$20. Monday, May 1 4-6 p.m.
Vietnamese
Wednesdays, April 19, May 17, June 21 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Location: UCI Westminster Medical Center

Diabetes Management Overview (1 Session) (S) (V)

Methods to control blood-sugar levels through diet, exercise, medication and lifestyle changes. Cost: \$20. Free glucometer. Monday, April 10, June 12 4-6 p.m.
Spanish
Wednesday, April 5, May 3, June 7 6-8 p.m.
Location: UCI Family Health Center Anaheim
Wednesday, April 12, May 10, June 14 6-8 p.m.
Location: UCI Manchester Pavilion
Vietnamese
Wednesday, April 12, May 10, June 14 8:30-10:30 a.m.
Location: UCI Westminster Medical Center



Diabetes Management Series (4-Session Series)

Meal planning, exercise, medications, monitoring your blood sugar, and lifestyle changes to help you avoid complications. Cost: \$80. Free glucometer. Mondays, May 8, 15, 22, June 5 4-6 p.m.

Early Pregnancy (1 Session)

For expectant mothers and their birth partners in the first four months of pregnancy. Includes nutrition, exercise, prenatal care, warning signs and car safety. Cost: \$20. Wednesday, May 17 6-8 p.m.

FallProof!™ A class that helps you stay on your feet. (16-Session Series)

Taught by a certified FallProof! specialist, this fun program is designed to improve balance and mobility and reduce the risk of falls. Each one-hour class will focus on movement, balance, flexibility, strength and endurance. Participants must be medically stable senior adults who live independently and can walk at least 200 feet safely without the use of any assistive devices. Prior to class, participants must schedule a 30-minute session that will include a health screening questionnaire and a fitness evaluation. A written medical clearance from your primary care physician is required and must be presented to the instructor at the fitness evaluation. Wear comfortable clothes. This program is recognized by the National Council on Aging as a nationwide meritorious program that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle. Cost: \$80. Includes evaluation. Tuesdays and Thursdays:
Session 1 evaluations: May 23 and 25 1-3 p.m.
Session 1 classes: May 30 - July 20 1-2 p.m.

Heart Healthy Diet (Cholesterol Awareness) (1 Session)

Learn the American Heart Association guidelines about low-fat, low-sodium and low-cholesterol diets. Cost: \$20. Tuesday, April 25, May 23, June 27 4-6 p.m.

Living Well With Heart Failure (1 Session)

Taught by a cardiologist, this class includes an overview of heart failure, symptoms and basic lifestyle changes to manage the condition, including diet, exercise and medications. Cost: \$20. Thursday, May 4 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Maternity Tea & Tour

Learn about maternity services and tour the UCI Maternity Unit. Cost: Free to all. Thursday, April 27, May 25, June 22 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Medical Center, neuropsychiatric conference room 101

Meditation Intermediate/Advanced (2-Session Series)

For those who have an established meditation practice and want additional guidance. No special clothing or equipment is required. Cost: \$20. Monday, May 1, 8 6-7 p.m.

Meditation Special Topic: Grief Recovery (1 Session)

Learn how meditation can help one recover from grief through guided visualization. Cost: \$20. Monday, April 10 6-7 p.m.

Meditation Special Topic: Tea Ceremony (1 Session)

Transforms the ordinary act of drinking tea into a social communal activity with elements of grace and spirituality. Limit 8 participants. Cost: \$30. Monday, June 19 6-7:30 p.m.

Mind Over Mood

Cognitive therapy group for depression, anxiety, anger and stress-related disorders. Pre-registration required: 714-456-5902. Cost: \$40 per session, plus \$23.63 for book. Mondays 6:15-7:45 p.m.
Location: UCI Neuropsychiatric Center, room 302

Newborn Care (1 Session) (S)

Infant feeding, dressing, bathing, diapering, normal newborn appearance and signs and symptoms of illness. Cost: \$20. Monday, April 24, June 26 6-8:30 p.m.
Spanish
Tuesday, May 16 5:15-7:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Family Health Center Santa Ana

Joslin Diabetes Center Education Classes

Joslin Diabetes Center at University of California, Irvine offers two types of classes to help people learn how to successfully manage their diabetes. "Steps to Success" is a five-session, comprehensive educational program. "Diabetes Today" offers single-topic sessions that address specific issues of diabetes management. Classes are held at the Center, located at Gottschalk Medical Plaza on the UCI campus in Irvine. There is a fee and insurance pre-authorization is recommended. For a full description of the programs, registration, or to schedule an appointment with a physician, please call Joslin Diabetes Center at UCI at 949-824-8656 or visit www.ucihealth.com/joslin.



Joslin Diabetes Center
at University of California, Irvine



Parenting (1 Session)

For parents and child care providers of 1-6 year olds. Developmental approach to building communication skills and self-esteem, injury and accident prevention, positive parenting and discipline. Cost: \$20.
Monday, May 22 6-8 p.m.

Prepared Childbirth (6-Session Series) (S)

Offered in conjunction with Santiago Canyon College Continuing Education. For expectant mothers and their birth partners beginning the 6th month of pregnancy. Topics include relaxation, Lamaze techniques, labor and birth, Caesarean delivery, medication and anesthesia. Cost: Free to all.
Wednesdays, April 26 - May 31 7-9:30 p.m.
Thursdays, April 27 - June 1 7-9:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Medical Center Library, Room 2105
Spanish : Prepared Childbirth (4-Session Series)
Tuesdays, April 11, 18, 25, May 4 5:15-7:30 p.m.
Tuesdays, June 6, 13, 20, 27 5:15-7:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Family Health Center Santa Ana

Road to Driving Wellness for Older Adults (1 Session)

Discusses how driving is affected by normal aging and explores ways in which older adults can enhance their driving safety. Cost: \$20.
Monday, May 15, 1-3 p.m.

Siblings (1 Session)

For children about to become big brothers and big sisters who want to learn what will happen when Mom goes to the hospital to have the baby. Cost: \$20.
Wednesday, May 10, June 14 4-5 p.m.
Location: UCI Medical Center 2 Tower conference room (2nd floor of main hospital)

Stop Smoking (4-Session Series)

Stop smoking by discussing what to do before you quit smoking and how to live life afterward. Cost: \$80.
Tuesdays, April 4, 11, 18, 25 Noon-2 p.m.
Wednesdays, May 3, 10, 17, 24 Noon-2 p.m.
Wednesdays, June 7, 14, 21, 28 4-6 p.m.

Stress Management (1 Session)

Effects of stress, coping strategies, relaxation techniques, nutrition, exercise and available resources. Cost: \$20.
Tuesday, May 16 6-8 p.m.

Weight Control (4-Session Series)

Identify your healthy weight and learn about meal planning, the food-guide pyramid, exercise, label reading, restaurant dining, recipe modification and maintenance. Cost: \$80.
Wednesdays, April 19, 26, May 3, 10 4-6 p.m.

Beginning Hatha Yoga (Monthly Series)

Wear loose-fitting workout clothes. Pack a cool-down sweatshirt and a yoga mat or beach towel. It's best not eat or drink two hours prior to class. Cost: \$30 per month.
Every Tuesday 5-6 p.m.
Location: 200 S. Manchester Ave., basement training room

SUPPORT GROUPS

All support groups are free and held at UCI Medical Center, 101 The City Drive South, Orange, CA, unless otherwise noted. For a complete list, please visit www.ucihealth.com/events.

Bariatric Surgery Support Group

Offers support for patients before and after laparoscopic weight-loss surgery. Information: 888-717-4463
Third Tuesday every month 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Manchester Pavilion, 200 S. Manchester Ave., Ste. 840, classrooms B & C, Orange

Brain Injury Support Group

For patients and families. Information: 800-986-4487
Every Saturday except holiday weekends 7-8:30 p.m.
Location: The Associates conference room

Burn Survivors Support Group

Information: 714-456-5304 or 714-456-8938
Third Thursday every month 6-7:30 p.m.
Location: Acute Rehabilitation Unit/3-South, recreation room

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

For parents and professionals interested in learning about ADD/ADHD in children and adults. Guest speaker at every meeting. Information: 714-630-5214, 949-824-2343 or www.chadd.org
Second Wednesday every month 7-9 p.m.
UCI Child Development Center, 19262 Jamboree Road, Irvine

Dry Eye Support Group

RSVP required: 949-824-9276
Wednesday, March 15, May 17, June 21 Noon-1:20 p.m.
Location: Gillespie Neuroscience Research Building conference room on the UCI campus in Irvine. Call for directions and parking permits.

Epilepsy Support Group

Social and educational support group for adults with epilepsy, offered in collaboration with the Epilepsy Alliance of Orange County. Guest speaker at every meeting. Information: 714-965-1512
Third Friday every month 7-8:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Neuropsychiatric Center, room 101

Korean Women's Share and Care Group

Help and support for Korean-speaking women with cancer. Information: 714-456-8609
First Thursday every month 3-4:30 p.m.
Location: Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 4th floor conference room

Living with Cancer

Help for cancer patients and their loved ones. Information: 714-456-8609
Second and fourth Thursdays every month 6:30-8 p.m.
Location: Breast Health Center, Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 3rd floor

Look Good, Feel Better

Help with appearance changes during cancer treatments. Reservations: 949-261-9446, option #3
Second Monday every other month
May 8, July 10 10 a.m.-noon
Location: Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 4th floor conference room

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Support and education for those caring for someone with mental illness. Information: 714-456-5843
Every Wednesday 6-7:30 p.m.
Location: UCI Neuropsychiatric Center, occupational therapy room 207

Super Sibs Klub (S)

Therapeutic workshop for children ages 8-12 with siblings who have disabilities or chronic illnesses. Information: 714-532-8778
Third Saturday every month 9:30 a.m.-noon
Location: UCI Neuropsychiatric Center, room 101

Spinal Cord Support Group

For those with spinal cord injuries and their families. Information: 714-456-6628
Monday, Mar 20, April 17, May 15, June 19 Noon-1:30 p.m.
Location: Acute Rehabilitation Unit/3-South, recreation room

Support for People with Oral, Head & Neck Cancers (SPOHNC-UCI-Orange)

Information: 714-456-5235
First Monday every month 6:30-8 p.m.
Location: Breast Health Center, Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 3rd floor

Walkers and Wheelers

Therapeutic support for children with disabilities, focusing on individual strengths through group activities. Offered in conjunction with Children's Hospital of Orange County. Information: 714-456-2295 or 949-933-2277
Second and fourth Saturdays every month 2-4 p.m.
Location: Classroom 2103-04, above UCI Medical Center library

Women's Care and Share Group

Support and education for women with cancer. Information: 714-456-8609
Second and fourth Tuesday every month 10-11:30 a.m.
Speaker on fourth Tuesday
Location: Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 4th floor conference room

Register for classes online at

www.ucihealth.com/events

Toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS



Transformations

For months, the construction site for UCI Medical Center's new university hospital has been only barely visible to people driving past on city streets and the Santa Ana Freeway. But in the next few months, large uprights of steel will emerge from the subterranean foundation, making a bold visual announcement that the new hospital is indeed on the rise.

Starting in April, the steel beams will be set into place and the structural skeleton of the new university hospital will begin to take shape. A total of 5,500 tons (11 million pounds) of steel will be used to build the seven-story tower. Already, 19,000 cubic yards of concrete have been poured into the huge pit at the site of the new university hospital to form the foundation.

The new university hospital is being built on the north side of the existing medical center, which remains fully functional during construction.

The \$371 million new university hospital is expected to open its doors in early 2009, offering the most modern, patient-friendly features and the latest in medical technology to support patient care, research and education.

For more information about UCI Medical Center's new university hospital, please visit www.ucihealth.com/newhospital. UCI thanks patients and visitors for their understanding during this time of transformation.

www.ucihealth.com

Seniors: Ask the Doctor

Health Assessments

For many people, the aging process is fraught with physical, mental and emotional challenges. But a comprehensive approach to these problems, coupled with the care of experts specializing in older patients, can make a difference. UCI's Health Assessment Program for Seniors (HAPS) provides comprehensive exams for people over 55. UCI geriatrician Dr. Sonia Sehgal offers details about this special program.

Q Who can benefit from HAPS?

A A HAPS assessment is especially helpful for older people with several chronic health problems requiring multiple medications. It's also beneficial for those who have suffered a notable physical or mental decline in recent months. Additionally, adult children may want a parent assessed to ensure they can still live independently.

Q What does a HAPS assessment include?

A An in-depth physical exam, memory assessment, psychological and social profile, evaluation of the patient's living situation, and post-evaluation conference with the patient and family members. Since drug interactions and dosage issues can affect a person's mental and physical function, an assessment of the patient's medication regimen is an important part of a HAPS evaluation.

Q Who conducts the assessment?

A A team of geriatricians, neurologists, psychologists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, social workers, dietitians and others. These experts work together to unravel the patient's interconnected health problems and formulate a set of recommendations.

Q What happens during the post-exam conference?

A A HAPS geriatrician meets with the patient and family to review test results and treatment

recommendations. Part of the discussion may focus on the appropriateness of the patient's current living arrangements, including suggestions for care. For follow-up treatment, patients may be referred back to a family doctor, followed by HAPS program specialists, or cared for by both.

Q How does the HAPS program differ from seeing a general practitioner?

A HAPS team members specialize in geriatrics, making them experts in the medical, psychological and social issues faced by older people. They use a highly collaborative approach, working together to identify the patient's problems and sorting out how they relate to one another. On the other hand, general practitioners work with all age groups and may not have a global understanding of the health care issues affecting older people. They may also refer patients to several specialists, which may result in less coordinated care.

Q When should you be concerned about an older relative?

A Depression, memory loss, pain and incontinence are not normal parts of aging and should be evaluated for medical causes. Other red flags are unintentional weight loss, a reduced appetite, confusion, listlessness and difficulty performing daily activities. A HAPS professional can distinguish between normal age-related changes and those caused by medications or disease. To request a HAPS assessment, call 1-877-427-7824.



An integral member of the HAPS team, Dr. Sonia Sehgal is a board-certified internist and geriatrician. She will speak on travel medicine at the Jewish Community Center of Orange County, 1 Federation Way, Irvine, on Wednesday, April 26, at 11:30 a.m.

TEEN DRIVERS

Getting a driver's license is a rite of passage for many teens. But unfortunately, this foray into freedom may come with a big price tag.

Accidents involving teenage drivers are the leading cause of death among adolescents, with about 10 young people ages 16 to 19 dying in teen-driven cars every day.

What causes teenagers to have such a high automobile fatality rate? "Studies by the National Institutes of Health show that the region of the brain responsible for inhibiting risky behavior isn't fully formed until the early to mid-twenties,"

says **Dr. Federico Vaca**, UCI emergency medicine physician and director of the UCI School of Medicine's Center for Trauma and Injury Prevention Research. "Even though teens can assess risk when presented with a hypothetical situation on a written test, those skills often vanish when they actually get behind the wheel." Vaca and his research staff are currently addressing some of the issues surrounding teen driver safety through a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety.

Because the teenage brain is still under construction, many young drivers may have trouble handling on-the-spot decisions such as when to merge onto a highway or how to pace a yellow light. "Many fatal crashes are caused by overcorrecting after veering off the road or losing control when facing a roadway obstacle," says

Vaca. "And because young people often have little appreciation of their own mortality, they may speed without considering the consequences."

What's more, research shows that the chances of a crash by a 16- or 17-year-old driver double with two peers in the vehicle and quadruple with three or more. Add cell phones, iPods and other distractions to the mix and you have a recipe for disaster.

Learning to drive. To reduce teen driving accidents, California became one of the first states in the nation to implement a graduated drivers licensing law (GDL). This three-step program is designed to gradually expose aspiring drivers under



age 18 to increasingly demanding on-the-road experiences. Prior to receiving a learner's permit, teens must complete 30 hours of DMV-approved classroom instruction and at least six hours of behind-the-wheel training. During the next six months, they must have 50 hours or more of supervised practice with a parent or other adult.



Then they receive a provisional license. During the next year, they may not transport passengers under age 20, or drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m., unless there's an adult 25 years or older in the car. If they successfully complete the year, they're granted a full license.

Due to brain development, many young drivers may have trouble handling on-the-spot decisions.

In the years following GDL implementation, deaths and injuries from crashes involving 16-year-old drivers dropped 40 percent. Yet nearly 40,000 California teenage drivers and their passengers

died or were injured in car accidents in 2004.

To prevent these tragedies, Vaca believes it's critical for parents to log in more supervised practice time with their teens than required—and monitor their child's driving throughout the GDL process. "Studies show that kids with the most involved parents have better driving records," he says.

Furthermore, teens typically model their parents' driving behaviors. To ensure that their children drive safely,

Vaca encourages moms and

dads to observe safe driving practices themselves.

Finally, Vaca encourages parents to provide their child with a safe vehicle. "It should be equipped with lap and shoulder harness seatbelts, driver/front passenger side-impact and curtain (head protection) airbags, and other safety features," he says. "This is one time when only the best will do."

Toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS

UCI Medical Center

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The information contained in this newsletter is not meant to replace the advice of your physician. Please send comments to UCI Medical Center, Marketing Department, 333 City Boulevard West, Suite 1250, Orange, CA 92868.



Construction has begun on UCI Medical Center's new university hospital!
See page 6 for more information.

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