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# UCI MEDICAL CENTER SeniorHealth

INSIDE: SeniorHealth

QUARTERLY NEWS FOR SENIORS

[www.ucihealth.com/seniors](http://www.ucihealth.com/seniors)

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## ADVANCE DIRECTIVES: MAKE YOUR WISHES KNOWN

Anytime you check into a hospital, there is a possibility that you may not recover as planned. It is best to prepare for this situation by signing a document known as an advance directive.

Before putting pen to paper, discuss your wishes for medical intervention with your doctor, family members, clergy or friends. This will help you decide whom to designate as the person who will make your health-care decisions if you are unable to do so. This includes which end-of-life medical treatments you would accept or refuse and whether you wish to donate organs.

Advance directive forms are available from your doctor, at all UCI Medical Center clinics and at [www.ucihealth.com](http://www.ucihealth.com).



## Preparing for a Hospital Stay

Preparing for hospitalization involves more than packing your toothbrush.

“You may want to bring your favorite music or a few books you’ve been meaning to read,” says UCI Medical Center geriatrician Dr. Laura Mosqueda. “Whatever will make your stay more comfortable.”

Mosqueda and Dr. Michael Wang, a UCI hospitalist specializing in geriatric medicine, encourage seniors to bring a list of their current medications. In most cases when hospitalization is scheduled, admitting doctors have already obtained the necessary medical history, lab tests, pre-surgery screening or blood donation. Discuss with your physician whether you should bring prescriptions to the hospital or have medications dispensed on an as-needed basis. Preparation also should include an advance directive (see sidebar).

“Patients in the hospital may want to speak with their doctors,” says Wang, “but primary-care physicians have full schedules seeing patients in their offices. They’re not always available.” That’s where hospitalists come in. Wang and about a dozen other UCI hospitalists are specialists who care for hospitalized patients. “Hospitalists are always here. We’re caring for people all the time.” Arturo Contraras, a medical assistant at the UCI SeniorHealth Center, also cares for seniors who are hospitalized in his new position as concierge.

“No one wants to be in the hospital,” says Mosqueda, “but the concierge’s job is to make the patient’s stay as pleasant as possible. He takes care of the little things that make all the difference—seeing to it that meals are served hot and that seniors who want a morning paper have one.”



## Depression: Don't Let It Keep You Down

Many factors put seniors at heightened risk for developing depression: loss of loved ones, declining health and decreased mobility. Any of these can result in social isolation and feelings of hopelessness.

"We're not just talking about temporary sadness or feeling down about something," says UCI Medical Center clinical neuropsychologist Dr. Mina Oak. "Depression is an illness."

### Warning signs of depression include:

- fatigue
- change in appetite or weight
- sleeping too much or too little
- more tearful than normal
- not excited about things that once brought satisfaction or pleasure
- trouble concentrating
- feelings of guilt, worthlessness or hopelessness that a situation will not improve
- seeing every situation in negative terms
- irritability
- alcohol or drug abuse

"The first thing is to have a thorough checkup because many medical conditions are associated with depression," says Oak. Alzheimer's, dementia, stroke and Parkinson's all result in brain-related changes. And a thyroid problem is often characterized by sluggishness.

"In addition, too much medication or the wrong medication can also affect mood, so ask your doctor to review all your prescriptions," she says. Once physiological factors have been ruled out, psychotherapy or medication may be prescribed.

To prevent depression, Oak emphasizes reducing your stress load. "You can't stay healthy if you're constantly showering your body with stress-induced hormones. And do the things your mother always told you to do – eat right, get enough sleep, exercise and spend time with the people you love."



## Bladder Problems? Remedies are Available

More than 30 percent of women age 60 and older struggle with urinary incontinence. "A number of factors increase the risk in women," UCI Medical Center urogynecologist Dr. Felicia Lane says. These include vaginal childbirth (especially if forceps were used), hysterectomy and use of diuretic drugs.

Obesity, too, plays a role. "Loss of muscular strength and increased abdominal pressure damage ligaments necessary for bladder control," she says.

Urinary incontinence falls into four main types. Stress incontinence is prompted by coughing, laughing or sneezing. Urge incontinence, most common in seniors, is characterized by an inability to get to the bathroom in time. Mixed incontinence is a combination of stress and urge incontinence. Overflow incontinence is an incomplete emptying of the bladder. All can be treated.

For stress incontinence, Lane recommends pelvic floor exercises (Kegels), reducing caffeine and losing weight. If those techniques fail, doctors can treat with a diaphragm that supports the urethra or with trans-vaginal taping.

Urge incontinence is treated with medications and timed voiding – retraining the bladder by going at set intervals. For urge and overflow incontinence, there is an outpatient procedure called Interstim®. A tiny wire is placed via the sacrum to a nerve that runs along the bladder, correcting abnormal nerve signals.

Most important, Lane says, is understanding that incontinence is not inevitable. "Women with urinary incontinence don't go out," she says. "They feel guilty and depressed. They limit their social interactions. They lose self-respect. Don't let that happen. Tell your doctor you have a problem and take steps to greatly improve your quality of life."



# FREE SEMINARS

## NEW CONCEPTS IN PREVENTING HEART DISEASE

Nathan Wong, Ph.D.

UCI Heart Disease Prevention Program director

Wednesday, April 27 • 1 p.m.

Oasis Senior Center  
800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar

## BACK PAIN? THERE IS HOPE

Dr. Nitin Bhatia

UCI orthopedic surgeon

Wednesday, May 18 • 1 p.m.

Oasis Senior Center  
800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar

## OSTEOPOROSIS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Dr. Andrew Reikes

UCI internist

Friday, June 10 • 1 p.m.

Oasis Senior Center  
800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar

## SKIN CANCER PREVENTION

Dr. Kenneth Linden

UCI dermatologist

Wednesday, June 15 • 11 a.m.

Tustin Senior Center  
200 S. C Street, Tustin

## PAIN MANAGEMENT

Dr. Arthur Zepeda

Pain management specialist

Monday, June 20 • 1 p.m.

University Club  
Los Trancos Drive and East Peltason Drive,  
UC Irvine campus

## AVOIDING MEDICATION MISADVENTURES

Brad Williams, Pharm.D.

UCI geriatric pharmacist

Friday, June 24 • 10 a.m.

The Bowers Museum  
2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana

## BACK PAIN

Dr. Nitin Bhatia

UCI orthopedic surgeon

Monday, June 27 • 10 a.m.

The Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace  
18001 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda

## SLEEP DISORDERS IN SENIORS

Dr. Jorge Rivero

UCI geriatrician

Friday, July 8 • 10 a.m.

Orange Senior Center  
170 S. Olive St., Orange

## SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA

Dr. Roger Crumley

UCI otolaryngologist

Wednesday, July 13 • 10 a.m.

The Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace  
18001 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda

## GLAUCOMA SEMINAR

Dr. Sameh Mosaed

UCI ophthalmologist

Monday, July 25 • 10 a.m.

University Club  
Los Trancos Drive and East Peltason Drive,  
UC Irvine campus

## PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Dr. Neal Hermanowicz

UCI neurologist

Wednesday, July 27 • 1 p.m.

Oasis Senior Center  
800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar

## AGING AND CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

Dr. Chowdhury Ahsan

UCI cardiologist

Thursday, July 28 • 10 a.m.

The Bowers Museum  
2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana

## ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE AND AGING

Dr. Wadie Najm

UCI geriatrician

Wednesday, Aug. 3 • 1 p.m.

Oasis Senior Center  
800 Marguerite Ave., Corona del Mar

## HEALTHY AGING

Dr. Laura Mosqueda

UCI geriatrician

Tuesday, Aug. 9 • 10 a.m.

The Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace  
18001 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda

For more information, visit [www.ucihealth.com/seminars](http://www.ucihealth.com/seminars) or call toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS (1-877-824-3627).

## Preparing for Your Hospital Stay CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

During hospitalization, preparation begins for after-hospital care. “I ask about the home environment,” Wang says. “Are there stairs? Is someone living with you? Can someone come in to help?”

A case manager, who investigates insurance coverage for post-hospitalization care, also gets involved, as do physical and occupational therapists, who assess the senior’s ability to function at home.

“Our recommendations may be as simple as a walker

or a cane to help the senior get around following discharge,” says Wang. “Or we may suggest that a family member assist the senior for a few weeks. In some cases, a rehabilitation facility may be necessary.”

Mosqueda recommends that patients begin preparing for discharge even before entering the hospital. “Ask your doctor, ‘What help will I need? What resources are available?’ If you’re prepared, your hospital stay will be more comfortable with fewer worries.”

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**REGISTER NOW!**

**TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2005**

## 6th Annual Taking Charge of Your Health Care

Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove

Don't miss Orange County's largest senior health care conference. Register yourself and a friend. Registration cards and more information are inside this newsletter.

UCIrvine



## New Hospital Construction Stirs Excitement...and Changes

Groundbreaking is just two months away for UCI Medical Center's new university hospital, a seven-story tower that will usher in new standards of patient comfort, state-of-the-art care, education and research.

The hospital will be built on the existing medical center grounds, requiring the demolition—now underway—of parking areas and an office building, all on the medical center's north side.

Patient care will continue uninterrupted at the hospital and outpatient facilities throughout construction, which is expected to be completed in late 2008. However, parking and traffic may be affected at times. Valet parking at a reduced price for patients will remain available on UCI Medical Center Drive, but there may be a wait at times of heavy use.

Because of the construction, patients and others visiting the medical center should allow extra time for travel and parking. The medical center staff thanks patients and visitors for their understanding during this time of transformation.

The new \$371 million hospital will have 191 beds, with space for future expansion. This is in addition to the existing 102 beds in the medical center's tower and the 84-bed Neuropsychiatric Center. Further, the new hospital will have 13 operating rooms and three interventional procedure rooms, all designed to support the latest technology in medical care.

For 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](http://www.ucihealth.com/newhospital).