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**TRIP PREPARATION
MEANS MORE THAN
PACKING A SUITCASE**

If summer is your travel season, enjoy it in good health. UCI Medical Center geriatrician Dr. Simin Torabzadeh advises older adults to prepare physically and medically:

- Do at least 10 minutes of walking daily, two weeks or more in advance.
- Obtain refills of prescriptions and take enough to last throughout the trip.
- One month ahead, ask your doctor about immunizations required for foreign countries.
- Wait at least six weeks after events such as a heart attack or surgery to travel.

“Tell your physician you are traveling and where you’re going,” Torabzadeh says. “Your doctor can give you clues as to what you might need.”



Hormone Therapy: Is It Safe?

Studies about postmenopausal hormone therapy have left many older women confused and concerned. But if women are satisfied with hormone therapy’s many benefits, they may be able to continue the treatment.

“If someone started it in her early 50s and she’s now 65, I don’t know that I would change anything,” says Dr. K. Mark Vuchinich, an obstetrician and gynecologist at UCI Medical Center. “As long as they are in overall good health, a lot of women can continue with the therapy.”

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) helps reduce the symptoms of menopause—hot flashes and vaginal dryness—while also protecting against osteoporosis. Many women report additional benefits in keeping their skin supple and hair healthy.

Doctor and patient attitudes toward hormone therapy changed after the landmark Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) study in 2002. WHI showed increases in cases of heart disease, stroke and breast cancer among older women taking hormones for five years or longer. Media reports tended to overstate the risks, Vuchinich says, so patients were scared, doctors stopped prescribing it, and hormone therapy received a black eye.

The WHI study showed that for every 10,000 women who took estrogen and progesterone, eight more cases of breast cancer would result per year. “That’s quite small in terms of absolute risk,” Vuchinich says.



Men's Health: Treatments Relieve Prostate Woes

It is almost as inevitable as gray hair. As men age, their prostate gland commonly becomes enlarged. While not cancerous or fatal, an enlarged prostate can cause discomfort and bothersome symptoms such as weakened urine stream, frequent urination and possibly a complete inability to urinate. About half of men in their 50s have an enlarged prostate, and half of those with an enlarged prostate have bothersome symptoms.

Drugs known as alpha blockers can help, but medications can cause side effects or be ineffective. Surgery may be an option to treat an enlarged prostate, also known as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). UCI Medical Center urologists offer two surgical methods to remove excess tissue: minimally invasive GreenLight™ laser vaporization therapy, and traditional surgery called transurethral resection of the prostate, or TURP.

“The GreenLight laser comes the closest to replicating the tissue removal of TURP without the downsides,” which include longer hospitalization time and more bleeding, says Dr. Leland Ronningen, UCI urologist.

The GreenLight procedure takes between 30 minutes and 2 hours. The doctor inserts a scope through the patient's urethra to the site of the prostate, where a laser beam removes the prostate tissue that blocks urine from flowing through the urethra. Patients leave the hospital within 24 hours, many of them the same day. TURP usually requires one or two full days in the hospital.

The cause of BPH is not known. The main risk factors are age and family history. “You don't need to be treated for BPH unless the symptoms are bothersome,” Ronningen says. “If they are, see your primary care doctor or a urologist.”

For an appointment with a UCI urologist, call 714-456-7005.



Road Wise: Computer Program Gives Drivers a Fitness Test

Older drivers may be more experienced, but aging may also result in physical changes that could make handling an automobile risky. Reduced flexibility, weakened strength, longer reaction time and diminished vision can affect driving ability.

A good tool for assessing these issues is an easy-to-use computer program called “Road Wise,” which is available for viewing at the UCI SeniorHealth Center in Orange and for purchase at all AAA of Southern California locations (\$5 for AAA members, \$7 for non-members). The 30-minute CD administers a simple test to determine how fit a person is to drive.

“It really is an excellent test to see where older adults may have difficulty on the road,” says Camille Fitzpatrick, UCI nurse practitioner at the center. “I recommend people do the test once a year.”

“Road Wise” requires two people at a time. It guides them through eight functions, such as general mobility, leg strength, hand-eye coordination, head-neck flexibility, peripheral vision and night vision. When finished, the program gives an individual score plus instructions on where improvement is needed.

“Older adults usually are safer drivers, despite the negative stereotype,” Fitzpatrick says. “They consistently use their seat belts, they are cautious, they don't drive often at night and they obey the rules. But the reality is normal aging brings changes that can make driving more of a challenge. This doesn't mean they can't drive. They just might need to do a little more physical therapy, exercise and planning to make sure they can react quickly enough when necessary.”

To view the “Road Wise” CD free at the UCI SeniorHealth Center, please call 714-456-7007.



FREE SEMINARS

BALANCE DISORDERS AND FALL PREVENTION

Tudy Trgovac, OTR/L
UCI occupational therapist

Two presentations:

Tuesday, Sept. 26 • 1 p.m.
Florence Sylvester Senior Center
23721 Moulton Parkway
Laguna Hills

Wednesday, Nov. 15 • 1 p.m.
Oasis Senior Center
800 Marguerite Ave.
Corona del Mar

HYPERTENSION

Dr. Andrew Reikes
UCI internal medicine specialist

Wednesday, Aug. 9 • 11 a.m.
Tustin Senior Center
200 S. C St., Tustin

AVOIDING MEDICATION MISADVENTURES

Brad Williams, PharmD
UCI pharmacist

Two presentations:

Tuesday, August 29 • 1 p.m.
Florence Sylvester Senior Center
23721 Moulton Parkway
Laguna Hills

Wednesday, Sept. 13 • 10:30 a.m.
Jewish Community
Center of Orange County
1 Federation Way, Irvine

URINARY INCONTINENCE

Dr. Felicia Lane
UCI urogynecologist

Wednesday, Sept. 6 • 11 a.m.
Tustin Senior Center
200 S. C St., Tustin

SUPPLEMENTS AND AGING – WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW

Dr. Wadie Najm
UCI geriatrician

Tuesday, Oct. 10 • 1 p.m.
Florence Sylvester Senior Center
23721 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Hills

SLEEP DISORDERS

Dr. Marcel Hungs
UCI sleep disorders specialist

Wednesday, Nov. 1 • 10:30 a.m.
Jewish Community Center of Orange County
1 Federation Way, Irvine

SPINE AND BACK PAIN

Dr. Nitin Bhatia
UCI spine surgeon

Wednesday, Dec. 6 • 10:30 a.m.
Jewish Community Center of Orange County
1 Federation Way, Irvine

New University Hospital is on the Rise

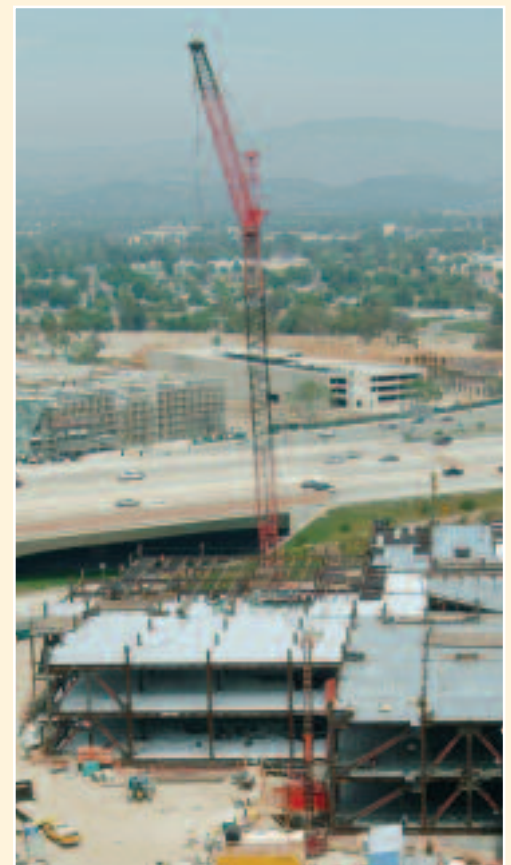
You've likely seen it while driving along the Santa Ana Freeway. The steel "skeleton" of UCI Medical Center's new university hospital is rising rapidly.

The framework of the seven-story tower under construction is changing the horizon around UCI Medical Center in Orange, just as the new university hospital is expected to transform medical care for the community.

The \$371 million new hospital will offer the latest in medical technology for patient care, research and education, in a patient-friendly environment when it opens in early 2009.

While the rising framework of the new hospital is certainly noticeable, it is momentarily dwarfed by the construction site's enormous crane, visible for miles, that lifts steel beams into place. Upright, the "crawler crane" is 30 stories tall and has lifted up to 7¹/₂ tons of steel at a time during the construction. A total of 5,500 tons – 11 million pounds – of steel is framing the new hospital.

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

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REGISTER NOW

Fallproof!TM

FallProof! is a 16-session program for medically stable seniors to reduce their risk of falls. Register now for classes beginning **Aug. 15, 2006**. Participants must have medical clearance and undergo evaluation by Aug. 10. Call toll free 1-877-UCI-DOCS (1-877-824-3627) for details and to register.

UCIrvine



A Day of Health

More than 1,400 seniors attended UCI Medical Center's seventh annual "Taking Charge of Your Health Care" event at the Crystal Cathedral in May. Thanks to all who participated. To see more photos, visit www.ucihealth.com/seniorevent.

Hormone Therapy: Is It Safe? (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

In addition, the study did not accurately reflect the typical HRT patient, who is in her late 40s or 50s when beginning treatment, Vuchinich says. The study measured women with an average age of 63 at the start of therapy.

"If a woman wants to stop the therapy, that's fine," Vuchinich says. "She should understand that some of her symptoms may resume for a short period of time — hot flashes, vaginal dryness and perhaps some withdrawal bleeding."

Alternatives to vaginal dryness include lubricants. Drugs such as Fosamax can help maintain protection against osteoporosis. Hot flashes have few alternative treatments, Vuchinich says.

He counsels women to stay with traditional delivery forms of HRT—pills, patches or vaginal creams—and steer clear of implants or injections advertised by pharmacists. These are largely unregulated and vary in quality and dose levels.

"Women on long-term HRT don't need to do anything special, just continue their annual Pap smears and mammograms, and check their overall cholesterol levels and lipids," Vuchinich says. "Hormone therapy might not prevent Alzheimer's or heart disease, as we used to think, but women don't need to be afraid of it. They should weigh the benefits and risks, as with all treatments."

To make an appointment with a physician at the UCI Women's Health Care Center, please call 714-456-2911.