



MEDICAL STAFF PULSE

a bi-weekly newsletter for CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL STAFF

Clinic Helps Menopause Patients with Heart Risks

Advanced Preventive Women's Clinic is part of Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute

Menopausal women at risk for heart disease now have a specialized clinic at the Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute. The Advanced Preventive Women's Clinic at the Women's Heart Center offers comprehensive

cardiac risk assessments designed for high-risk women who are in menopause. This clinic offers menopausal patients state-of-the-art screenings, as well as personalized medical therapies, including high-risk hormone

counseling.

"This clinic is designed for women who are at higher risk for heart disease and who are seeking to treat their menopause symptoms while taking steps to prevent heart problems," said Chrisandra

Shufelt, M.D., assistant director of the Cedars-Sinai Women's Heart Center and a NAMS Certified Menopause practitioner.

Some women - especially those who have had a prior heart

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Dr. Sumeet Chugh Named Price Chair Holder

Sumeet S. Chugh, M.D., associate director of the Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute and section chief of Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology, has been given The Pauline and Harold Price Chair in Cardiac Electrophysiology Research.



The chair, presented in Harvey Morse Auditorium on Aug. 19, supports research in the area of electrophysiology and heart rhythm

abnormalities. Dr. Chugh is the second holder of The Pauline and Harold Price Chair at Cedars-Sinai. It is supported through The Louis and Harold Price Foundation.

"Sumeet Chugh's work as a physician, teacher and researcher has touched many lives," said Eduardo Marbán, director of the Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute. "A great number of people in this community and beyond will benefit from him holding this chair."

Dr. Chugh is an expert in the diagnosis and treatment of heart rhythm abnormalities and a leader in sudden cardiac arrest research. He initiated, and continues to direct, the Oregon Sudden Unexpected Death Study, a comprehensive assessment of sudden cardiac arrest in a community of one million residents that started in 2002. He came to Cedars-Sinai from Oregon Health and Science University in fall 2008.



David Palestrant, M.D., seen on the robot's monitor, makes rounds in the Neuro ICU.

PAGING DR. NEURO-ROBOTO

Neuro ICU physicians use mobile robot for rounds

Finding a neurologist at 10 p.m. just got easier. The Neuro Intensive Care Unit on 8 Saperstein has Cedars-Sinai's first mobile robot, which allows physicians to remotely perform rounds, assist residents and communicate with patients' families when they aren't at the medical center.

Designed by InTouch Technologies, the

RP-7 robot is 200 pounds, 5 feet 7 inches tall and, if you are a sci-fi fan, resembles a Dalek from "Doctor Who" but for the monitor on its top.

Physicians use a joystick in their home or office to maneuver the robot around the unit. A camera atop the robot is sensitive enough to detect pupil dilation, and there is an attached stethoscope that a nurse can place

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Clinic Helps Menopause Patients with Heart Risks

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attack, bypass surgery or TIAs - may not be appropriate for hormone therapy, but no one needs to suffer with menopause symptoms, Dr. Shufelt said. In cases where hormone therapy is not advisable, there are other non-hormonal options and lifestyle modification to consider. This personalized medicine approach enables this clinic to tailor a treatment plan that is uniquely suited for the patient.

Research is also part of the equation.

There is a study underway to evaluate the possible benefits of traditional acupuncture on frequency and severity of vasomotor symptoms, menopause quality of life and other perceived psychological stressors. In addition, there is a study to evaluate the relationship between the degree of basal hypothalamic pituitary axis responsivity and cortisol metabolism with the severity and frequency of vasomotor symptom.

The Advanced Preventive Women's Clinic

offers hormone therapy counseling as well as non-hormonal options, Dr. Shufelt said. The decision as to which provides the better treatment for each individual is determined by the woman's own symptoms, risk factors, medical history and assessment of risk and benefit. Advisement for high risk women regarding contraceptive hormone therapy is also available.

To refer a patient to the center, please call (310) 423-9680.

Neuro ICU physicians use first mobile robot for night rounds

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on the patient allowing the physician to check vital signs. The physician's face appears on a monitor, and there is a phone handset that allows people to speak with the physician.

David Palestrant, M.D., director of both Neuro-Critical Care and the Cedars-Sinai Stroke Program, is one of the physicians using the robot. He said the robot allows them to extend the Neuro ICU staffing while still maintaining quality care. He and others use the RP-7 between 9 and 11 p.m. nearly every night.

"The technology and optics are amazing," he said. "You can literally focus on a patient's pupil from across the room. You can observe the neurological exam, auscultate, review vitals, read charts, speak to patients and then discuss the case with the nurses and physicians. The only thing you can't do is touch the patient."

The robot's "feet" are three spherical wheels, which allow for maneuverability. There are sensors around the base to prevent it from bumping into things as the physician moves it around the unit.

"It takes about an hour to get used to moving the robot, then it is really easy to use," Dr. Palestrant said. "We can drive it right into the patients' rooms and up to their bedsides."



Dr. Palestrant, visits a Neuro ICU patient using the RP-7 robot, which can be driven right up to the bedside.

Pharmacy Focus

Liver Failure with Propylthiouracil

There is a risk of serious and possibly fatal liver injury associated with propylthiouracil, an anti-thyroid drug used to treat Graves' disease, according to the FDA. Propylthiouracil is considered a second-line therapy in Graves'



disease. The drug of choice in most cases is methimazole, because it has been associated with fewer cases of serious liver damage than propylthiouracil.

Children are especially vulnerable to liver damage with the drug. The risk profile is different for patients in the first trimester of pregnancy, however, since methimazole has been associated with embryopathy and propylthiouracil has not.

The FDA is recommending that clinicians reserve the use of propylthiouracil for patients who cannot take methimazole because of allergy or intolerance, or for patients in the first trimester of pregnancy. Propylthiouracil should not be used in children unless they cannot take methimazole and there are no other treatment options available.

Neuropsychiatric Events with Certain Asthma Drugs

There is a potential for neuropsychiatric events with leukotriene-modifying drugs including the asthma drugs Accolate (zafirlukast), Zflo (zileuton) and Zyflo CR (zileuton). Also included is Singulair (montelukast), which is used to treat asthma and allergic rhinitis, and to prevent exercise-induced asthma.

Neuropsychiatric symptoms have included agitation, aggression, anxiousness, irritability, restlessness and insomnia. Patients have also experienced tremors, dream abnormalities, hallucinations, depression and suicide.

If symptoms develop, clinicians should consider discontinuing the medication, according to the FDA.

Increased Mortality in Liver Transplant Patients Treated with Rapamune

Stable liver transplant patients may have an increased risk of death if they are switched from an immunosuppressive regimen based on a calcineurin inhibitor (CNI) to sirolimus,

which is marketed as Rapamune, according to the FDA.

The drug is approved to prevent organ rejection in patients 13 and older who receive kidney transplants. It is not approved to treat patients with liver or lung transplants.

The higher mortality risk was found in a clinical trial conducted by Wyeth, the manufacturer of Rapamune. The trial also suggested that patients converted to Rapamune were more likely to experience treatment failure at one year, and more likely to discontinue the drug because of adverse events, than patients who remained on CNI-based therapy.

FDA Alert on Insulin

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an alert that certain vials of the long-acting insulin Levemir were stolen and are being sold in the U.S. The stolen vials, which came from three specific lots, may not have been stored or handled properly, and may be dangerous to use.

The following three lots were stolen: XZF0036, XZF0037 and XZF0038. These lots contain almost 130,000 vials of insulin, according to Novo Nordisk, the manufacturer of Levemir.

Serious Fungal Infections with Simponi

There is a risk of serious fungal infections with TNF blockers, including the recently approved Simponi (golimumab), according to the FDA.

TNF blockers are immunosuppressants used to treat chronic inflammatory diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis.

The FDA previously warned about the risk of such infections associated with TNF blockers, including Cimzia (certolizumab pegol), Enbrel (etanercept), Humira (adalimumab) and Remicade (infliximab). FDA said that invasive fungal infections, including histoplasmosis, have not been consistently recognized in patients taking these drugs, resulting in delayed treatment and, in some cases, death.

TNF blockers, including Simponi, should be discontinued if such infections occur, and clinicians should consider empiric antifungal therapy until the specific pathogens

can be identified, according to Centocor Ortho Biotech, the manufacturer of Simponi.

Anti-epileptic Drugs and Suicide Risk

The labeling for anti-epileptic drugs will now warn of patients having an increased risk of suicidal thoughts and actions, according to the FDA.

The warnings are based on FDA's analysis of placebo-controlled clinical studies of 11 drugs used to treat epilepsy, psychiatric disorders and other conditions. In this analysis, the risk was roughly doubled in patients receiving the anti-epileptic drugs compared with those getting placebo.

The following drugs were included in the analyses:

- Carbamazepine (marketed as Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol XR)
- Felbamate (marketed as Felbatol)
- Gabapentin (marketed as Neurontin)
- Lamotrigine (marketed as Lamictal)
- Levetiracetam (marketed as Keppra)
- Oxcarbazepine (marketed as Trileptal)
- Pregabalin (marketed as Lyrica)
- Tiagabine (marketed as Gabitril)
- Topiramate (marketed as Topamax)
- Valproate (marketed as Depakote, Depakote ER, Depakene, Depacon)
- Zonisamide (marketed as Zonegran)

The analyses suggest that this risk applies to all anti-epileptic drugs when they're used for any indication - even those that weren't part of the analysis, according to the FDA.

Recall of Certain Infant Apnea Monitors

Philips/Respironics is recalling some SmartMonitor 2 Infant Apnea Monitors.

The affected devices are the SmartMonitor 2, Models 4002 and 4003 with serial numbers 3000033364 through 3000038740.

The devices monitor infants' heart rate and respiration in the hospital or at home. The affected monitors may fail to alarm if the infant experiences breathing problems or an abnormal heart rate.

For more information, call Respironics directly at 1-888-345-4630.

For more information on any of the items above, visit www.fda.gov/psn.

Save the Date *Medical student reception is Sept. 29*

All members of the medical staff are encouraged to attend the annual Arthur I. Johnson, M.D., Medical Student Reception on Tuesday, Sept. 29, starting at 6 p.m. in Harvey Morse Auditorium.

Each fall, Cedars-Sinai hosts this reception to welcome students from local medical schools and introduce them to the wide array of training opportunities available here.

The Medical Student Reception is geared toward students from groups that are underrepresented in medicine; however, the reception is open to all interested students. Medical students are interested in many issues as

they enter the profession, ranging from specialty-specific questions to work-life balance and cultural diversity. Your attendance is an opportunity to share your Cedars-Sinai experiences with these students.

The evening includes a campus tour for the students and dinner followed by a program/reception during which the medical students will have the opportunity to meet with the medical staff and current physicians-in-training.

Please RSVP by Friday, Sept. 25, to David Allen at (310) 423-2126 or david.allen@cshs.org.

Research Corner

Tumor ‘stem-like cells’ found in benign tumors

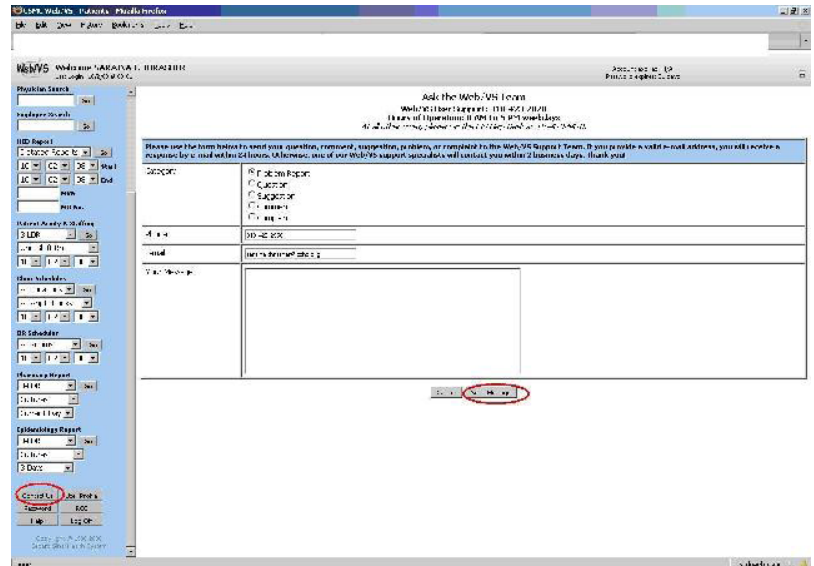
Research scientists at Cedars-Sinai’s Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute have isolated stem-like cells in benign pituitary tumors and used these “mother” cells to generate new tumors in laboratory mice. Targeting the cells of origin is seen as a possible strategy in the fight against malignant and benign tumors.

When tumor stem-like cells were implanted into laboratory mice, they generated new tumors that had the same genetic composition and characteristics as the original tumors, according to an article in the July 2009 issue of the *British Journal of Cancer*. Cells from the new tumors, later transplanted into other mice, maintained the same tumor-specific properties.

“Although previous studies have offered evidence of the existence of stem-like cells in pituitary adenomas (benign tumors), in this study we scrutinized these cells for composition and function, demonstrating that stem-like cells exist in benign tumors,” said John S. Yu, M.D., director of Surgical Neuro-oncology at Cedars-Sinai and senior author of the journal article.

Although pituitary adenomas are typically noncancerous, the tumors can cause significant injury or illness by compressing important structures or creating hormone imbalances. Identifying the mechanisms that enable these and other tumors to form may provide unique targets for new, more effective therapies.

“It appears that stem cells from different cancers – or possibly even within the same tumor – may use different signaling pathways and have different implications for disease progression and prognosis,” said Keith L. Black, M.D., chair of the Department of Neurosurgery. “Findings from the pituitary tumor study generally support the cancer stem cell hypothesis, suggesting that similar mechanisms may be involved in the generation of both malignant and benign tumors.”



Web/VS Tip of the Week

How to contact the support team

To report a problem, ask a question, make a suggestion, comment or complaint, you may notify the Web/VS support team immediately using the “Contact Us” button in the lower left corner of the patient search screen.

The Web/VS Support Team will contact you within 24 hours regarding the inquiry noted on the Contact Us form.

For questions, comments or suggestions, please contact the Web/VS Support Team at (310) 423-2828 or via e-mail at mdsupport@cshs.org. You can also click on the “Contact Us” button in Web/VS (located in the blue shaded area on the bottom left side of the screen).

SHARE YOUR STORY



Send an e-mail to: MedStaffPulse@cshs.org

Meeting and Events

Welcome Reception for Rabbi Jason Weiner – Sept. 9

All Cedars-Sinai medical staff members are invited to a welcome reception for Rabbi Jason Weiner from 2 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 9, in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Refreshments will be served. Rabbi Weiner began serving as Cedars-Sinai's Jewish Chaplain on July 20.

Rehabilitation Topics in the Management of Brain Injuries – Sept. 12

This one-day conference addresses treatment options for integrating the neurological pathology with the functional and behavioral impairments in assessing the rehabilitative choices in patients with brain injury. The conference is from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 12, at the Luxe Hotel Sunset, 11461 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Information: Go online to download a PDF of a brochure or call Barbara Stokes at (310) 423-2935.

Advances in Multi-Specialty Aesthetic and Reconstructive Plastic Surgery Symposium – Sept. 12-13

This weekend course teaches new techniques and reinforces skills and methods through presentations, video, panel discussion and interaction with acknowledged experts in plastic surgery, facial reconstruction and dermatology. Surgical management strategies for post-bariatric surgery patients will also be covered. The conference runs from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, and Sunday, Sept. 13, in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Information: Go online to download a PDF flyer or call Marta Betancourt at (310) 423-1921.

The Future of Bioethics: Power and Community Dialogue – Sept. 16

The Center for Healthcare Ethics sponsors the Maurice B. Siegel, M.D., Lecture in Humanism and Medicine as part of the Ethics Noon Conference on Wednesday, Sept. 16. Howard Brody, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Institute for the Medical Humanities at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, will discuss "The Future of Bioethics: Power and Community Dialogue." Lunch

is available at 11:30 a.m. and the event follows from noon to 1 p.m. in Harvey Morse Auditorium.

10th Annual HIV/AIDS Conference – Sept. 25

This course will increase understanding and respect in the care of sex workers through a presentation on patient interaction and risk reduction strategies. Lectures and case presentations will address issues of effective treatment specific to substance addiction in HIV positive patients. The conference is from 7:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 25, at the Intercontinental Hotel – Century City, 2151 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles. Information: Go online to download a PDF flyer or call Barbara Stokes at (310) 423-2935.

Annual Arthur I. Johnson, M.D., Memorial Medical Student Reception – Sept. 29

All physicians are invited to attend the annual Arthur I. Johnson, M.D., Medical Student Reception on Tuesday, Sept. 29, starting at 5:30 p.m. in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Cedars-Sinai hosts this event to welcome students from local medical schools and introduce them to the wide array of training opportunities available here. Please RSVP by Friday, Sept. 25, to David Allen at (310) 423-2126 or david.allen@cshs.org.

10th Annual Educational Meeting in Gastroenterology – Oct. 9-11

This year's three-day program is designed to educate attendees on the impact this meeting and the Cedars-Sinai Center for Digestive Diseases has made on best practices in the field. It includes a description of where the center is headed and what new developments clinicians can anticipate. This conference will be held Friday, Oct. 9, through Sunday, Oct. 11, from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at The Fairmont Miramar Hotel, 101 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Information: Go online to download a PDF brochure or call Bari Laner at (310) 423-2937.

Head to Toe: Orthopaedic Aspects of the Growing Child – Oct. 10

This one-day course for pediatricians and family practice physicians provides information on the diagnostic process in common pediatric orthopaedic problems such as hip and back pain using an algorithm-based approach. The event features hands-on workshops and runs from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10, in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Information: Call Barbara Stokes at (310) 423-2935.

Annual Meeting of the Medical Staff – Oct. 26

The 2009 Pioneer in Medicine Award and the Chief of Staff Award will be presented at this luncheon meeting. Chief of Staff William W. Brien, M.D., and President and CEO Thomas M. Priselac will be among those speaking at the event, which runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 26, in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.

The Levi Meier Memorial Lectureship in Medical Ethics – Nov. 6

The inaugural Levi Meier Memorial Lectureship in Medical will be held at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 6, in Harvey Morse Auditorium. Scott Halpern, M.D., Ph.D., MBE, of the University of Pennsylvania will be speaking on "Bedside rationing of critical care: Shedding light rather than cursing the darkness."

Run for Her – Nov. 15

The fifth annual Run for Her 5K run and friendship walk is Sunday, Nov. 15, starting at Pan Pacific Park, 7600 Beverly Blvd., next to The Grove. The 5K starts at 9 a.m. and the finish line festival ends at noon. Proceeds from the run benefit the Cedars-Sinai Women's Cancer Research Institute. For information or to register for Team Cedars-Sinai, visit www.runforher.com.

Grand Rounds

For information on scheduling of Grand Rounds, go online to access the Continuing Medical Education website.