

Your Partner in Health

Message from the CEO



Cedar-Sinai Medical Group is proud to announce the launch of our new electronic medical record (EMR) system. We spent many months to make sure we chose the right system for the

medical group, and the dream of supporting our practices with state-of-the-art technology is now being realized.

The EMR system will allow our physicians to find your information more quickly, easily update your records and share information with other medical professionals involved in your care. Accurate information at your physicians' fingertips means better care for you.

Technology is rapidly changing the way we deliver healthcare in the United States. The EMR system will have a direct positive impact on the physician-patient experience. We expect this new system will bring the following mutual benefits to you and our organization:

- Higher quality and efficiency of patient care
- Improved communication between healthcare providers
- Improved medical documentation and patient safety
- Immediate physician access to patient documentation
- Tools to ensure confidentiality of patient information
- Improved physician and staff satisfaction through more efficient processes
- Increased patient satisfaction

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Medical Director's Corner

Medicare Part D

Am I the only one confused around here?

Stephen Deutsch, MD
Medical Director
Cedars-Sinai Medical Care Foundation



Medicare began covering prescription drugs in January 2006 under Medicare Part D. No doubt, Part D can be confusing, and it takes a very savvy senior to figure it out. Several issues have come to my attention including enrollment deadlines, so-called "doughnut holes" and prescription drug coverage.

Did you miss the enrollment extension?

To avoid a penalty in the form of one percent higher monthly premium, you needed to sign up for Part D by June 30th, extended from the original date of May 15, 2006. For every month that you do not enroll, Medicare will add on another one percent penalty. The next date to sign up for 2007 or to switch from one plan to another is November 15, 2006. If you sign up at that time, you will pay your plan's premium plus the five

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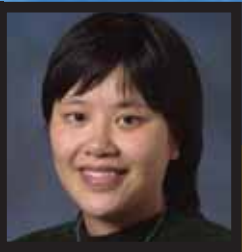


Summer is here!

Happy and Healthy in the Summer

It's that time of year again. The days are longer and everyone is enjoying our great Southern California weather. Here are answers to some of the most common summer-season health questions.

Frances Pang, MD
Pediatrics



Do kids and adults really have to apply sunscreen every day?

In Southern California, we do. Even one bad sunburn can increase your risk of getting skin cancer, so it's important to protect your child and yourself every day. Sunscreens come in two types. There are titanium oxide sunscreens that contain tiny particles that stay on the surface of the skin to block the sun's rays. There are also chemical sunscreens that penetrate the skin to provide protection. For infants from six months to two years, I recommend the titanium oxide sunscreens, since they are less likely to cause allergic reactions. For children over two years, either type is fine. Pick a sunscreen that provides SPF 20 to 30. Apply plenty of sunscreen and reapply every four hours – more often if your child is swimming. Set a good example and apply sunscreen to your own skin, too. None of the sunscreens on the market have been FDA approved for infants less than six months of age. However, if your infant cannot avoid exposure to the sun, it's better to use a sunscreen

rather than allow the child to become sunburned. Use spray sunscreens with caution, since the alcohol in them can sometimes sting sensitive skin.

Use hats, long clothing and shade to reduce exposure to the sun's rays. Sunglasses with UV protection are also important to decrease the risk of cataracts. Try bathing suits that are made to protect kids from the sun. They feature long sleeves and leg coverage, like a thin wetsuit. These bathing suits minimize the area parents need to cover with sunscreen, which keeps the kids happy, too.

Decrease exposure to the sun between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun's rays are most intense. Don't let overcast days give you a false sense of security. Over 70 percent of the sun's rays still get through the clouds. Over 30 percent can also penetrate loosely woven fabrics (for example, a T-shirt). Children who tan easily can still get sunburns, so continue to apply sunscreen even if your child's skin already looks dark.

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Should I be worried about West Nile virus in Los Angeles?

West Nile virus is an illness that is spread by the bites of infected mosquitoes. It cannot be spread from person to person. For the past couple of years, Los Angeles County has had minimal exposure to West Nile virus. However, public health officials predict that there may be more cases in the city this summer. The chance of having serious illness with West Nile virus from a single mosquito bite is extremely low, less than one in 10,000. However, it is still important to protect children from bites as much as possible.

For children over age two, it is safe to use insect repellent lotions or sprays that contain less than 15 percent DEET. They should not be applied to the face or hands, since there is a risk that the child may eat the repellent. For all children, especially younger ones, it's best to spray clothing or a hat instead of directly spraying the skin. Several companies also make clothing that repels mosquitoes and does not release any chemicals onto the skin.

Symptoms of West Nile virus that might indicate serious infection include high fever, confusion, muscle weakness and severe headaches. If you or your child have these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

What can I do to ensure my child's safety at pool parties?

Once they are over six months old, infants can start parent/child swimming classes. Classes should focus on teaching your child to hold their breath and feel comfortable in the water. Even when your children know how to swim, they should be supervised at all times. Flotation devices can give adults and kids a false sense of security and should be used with caution. Make sure that a separate fence with a locked gate, not just a fence around the property, surrounds the pool. Supervise children at all times!

Even one bad sunburn can increase your risk of getting skin cancer, so it's important to protect your child and yourself every day.



CSMG at the Fifth Annual Women's Health Conference

This spring, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center celebrated its fifth annual Women's Health Conference, providing midlife and older women the opportunity to improve their knowledge and understanding of the latest research and lifestyle habits pertaining specifically to women.

In the United States, women over 45 face increased risk of a variety of health problems, especially chronic conditions. Today, improving women's health means prevention and treatment of conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol, hypertension and obesity.

More than 500 attendees, allied health professionals and community members learned about prevention tactics and the latest diagnostic, treatment and research breakthroughs on a variety of topics, including cardiac disease, sexual libido and stress management. Participants attended panel discussions led by nationally recognized specialists, including a number of our own CSMG physicians.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group was a proud supporter in making this a successful event. In particular, Michelle Israel, MD, Taz Varkey, MD and Oona Khan, MD served as faculty panelists. Internist Dr. Israel co-facilitated a panel discussion on the topic of tension, covering memory, depression, mind and body connection, stress management and geriatrics. Dr. Varkey, an obstetrician/gynecologist, served as a panelist on the subject of sexual appetite. Dr. Khan practices internal medicine and endocrinology and provided important health tips applicable to all ages. This panel discussed nutrition, prevention of obesity and diabetes.

We thank the Women's Guild of Cedars-Sinai and CV Therapeutics, Inc. for sponsoring this important event and look forward to participating in next year's Women's Health Conference.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group: Making a Difference



Cheryl Dunnett, MD
Internal Medicine

Making a difference in the lives of those less fortunate is a deeply rewarding experience.

In February, Cedars-Sinai Medical Group (CSMG) took part in an unforgettable medical mission, which provided five days of quality healthcare to more than 1,000 patients in a rural village just outside Guatemala City. The medical mission was organized by HELPS International, which has been providing medical care to Guatemalans most in need since 1984.¹

Guatemala is one of the poorest nations in the Americas with an average wage of four dollars per day. In fact, 86 percent of all health care in Guatemala is paid out-of-pocket, which means many families receive little or no medical care, or they sacrifice other basic needs.

The HELPS Los Angeles team was comprised of 70 volunteers, including surgeons, medical doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and helpers. HELPS International has 10 U.S.-based medical teams that make annual trips to Guatemala. CSMG was well represented by Barry Brock, M.D. (gynecology), Cheryl Dunnett, M.D. (internal medicine), Frances Pang, M.D.

(pediatrics), Gloria Alvarado and Carmen Figueroa (medical assistants).

With the assistance of the HELPS in-country team, our Los Angeles team transformed empty rooms in a modest medical clinic into a small hospital in about four hours. The facilities included four operating rooms, a recovery area, a pharmacy, three medical offices, a three-chair dental office, a triage area and a dining room. Within five days, the team saw more than 1,000 patients and performed 90 surgeries.

The mission gave us the opportunity to help to make a difference in the lives of those patients we treated and provided many heartwarming memories. We were able to provide surgery for a 15-year-old girl who supported her family of seven by making tortillas. We treated many elderly patients who had never had access to any medical care. We also provided medical exams and Beanie Babies—collected by Dr. Dunnett's 13-year old niece—to many Guatemalan children.

Our trip was possible thanks to generous donations from CSMG and from our doctors, staff, families and friends. We are already looking forward to next year's mission and are recruiting more of our CSMG friends to join us.

¹ For more information about the HELPS International, visit their website at www.helpsintl.org



Welcome to Medicine in the 21st Century

Your doctor walks into the exam room to see you. He doesn't have your chart. He may not even have a pen. Why does this happen?



Howard Wynne, MD
Medical Director
Cedars-Sinai Medical Group
Internal Medicine



We're proud to announce that Cedars-Sinai Medical Group is in the midst of a dramatic and exciting change - one that will improve the services we provide our patients and make our physicians more efficient as well. Taking a big step into 21st century medicine, we are in the process of rolling out an electronic medical record (EMR) system. I am fortunate enough to be the first internist in the group to "go live" on the system. Our general surgeons, Dennis Wood, MD and Gregory Tsushima, MD have been using EMRs since February with great success, and we are now getting our general internists and other specialists up and running.

This is undoubtedly the most exciting development that has happened in my career. The introduction of the EMR changes and improves the way I practice medicine at a basic level, with a significant issue being penmanship. No one will ever have to struggle to decipher my tiny scribbles. Medication refills will soon be entirely electronic - from the pharmacy to our offices and back - without a phone call. I don't even carry a prescription pad in my pocket anymore. And best of all, I will always have ready access to your chart whenever you call or visit.

Of course, there are fancy bells and whistles, too. The next time you come in, I may show you a graph of your cholesterol levels over the past year or print out a handout on heartburn. From a practical standpoint, the EMR makes it much easier to track when you had your last mammogram or when you are due for another colonoscopy - no flipping through page after page in a chart that's falling apart.

That multiple individuals can view your chart simultaneously substantially improves the care we can provide you. No longer will you have to wait for the chart to come back from another physician's office or visit one of our specialists who does not have full access to your medical record.

In the end, there is no question that this is where the practice of medicine needs to go, and I can safely say that it will only get better from here.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group: This IS your grandma's doctor's office - technologically outfitted for the 21st century.

Medicare Part D

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month's penalty or five percent of the average monthly premium in a given year. For 2007, the average monthly premium is \$41.00

Beware of "doughnuts"

Medicare Part D aims to reduce drug costs for most enrollees and protect against catastrophic drug expenses. Following Medicare guidelines, every prescription drug plan sets its own premiums, deductibles, formularies and co-pays for specific drug prescriptions. Therefore, it is important that you know which drugs and the amount you take within a given year; which of these drugs are covered by your plan; what you will pay for your prescriptions; and whether your plan imposes any prescription restrictions such as quantity limits. Once you can approximate your drug costs for the year, you will be able to determine how the doughnut hole affects or doesn't affect you.

What is the doughnut hole? It is the coverage gap in the standard drug benefit offered by many Medicare prescription drug plans. Think of Medicare's standard drug benefit as a long staircase of drug costs, with each step representing one dollar. You must climb the first 265 steps alone. Then your plan joins you to climb to the 2,400th step. Between the 2,400th step and the 3,850th step, you are on your own. That is, you are responsible for paying for all your drug costs. This is the infamous doughnut hole. After the 3,850th step, your plan offers you a hand and helps you up the rest of the way. Your contribution during most of the climb is in the form of a deductible, co-pays and premiums, which vary by plan. If your plan offers no additional gap coverage, you will be responsible for 100 percent of your drug costs while in the doughnut hole gap.

Medicare prescription drug plans should send you monthly statements with information about your drug expenses. Be sure to request statements from your plan if you are not receiving them.

Drug coverage issues: Part B vs. Part D

Prescribed drugs are covered under all Parts A, B and D of Medicare. A major issue facing physicians, pharmacists, hospitals and Medicare beneficiaries has to do with knowing which drugs are covered under Parts B and that under Part D. Unfortunately, during Medicare's drug plan transition, there are no simple

answers. There are drugs which are covered by both Part B and Part D. Depending on the beneficiary's characteristics, how and where the drug was administered, and the diagnosis or medical condition for which the drug is being prescribed, it's difficult to figure out how the drug is going to be covered. Medicare has recently issued guidelines and a chart, and has indicated that drug plans may impose prior authorization requirements to sort out coverage issues.

High cost-sharing at the expense of preventive health

Paying high premiums, deductibles or co-pays can put a strain on your financial resources. These are cost-sharing techniques that plans use to offset their own expenses. High deductibles, unfortunately, have the unintended consequence of discouraging usage of preventive services for seniors. Avoiding high deductibles by skipping your preventive care only hurts you in the long run, and our goal at CSMG is to keep you healthy.

Conclusion

Finding the right prescription drug plan that satisfies your health and fiscal needs is clearly a major challenge. Despite unfavorable views among some seniors about the new Medicare Part D law, early experiences have been positive overall according to an April 2006 national poll.* CSMG is committed to bringing our seniors updated information and answering any questions to the best of our ability during this Medicare transition.

Need more information on Medicare Part D?

Visit www.medicare.gov for more information on online enrollment and drug plan comparisons or call 1-800-MEDICARE. Kaiser Family Foundation (not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente health plan) also provides an excellent Medicare Q&A weekly column at <http://kff.org/medicare/QA/index.cfm>.

* For more information, visit [Medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

Your Partner in Health

Since 1985, Cedars-Sinai Medical Group has been your Partner in Health, with more than 75 physicians providing primary care and a full array of specialty services, including:

- Cardiology
- Dermatology (medical and cosmetic)
- Endocrinology
- Ear, nose and throat (ENT)
- Executive Medical Services
- Gastroenterology
- General surgery
- Geriatric medicine
- Hand surgery
- Hematology/oncology
- Internal medicine
- Nephrology
- Obstetrics and gynecology
- Optometry, ophthalmology and LASIK vision correction
- Orthopedic surgery
- Pediatric medicine
- Plastic and reconstructive surgery
- Pulmonary medicine
- Rheumatology
- Sports medicine
- Disease-specific programs
- Women's health

Appointments: Please arrive 15 minutes early to check in. Call your doctor's office if you think you will be late; otherwise, it may be necessary to reschedule your appointment. Please call us 24 hours ahead of time if you need to cancel so we can schedule something more convenient for you. Also, please bring your current medications to every office visit.

Test Results: The time needed to receive laboratory test results varies depending on the test. During your visit, please ask your doctor how and when you will receive your results.

Prescription Refills: If you need a prescription refill, you will be served most quickly if your pharmacy calls or faxes your doctor's office directly during regular office hours. Please plan for it to take up to two working days for your refill(s) to be authorized.

Referral to a Specialist: Depending on your insurance, you may need a referral from your physician to see a specialist. If so, and your physician decides it is medically necessary, please allow seven to 10 working days for this process. All utilization management decision-making is based only on the appropriateness of care and service. None of our physicians or staff members are encouraged or rewarded (financially or otherwise) for issuing denials.

Insurance: Cedars-Sinai Medical Group accepts most health insurance plans and Medicare. Please check with your doctor's office to see which plan he or she accepts. Please bring your insurance card and co-payment (if required) to every doctor's office appointment.

Learn More about Us: You can learn more about your Cedars-Sinai Medical Group physician, office locations, telephone numbers, services and wellness classes on our website at www.cedars-sinaimedicalgroup.org.

For more information about Cedars-Sinai Medical Group, please contact Patient Services, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at (800) 700-6424.



Locations

To meet your needs, we are conveniently located in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles. Please call our offices during our hours of operation to schedule an appointment, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Urgent Care hours are from 5 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday.

Beverly Hills

200 N. Robertson Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Dermatology: (310) 385-3300
Hematology/Oncology: (310) 385-3297/385-3343
Internal Medicine: (310) 385-3262
Pediatrics: (310) 385-3345
Orthopedic Surgery/Sports Medicine: (310) 385-3326

250 N. Robertson Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Internal Medicine: (800) 700-6424
Vision Center: (310) 385-3450

99 N. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Endocrinology/Internal Medicine: (310) 385-3228
Gastroenterology: (310) 385-3506
Internal Medicine: (310) 385-3353
Obstetrics/Gynecology: (310) 385-3380

Los Angeles

5901 W. Olympic Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Internal Medicine: (800) 700-6424

8635 W. Third St.
Los Angeles, CA 90048
General Surgery: (310) 423-0289
Hand, Orthopedic, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery: (310) 423-5900
Nephrology/Internal Medicine: (310) 659-4320
Executive Medical Services: (310) 423-2374

Message from the CEO

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A systematic rollout to all of our medical offices will take place over the next 18 months. We recently completed successful pilots in several of our suites, including internal medicine and general surgery. Currently, the electronic medical record system is being installed in our internal medicine and ENT practices located on the 5th floor of the 250 N. Robertson building. Future phases will focus on our remaining internal medicine and specialty suites on the 6th floor of 250 N. Robertson, with an anticipated start date of October 2006. We will continue to bring the system to our other locations over the next year and expect to be fully electronic by the end of 2007.

All of us at Cedars-Sinai Medical Group are committed to providing excellent care and service to all of you, our patients, and we are excited about the benefits of this new system. Our physicians and staff are enthusiastic about what they have experienced so far and are eager to continue providing the best care to you using our new electronic medical record system.

Best regards,



Thomas D. Gordon
Chief Executive Officer

Continuous Quality Improvement

Voice of the Customer Program WE CARE

At CSMG, our Voice of the Customer Program allows you, our customer and patient, to provide us with feedback about the quality of care and services you have received. Your questions and concerns are important to us and we want to hear from you, so please call our Patient Services Department at (800) 700-6424. If you have any billing questions, please call (800) 851-0211.



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