



CEDARS-SINAI HOLIDAY TIP SHEET: Nov. – Dec. 2001

NEW IMAGING TEST OFFERS NON-INVASIVE ALTERNATIVE FOR PATIENTS WITH GASTROINTESTINAL BLEEDING

A new imaging test designed to find the cause of gastrointestinal bleeding is now being offered to patients at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The test involves swallowing a tiny camera-in-a-capsule that takes constant color pictures as it passes through the entire GI tract. The imaging capsule offers a pain-free and non-invasive alternative to patients who have not been able to be diagnosed with endoscopic and other conventional imaging tests. The capsule, about the size of a megavitamin, contains a camera, light source, radio transmitter and battery and works by transmitting pictures of the small intestine to a wireless recorder that the patient wears on a belt. Patients take the capsule in the morning and the images are downloaded to a computer where they can be read six to eight hours later. Simon Lo, M.D., head of the Pancreaticobiliary Research and Interventional Endoscopy program at Cedars-Sinai says that the imaging capsule has helped them find answers in about 75 percent of the difficult-to-diagnose cases. Dr. Lo is available for media interviews.

NEW EXPERIMENTAL DRUG SHOWN TO SLOW THE GROWTH OF PROSTATE CANCER TUMORS IN MICE

A new experimental drug has been found to slow the growth of prostate cancer tumors in laboratory studies conducted at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The findings, presented at the AACR-NCI-EORTC International Conference in Miami Beach, Florida, may lead to a new way to treat prostate cancer, a disease that strikes about 198,000 men each year. The drug, called 2C4, is a monoclonal antibody, or protein that enlists the body's immune system to attack foreign invaders, such as viruses or bacteria. Produced by Genentech, Inc., 2C4 targets HER-2/*neu*, a protein from the HER kinase family, that controls cell growth. When the HER-2/*neu* protein is expressed on cancer cells, it can stimulate tumor growth and spread.

COPING WITH DIABETES DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Holiday celebrations offer temptation for party-goers to abandon healthy nutrition habits, but calorie-laden festivities pose a special challenge to the 16 million Americans who have diabetes. "The key to successfully navigating the holiday season," says Riccardo Perfetti, M.D., Director of the Endocrine Training Program and of the Outpatient Diabetes and Weight Management programs at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, "is to remember that you can feast without forgetting about your diabetes. Focusing on friends and family instead of food, creates a new diabetes friendly holiday environment." Dr. Perfetti is available for media interviews on this topic.

COPING WITH DEPRESSION AND STRESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Holiday times can be especially difficult for someone who is depressed. In addition, the added stress of holiday planning, party-going, decorating and gift-giving can actually increase feelings of anxiety and a sense of inadequacy. Alan Schneider, M.D., Medical Director of the Psychiatry Department at Cedars-Sinai and an expert on coping with stress and depression, offers practical tips to help you survive – and enjoy – the holiday season.

SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT DURING THE HOLIDAYS

For many, holiday festivities can wreak havoc with the previous 11 months of carefully managed eating. Registered Dietitian Netty Levine, MS, RD, at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center's outpatient Nutrition Counseling Center, offers a "baker's dozen" of proven, practical tips on successful weight management during the holidays. From making sure that regular exercise is part of your holiday routine, to "scheduling" high-calorie days and planning for "strategic snacking," her tips are designed to help you enjoy seasonal festivities and still feel good about your weight loss plan later.

COPING WITH LONELINESS AND GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS

In spite of all the glamour and glitter connected to the holidays, those who have experienced the loss of a loved one during the preceding year often find the holidays to be a very difficult time. Medical experts from the Psychiatry Department at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center are available for media interviews, offering valuable tips that can help ease holiday blues and set the stage for a happier, more upbeat new year.

COPING WITH ALCOHOL DEPENDENCY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

It's no secret that the holidays present special challenges for recovering substance abusers and their families. From eggnog laced with alcohol, to New Year's Eve parties bubbling over with champagne, holiday "bowl" parties and even gifts of alcohol, it can be very difficult to enjoy the festivities without feeling like the proverbial party pooper. Jeff Wilkins, M.D., Director, Addiction Medicine Service and a chemical and alcohol dependency expert at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, offers practical tips and is available for interviews on this topic.

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To pursue any of these story ideas and arrange interviews with the experts, please e-mail sandy@vancommunications.com or call 1-800-880-2397. Thank you.