



CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER.

NEWS

Telephone: 1-800-880-2397
Media Contact: Sandra Van
E-mail: sandy@vancommunications.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 24, 2003

HIGHLIGHTS:

It may look like something out of a “Munsters-Meet-the-Jetsons” movie feature, but the bright blue neoprene face mask, connected to a laptop computer by a clear plastic tube is actually a high-tech medical testing device designed to help physicians at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center calculate an individual’s resting metabolic rate and then develop highly individualized weight loss and exercise programs that are customized to each individuals metabolism.

HEART TESTING TECHNOLOGY, PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE PRIMARILY TO PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES, IS NOW A VALUABLE FITNESS ASSESSMENT AND ENHANCEMENT TOOL FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 24, 2003) – It may look like something out of a “Munsters-Meet-the-Jetsons” movie feature, but the bright blue neoprene face mask, connected to a laptop computer by a clear plastic tube is actually a high-tech medical testing device designed to help physicians at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center develop highly individualized weight loss and exercise programs for their patients.

Colorful printouts from a nearby printer provide charts and graphs to visually depict accurate readings of the individual’s resting metabolic rate. (Resting metabolism is the rate at which a person burns energy – i.e. calories – doing everyday activities, such as sitting at the computer or sleeping. By increasing metabolism one can burn energy at a faster rate.) Based on these printouts and readings, physicians and counselors can create fitness and dietary programs that are unprecedented in the way they are customized to the patient’s own metabolism.

According to Donna Polk, M.D., Assistant Director of the Preventive and Rehabilitative Cardiac Center, the Ventilatory Oxygen Measurement Test (VO2) technology is not new – it has been used for several years by elite athletes seeking to maximize their athletic skills – but previous generations of it were cumbersome and awkward, making it impractical for use in more general settings. Today’s versions, though, have been miniaturized and made much more portable, so they are easily accessible to physicians who are involved in developing fitness and weight loss programs for their patients.

“The VO2 test enables physicians to accurately calculate how quickly or how slowly an individual “burns” calories by measuring – very precisely – the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide,” says Dr. Polk. “This means that we can create highly personalized weight loss and exercise programs based on that particular individual’s own metabolic rate.”

more

“This is the most precise way to determine the intensity at which a person should work out based on his or her fitness goals,” said Dr. Polk. “Now, through Cedars-Sinai, the technology is available to anyone embarking on a program to lose weight or achieve a higher level of fitness.”

The test itself is simple. Physicians first screen patients to make sure there are no cardiac risk factors to starting an exercise program. After the participant fasts overnight, a trained exercise physiologist administers the test by attaching a neoprene mask over the participant’s mouth and nose. The mouthpiece is connected to a laptop computer by a small tube. While the participant relaxes and breathes normally, the laptop measures the individual’s exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Physicians then can calculate when the patient becomes anaerobic, or begins burning oxygen at a deficit. From this information, doctors can calculate the patient’s resting metabolic rate and determine how many calories are needed by the patient to maintain or lose weight.

“We look at this as a much more medically-based and evidence-based way of developing individualized fitness programs for our patients,” Polk said. “In the long-term, this may help people have a better understanding of how to be more fit.”

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is one of the largest non-profit academic medical centers in the Western United States. For the fifth straight two-year period, Cedars-Sinai has been named Southern California's gold standard in health care in an independent survey. Cedars-Sinai is internationally renowned for its diagnostic and treatment capabilities and its broad spectrum of programs and services, as well as breakthrough in biomedical research and superlative medical education. It ranks among the top 10 non-university hospitals in the nation for its research activities.

###

If you have received this news release in error and do not wish to receive future advisories, or if they should be directed to someone else in your organization, please call 1-800-396-1002, so we can update our records. Alternatively, you may fax your updated information or your request for removal from our list to 808-263-3364 or e-mail it to sandy@vancommunications.com.