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HIGHLIGHTS:

Evan Ross, Board Certified Acupuncturist and Doctor of Oriental Medicine (NMBAOM), will be discussing complementary therapies to treat brain cancer at the upcoming conference “Outsmarting Brain Tumors,” sponsored by the Cedars-Sinai Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute on October 11, from 9 am to 4:30 p.m. Ross has had first hand experience with battling and beating one of the most deadly of all brain cancers – a Grade IV Glioblastoma Multiforme – an aggressive and often fatal brain tumor.

**ACUPUNCTURIST AND DOCTOR OF ORIENTAL MEDICINE DISCUSSES
COMPLEMENTARY APPROACHES TO TREAT BRAIN TUMORS AT THE CEDARS-SINAI
MAXINE DUNITZ NEUROSURGICAL INSTITUTE’S “OUTSMARTING BRAIN TUMORS”
CONFERENCE ON OCTOBER 11**

LOS ANGELES (October 7, 2003) – Diagnosed with a Grade IV Glioblastoma Multiforme, at the age of 25, Evan Ross didn’t have a lot of options. His doctors told him that he would have to undergo surgery, radiation, and extensive chemotherapy -- and even then, they gave him only a two percent chance to live. Faced with these options, he chose a different approach altogether: aggressive treatment of high dose chemotherapy with not one, but two, stem cell transplants combined with acupuncture and other complementary approaches. The chemotherapy and stem cell transplant killed cancer cells, while the complementary medicine enabled him to withstand the treatment with much fewer side effects. Eight-and-a-half years later, he is alive and well – practicing acupuncture and other complementary treatment approaches at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

“Although the treatment I chose to undergo was extreme,” said Ross, “complementing it with acupuncture, herbs, meditation, Tai Chi, Yoga and nutritional supplements enabled me to endure higher doses of chemotherapy at closer intervals with fewer side effects and a better quality of life during and after treatment.”

Now, he works closely with a number of physicians and surgeons at Cedars-Sinai to provide acupuncture and other complementary therapies for patients who are undergoing standard treatment for conditions such as chronic pain, cancer, and stroke rehabilitation. These treatments include acupuncture, herbs that are customized for the patient’s needs, nutritional counseling, supplements, basic exercises to improve circulation and increase energy, and guided imagery to address the psycho-spiritual needs of patients.

“Many of the therapies we are researching are intended to turn on the immune system, providing a natural defense against cancer. If complementary approaches can support the physical, emotional and spiritual

well-being of a patient, perhaps the immune system will be strengthened and this may increase the chances of a good outcome,” said Dr. Keith Black, a neurosurgeon and Director of the Cedars-Sinai Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute.

At the “Outsmarting Brain Tumors,” conference on October 11, Dr. Ross will discuss “Integrative Medicine,” as it relates to the treatment of brain tumors, and will address such issues as:

1. Types of complementary medicine that are available: Acupuncture, Ayurveda (Indian herbs), Chiropractic treatment, diet and nutrition, exercises such as Yoga, Qi Gong, guided imagery, healing touch, herbal medicine, homeopathy, meditation, nutritional supplements, etc.
2. How acupuncture has been clinically proven to reduce pain and nausea: Numerous studies have found that the placement of needles at various pressure points reduce pain and nausea.
3. Customizing treatment for the individual patient: “Customizing treatment for the individual patient is key,” said Ross, “as personality type, hobbies, and interests can all influence the type of complementary medicine that is right for the patient.”
4. Safe use of complementary therapies: To avoid problems with herb/drug interactions, Ross says that patients need to tell their physicians and complementary medicine practitioner what drugs and/or herbs they are taking. “Communication between practitioners is a must for conventional and complementary medicine to be integrated in a way that is safe for the patient. It’s also important that patients choose a practitioner who is Board certified in their area of specialty and who understand both herbal medicinals and pharmaceuticals,” said Ross.

“In my practice, I’ve found that regular and consistent complementary treatments help people do better,” commented Ross. “They will tolerate their conventional treatments and have a better quality of life.”

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. Named one of the 100 “Most Wired” hospitals in health care in 2001, the Medical Center ranks among the top 10 non-university hospitals in the nation for its research activities.

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