



## **CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL TIP SHEET: March 2003**

### **RADIATION AND INTRATUMORAL INJECTION TURN ON IMMUNE SYSTEM TO ATTACK BRAIN TUMOR CELLS**

Researchers at Cedars-Sinai's Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute are working to develop a non-surgical approach to brain cancer that combines radiation with the injection of specially cultured bone marrow cells into the tumor. The combination sets in motion a local and systemic immune response to kill surviving tumor cells. The novel approach has provided promising results in a study on rats, described in the March 3 issue of the *Journal of Immunotherapy*. Human trials are expected to begin this year.

### **DOCTORS AT CEDARS-SINAI REDUCE OXYGEN LEVELS TO PREVENT BLINDNESS IN PREMATURE BABIES WITHOUT ENDANGERING THEIR LIVES**

A study published in the February issue of *Pediatrics* finds that neonatologists at Cedars-Sinai can save the sight of premature babies by tight control of supplemental oxygen without endangering their lives. By reducing the oxygen saturation goals to a level more similar of what is achieved in the womb, doctors are able to "walk the tight rope" – closely monitoring the infants to avoid high blood oxygen levels that allows for appropriate development of blood vessels in the retina. The article indicates there were no statistically significant differences in mortality or in cerebral palsy among the children getting low oxygen compared with those babies treated prior to the protocol going into affect – and in fact, notes there appeared to be a trend showing fewer deaths and fewer cases of cerebral palsy.

### **STRESS AND PREGNANCY – WHAT EXPECTANT MOTHERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RISK OF PRETERM BIRTH AS A RESULT OF STRESS**

With increasing media coverage of the possibility of war, stress and anxiety across America is at an all time high. For women who are pregnant, increased stress levels during the first fourteen weeks can significantly increase the chance for preterm labor. Dr. Calvin Hobel, Director of Maternal Fetal Medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, has published research that indicates repeated stress during pregnancy has an additive and potentially detrimental effect on pregnancy by "resetting the placental clock" that is now thought to determine the time of delivery.

### **CEDARS-SINAI DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY SERVICES IS EXPERT ON MEDICAL ERRORS**

Rita Shane, Pharm.D., FASHP, FCSHP is Director of Pharmacy Services at Cedars-Sinai and Assistant Dean, Clinical Pharmacy Services, at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Pharmacy. An expert in patient safety and quality from a pharmacy perspective, Dr. Shane developed a clinical pharmacy intervention program in 1983 to document the role of pharmacists in preventing adverse drug events or medication errors. She and her staff have been active participants in the development of evidence-based medication guidelines at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. She is co-investigator of one of four 2000 National Patient Safety Foundation Research Awards to study "The Impact of Dedicated Medication Nurses upon the Rate of Medication Administration Errors: A Randomized, Controlled Trial". Her areas of interest are patient safety and defining quality and ensuring that patients receive optimal medication management regardless of where they access the healthcare system.

**CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER PREPARES TO MEET HIPAA PRIVACY DEADLINE**

Considered one of the most sweeping changes in health care legislation in the past 30 years, the Health Care Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations govern the privacy and security of health care information. After nearly 6 years since the Act was passed, regulations covering several portion of the Act have now been passed and will take effect at various times over the next few years. The first of the deadlines for HIPAA privacy rule compliance is April 14, 2003. The privacy rule regulates how hospitals maintain, use and disclose patient information. "Cedars-Sinai has always placed a high priority on protecting the confidentiality of its patients' medical information" says Helene DesRuisseaux, Chief Compliance and Privacy Officer. "However, this new regulation requires implementation of additional safeguards and issuance of notices to patients as to how the hospital can disclose their protected health information. In order to inform all of our physicians, nurses, staff and volunteers about these new requirements, they will all undergo HIPAA privacy training by March 31, 2003." Under the new rule, patients will have greater control of their information. For example, patients may choose to not be listed in the hospital's patient directory. Over the past 2 years, Cedars-Sinai has reviewed and developed strategies to meet HIPAA regulations through adjustments to policies, procedures, forms, and data collection.

**NEUROSURGEON KEITH BLACK TO RECEIVE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AWARD FROM MOREHOUSE COLLEGE**

Neurosurgeon and brain cancer researcher Keith L. Black, director of Cedars-Sinai's Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute, will receive Morehouse College's Candle Award Saturday, Feb. 15 in Atlanta. The ceremony, which will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, will celebrate the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the college. Proceeds from the gala benefit the Morehouse College Scholarship Fund.

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