



CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL TIP SHEET: May 2001

A NEW TREATMENT APPROACH INCREASES LIFE EXPECTANCY IN PATIENTS WITH ADVANCED BLADDER CANCER

A chemotherapy drug combination given prior to surgery to remove the bladder has been found to increase life expectancy in patients with locally advanced bladder cancer, reports Ronald B. Natale, M.D., Acting Medical Director at Cedars-Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Center, and principal investigator of the Southwest Oncology Group sponsored study.

NEUROSURGEON KEITH L. BLACK RECEIVES ESSENCE AWARD; CEREMONY TO BE BROADCAST NATIONALLY ON FOX TELEVISION

Keith L. Black, M.D., neurosurgeon and founder of Cedars-Sinai's Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute, received an Essence Award during ceremonies at New York City's Madison Square Garden Friday, April 27. The sold-out awards program is scheduled to air nationally from 8 to 10 p.m. Thursday, May 24 on FOX-TV. Dr. Black received the award for his "pioneering work in medicine and saving the lives of people worldwide," according to the letter of notification. Editors of Essence magazine chose the recipients.

PROTEIN FOUND IN BRAIN CELLS MAY SHED NEW LIGHT ON THE CAUSE OF DYSTONIA – A SEVERE NEUROLOGIC DISORDER THAT CAUSES INVOLUNTARY MUSCLE SPASMS AND TWISTING OF THE LIMBS

Researchers at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center have identified a new protein in brain cells that may help to regulate muscle control and movement. The protein, called torsinB, is closely related to torsinA – a protein that in its defective form – has been linked to the development of early-onset dystonia, a neurologic disorder that causes involuntary muscle spasms and twisting of the limbs. The finding, reported at the 53rd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Neurology, may bring researchers one step closer to understanding how dystonia occurs, ultimately enabling them to develop new therapies to treat the disease.

SUSPICIONS RANGED FROM FLU TO EYE PROBLEMS TO MIGRAINES: 6-YEAR-OLD'S LIFE BACK TO NORMAL AFTER SURGERY TO REMOVE BRAIN TUMOR

Within 24 hours of being diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor (a pilocytic astrocytoma), 6-year-old Isabella Gutierrez was undergoing surgery performed by a pediatric neurosurgeon who delayed the start of his vacation to do the operation. The youngster, whose symptoms appeared – and worsened – suddenly, also rebounded from the seven-hour surgery quickly. From being unable to walk before the operation, she now walks normally, her double vision has gone away, and she has no more headaches and no more vomiting. Best of all, because neurosurgeons were able to completely remove the tumor, the likelihood of its recurring is very small.

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