

Media Contact: Glenda Collins  
E-mail: [glenda.collins@cshs.org](mailto:glenda.collins@cshs.org)  
Telephone: 310-423-2103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 17, 2004

**MEDICAL TIP SHEET – AUGUST 2004 – To pursue any of these story ideas, please call 310-423-2103. Thank you.**

==

#### **PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS URGED TO SUPPORT 2004 NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH PLATFORM**

Urging both major political parties to increase significantly the national emphasis on women's health care and research, a nationwide coalition of women's health leaders has submitted an action agenda to the platform committees of the Democrats and Republicans. Dr. C. Noel Bairey Merz is available for interviews.

#### **NEW MINIMALLY INVASIVE APPROACH TO UPPER LUMBAR FUSION SURGERY REDUCES COMPLICATION RISK**

Surgeons who perform minimally invasive spine fusion surgery find access to the upper portion of the lumbar spine difficult because major blood vessels, nerves and important muscles are situated in the way of the usual approaches. In the August issue of the journal *Spine*, surgeons describe a new, more direct approach that simplifies the procedure and reduces the risk of potentially serious complications. Dr. John Regan is available for interviews.

#### **STUDY SHOWS THAT FLUORESCENCE SPECTROSCOPY CAN DISTINGUISH BRAIN TUMOR FROM NORMAL TISSUE**

When neurosurgeons attempt to remove the deadliest type of brain tumor, glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) nothing is more important – or more challenging – than distinguishing normal tissue from tumor. Magnetic resonance and other imaging techniques are helpful, but new biophotonics technology being developed by scientists at Cedars-Sinai and the University of Southern California may provide nearly instantaneous identification of types of tissue and progression of disease, even during surgery. Initial laboratory results are described in the July/August issue of *Photochemistry and Photobiology*. Dr. Keith Black and Dr. Laura Marcu are available for interviews.

#### **VACCINE TARGETING CANCER-RELATED ANTIGENS IN BRAIN TUMORS APPEARS TO PROLONG SURVIVAL**

Researchers at Cedars-Sinai's Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute have linked three cancer-related antigens to the deadliest type of malignant brain tumors. They have been able to target these antigens using an immune-based vaccine, significantly extending patient survival. Details are published in two articles in the July 15 issue of *Cancer Research*. Dr. Keith Black and Dr. John Yu are available for interviews.

### **JOURNAL *CANCER*: PROTEIN SHIFT PREDICTS BRAIN CANCER GRADE, RECURRENCE AND PATIENT SURVIVAL**

A molecular change that occurs as brain tumors progress may give clinicians a way to more precisely evaluate tumor grade and more effectively predict time to recurrence and length of patient survival. Because the protein involved appears to encourage the growth of blood vessels that support tumor development, it is considered a potential target for therapeutic intervention. Results of the study appear in the August issue of *Cancer*. Dr. Keith Black and Dr. Julia Ljubimova are available for interviews.

### **WASHINGTON FAMILY SCHOLARS ARRIVE WITH IMPRESSIVE CREDENTIALS AND EYES TO THE FUTURE**

The first two recipients of the Pauletta and Denzel Washington Family Gifted Scholars Program in Neuroscience have started their work at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. A 26-year-old from Oakland, who recently earned his medical degree, is conducting research on the immune system. An 18-year-old recent high school graduate from Fort Worth, Texas, is investigating the blood-brain barrier. Both arrived with outstanding abilities, talents and motivation, and are available for interviews.

### **CEDARS-SINAI RE-DESIGNATED A MAGNET HOSPITAL FOR ENHANCING NURSES' GROWTH, PATIENT CARE**

After a thorough site survey and interviews with staff, physicians, patients and community organizations, the largest nursing credentialing organization in the United States has re-designated Cedars-Sinai Medical Center a Magnet hospital. Studies show that Magnet hospitals tend to have lower mortality and infection rates along with higher patient satisfaction and nurse staffing levels. The American Nurses Credentialing Center found that Cedars-Sinai's nursing services "represent the highest standards in the nation and internationally." Dr. Linda Burnes-Bolton is available for interviews.

### **BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY: AVOIDING BACKPACK INJURY**

Despite parents' best efforts to protect their children from getting hurt, one of the greatest sources of potential injury often gets overlooked even when it's in plain sight: the backpack. Considered the most efficient way to carry books and other items that kids need for school, when it's overstuffed, it may actually be causing the pain and fatigue that as many as 50 percent of kids today are experiencing. Dr. Avrom Gart offers tips on back safety for kids.

For more information on other Cedars-Sinai's programs and services, please visit [www.cedars-sinai.edu](http://www.cedars-sinai.edu) or call 1-800-CEDARS-1 (1-800-233-2771).

---

If you have received this advisory 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. 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](mailto:sandy@vancommunications.com).