

MEDICAL TIP SHEET – MAY 2004

‘KNOWING THE NUMBERS’ ADDS UP TO BETTER HEALTH FOR WOMEN SCREENED REGULARLY

With diabetes, cholesterol levels and obesity all on the rise, even in women as young as in their 20s, Dr. C. Noel Bairey Merz and the Women’s Health Resource Center at Cedars-Sinai offer timely suggestions on 14 screenings and steps women can take to improve their own health. Screenings include blood pressure readings, cholesterol levels, weight, body fat percentages and glucose readings as well as recommendations as to when to have a mammogram or colorectal screening and more.

BAKERSFIELD COUPLE ATTRIBUTE BIRTH OF HEALTHY BABY TO PRENATAL DIAGNOSIS AT CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER

Genetic screening tests available today have greatly increased couples’ ability to predict the likelihood of genetic disorders in their offspring. Testing is available to patients in various situations—women over age 35 who are worried about chromosomal problems like Down Syndrome, patients exposed to potentially harmful medications or chemicals, couples with a family history or previous child with a birth defect, pregnancies where an abnormal ultrasound finding is detected, or couples at increased risk of ethnic-related genetic disorders. Dr. John Williams, III, is available to discuss the latest in prenatal screenings and diagnosis.

RESEARCHERS DEFINE MECHANISM THAT ENABLES STEM CELLS TO TRACK MIGRATING BRAIN TUMOR CELLS

Neural stem cells, which have the ability to track deadly brain cancer cells as they migrate from a tumor to form new satellites, are potential transporters to deliver cancer-killing agents. In the May/June issue of *Neoplasia*, researchers from Cedars-Sinai’s Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute identify the type of stem cells that have this capacity and describe a mechanism that turns on the tumor-tracking activity – important findings in the translation of laboratory results into the clinic.

NEW HIGH-TECH HIP REPLACEMENT TECHNIQUE OFFERED AT CEDARS-SINAI REDUCES ORDEAL OF SURGERY AND RECOVERY TIME

Although hip replacement surgery has enabled thousands of Americans crippled by arthritis to eventually walk again, many have faced a slow and painful recovery time. Now, a new minimally invasive hip replacement procedure is changing all of that. The procedure involves the use of two small incisions and very small surgical instruments, enabling surgeons to navigate between muscles, tendons and ligaments rather than cutting through soft tissue. Patients not only recover quicker, but they’re usually out of the hospital in a couple of days.

AGUSTIN GARCIA, M.D., APPOINTED AS NEW DIRECTOR OF BREAST CANCER RESEARCH AT THE WOMEN'S CANCER RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER

Agustin Garcia, M.D., has been appointed as Director of Breast Cancer Research at the Women's Cancer Research Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. Prior to joining Cedars-Sinai, Dr. Garcia was on faculty at the University of Southern California. In his new role, Dr. Garcia will focus on the early detection, prevention and treatment of breast cancer. To this end, he will collaborate with other physician/scientists throughout the Medical Center to bring the most innovative lab discoveries directly to women with or at risk for breast cancer.

CEDARS-SINAI NURSING INSTITUTE INTEGRATES EDUCATION INTO NEW, NOVEL APPROACHES TO NURSING SHORTAGE & RETENTION

In the face of increasingly acute nursing shortages, 20-40 percent attrition rates in most nursing programs, and an educational system that can produce only about half of the nurses needed, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles has launched an ambitious and innovative model designed to beat these dire odds. The Institute for Professional Nursing Development opened in June 2002, and is already helping to meet the needs of local nursing schools and students, while simultaneously creating a larger, more highly educated pool of nurses for the future.

CEDARS-SINAI'S DIRECTOR OF PULMONARY AND CRITICAL CARE OFFERS TIPS FOR SEASONAL ALLERGY SUFFERERS

This Spring's burst of color — a spectacular display of buds and blossoms — comes hand-in-hand with a bumper crop of airborne pollens and mold spores, due in part to winter's heavy rains and higher than normal temperatures. For those with allergies, Zab Mosenifar, M.D., Director of Pulmonary and Critical Care at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, offers tips for circumventing Mother Nature at this time of year.

MAJOR STUDY: BIOARTIFICIAL LIVER REDUCES MORTALITY BY 44% IN ACUTE LIVER-FAILURE PATIENTS

A bioartificial liver developed by researchers at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center reduced mortality significantly among patients suffering from acute liver failure, according to a clinical trial conducted at 20 centers in the United States and Europe. With a complex filtering system that incorporates liver cells from pigs, the bioartificial liver cleanses and nourishes the blood to prolong life while an injured liver recuperates or a donor organ becomes available for transplantation. Study results are published in the May issue of *Annals of Surgery*.

MEMORIES OF PATIENTS' GRATITUDE ARE PROMINENT AS CEDARS-SINAI STAFF MEMBERS READY FOR MEDICAL MISSION TO GUATEMALA IN MAY

For Dr. Alan Lefor, the May 15-24 trip will mark his sixth journey to Guatemala as part of a medical team with HELPS International, a nonprofit organization that supports and facilitates volunteer work in Central America. Dr. Lefor will lead the Los Angeles-based team, made up in large part of physicians, nurses, operating room support staff and other non-medical personnel from Cedars-Sinai. The team is one of nearly a dozen from around the U.S. who visit the nation each year.

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

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