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PROSTATE CANCER PATIENTS SOUGHT FOR DATABASE AS PART OF JOINT EFFORT AT CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER AND CENTINELA FREEMAN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER IN INGLEWOOD

Researchers at both medical centers hope data will help them understand the biology of prostate cancer and lead to the development of future treatments.

(LOS ANGELES, CA) August 11, 2006 – Men with prostate cancer and their spouses/significant others are being sought for a joint study being conducted by two Los Angeles-area medical centers as part of a collaborative effort to better understand the genetics of the disease. Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer in men.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center's Louis Warschaw Prostate Cancer Center at the Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute in Los Angeles is seeking participants for its Prostate Patient Profiles Project, in conjunction with Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center, Memorial Campus in Inglewood. The goal of the Prostate Patient Profiles Project is to collect blood and tissue samples as well as medical information from men with prostate cancer and their spouses/significant others. It is hoped that the data collected will help doctors better understand the biology of prostate cancer as well as to study the factors that influence how different types of prostate cancers respond to treatment.

By teaming with Centinela Freeman's Memorial Campus and its Urban Latino African American Cancer (ULAAC) Disparities Grant, researchers from Cedars-Sinai hope to reach a broad demographic range of patients, including underserved members of the community who may have difficulty gaining access to health care.

The ULAAC program, at Centinela Freeman, focuses on improving access to cancer clinical trials with patient navigators who help patients understand the treatment protocols, access treatment, and help patients deal with the physical and emotional aspects of a cancer diagnosis and treatment. It is hypothesized that minorities have worse cancer outcomes than whites because they reside too far from the traditional university setting where clinical trials are readily available. The ULAAC project not only brings clinical studies to the local community, but also helps patients access these trials through the navigator program, notes Michael Steinberg, M.D., principal investigator for the Centinela Freeman ULAAC project.

"This data collection project is being undertaken because very little is known about what causes some individuals to develop cancer while others don't," said David B. Agus, M.D., research director for the Louis Warschaw Prostate Cancer Center and co-principal investigator on the project with Ronald Shazer, M.D.

"Once we better understand the genetic and proteomic patterns of men with prostate cancer, we hope to be able to develop more targeted, more individualized – and ultimately, more effective --

treatments for prostate and other cancers,” Dr. Agus said.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age and have prostate cancer and/or prostate disease. For the project, participants will be asked to give approximately four tablespoons of blood during routine blood work. Participants also will be asked to allow tissue removed in any surgeries that would otherwise be discarded to be stored in the repository for future research purposes. This tissue is taken during a scheduled surgery or from a stored sample from a prior surgery; no additional tissue will be removed solely for research purposes. Participants also provide their medical histories and fill out questionnaires. Spouses/significant others that agree to participate will give blood and fill out a questionnaire. If they have been diagnosed with cancer and have a stored tissue sample from a prior surgery, they can give permission to access these samples.

“Participating in this data collection study will not impact any treatment the prostate cancer patients are currently undergoing,” said Dr. Agus. “Rather, it will be used in laboratory settings for studies that will determine cellular growth characteristics of cancer cells, gene and protein expression, and help researchers develop more effective treatment approaches to fighting – and perhaps curing – cancer in the future.”

Prostate cancer is not only the most common form of cancer in men, it is the second leading cause of cancer-related death among men living in the United States. Current treatments include surgery, radiation and hormone treatment as well as “watchful waiting.” Risk factors include age, ethnicity and family history.

“Prostate cancer is prevalent in our population and studies aimed at early detection will be extremely beneficial,” said Dr. Steinberg. “We hope that our patient’s involvement in these studies will help to provide better access to a continuum of cancer care.”

Those who are interested in participating in the Prostate Patient Profiles Project can call Cedars-Sinai Medical Center at 310-423-7600 or Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center, Memorial Campus at (310) 674-7050 ext. 4664.

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ABOUT CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER

The first of seven hospitals in California whose nurses have been honored with the prestigious Magnet designation, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is one of the largest nonprofit academic medical centers in the Western United States. For 18 consecutive years, it has been named Los Angeles’ most preferred hospital for all health needs in an independent survey of area residents. Cedars-Sinai is internationally renowned for its diagnostic and treatment capabilities and its broad spectrum of programs and services, as well as breakthroughs in biomedical research and superlative medical education. It ranks among the top 10 non-university hospitals in the nation for its research activities and is fully accredited by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP). Additional information is available at www.cedars-sinai.edu.

ABOUT CENTINELA FREEMAN HEALTHSYSTEM

Local hospital administrators, physicians and community leaders established Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center in 2004 to provide the community with locally owned and operated health care services. The HealthSystem owns and operates Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center; Centinela campus, Memorial campus and Marina campus, along with the Centinela Airport Medical Clinic. The hospitals offer a broad range of medical programs including cardiac, orthopedics, spine care, neurosurgery, oncology, pediatric and obstetrical services. Centinela Freeman Regional Medical Center is also the official hospital of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Lakers, Sparks, Clippers, Avengers and Galaxy. Additional information is available at www.centinelafreeman.com.

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