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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 20, 2004

MEDICAL TIP SHEET – OCTOBER 2004 - To pursue any of these story ideas, please call Glenda Collins at 310-423-2103. Thank you.

SPECIALIST SUGGESTS PREGNANT WOMEN REQUEST INFLUENZA VACCINE TO PROTECT BOTH MOM AND BABY

Women who are expecting a baby should be considered high priority during this season when the Flu vaccine is in short supply, and should seek an influenza vaccine as soon as possible. Influenza vaccines do not have adverse effects on fetuses, and they have been shown to dramatically decrease health risks for mothers and their newborns, says Neil S. Silverman, M.D., a high-risk obstetrician who specializes in infectious diseases during pregnancy. Dr. Silverman is available for interviews.

USE OF OVER-THE-COUNTER AT-HOME DEFIBRILLATORS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY LEADING CARDIOLOGIST

An estimated 70-80 percent of cardiac arrests occur at home, often suddenly and without warning. While cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can buy some time as families wait for paramedics, the only way to actually re-start the heart with a jolt of electricity is by using a defibrillator. Experts estimate that every minute spent waiting for a defibrillator lowers the chance of survival by 10 percent, so the sooner it can be used after a cardiac arrest, the better. Last week, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) approved for the first time, the sale of an over-the-counter defibrillator. This is the first time at-home defibrillators have been available without a physician prescription. P. K. Shah, M.D., Director of Cardiology, is available for interviews.

BEATING THE ODDS, PATIENT CAN HEAR AFTER LARGE BENIGN TUMOR IS REMOVED FROM INNER EAR

When an acoustic neuroma – a benign tumor that grows on a nerve extending from the brainstem to the inner ear – is discovered when it is two centimeters or larger in size, there is very little chance that hearing in the ear can be saved. But a 43-year-old mother of two who had a three-centimeter tumor removed has regained about 68 percent of normal hearing. Her operation was performed by specialists from Cedars-Sinai's Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute and the House Ear Clinic in Los Angeles. Keith Black, M.D., Director of the Institute, is available for interviews, as is the patient.

**KEITH BLACK, M.D., AND CEDARS-SINAI MAXINE DUNITZ NEUROSURGICAL INSTITUTE
HOST "OUTSMARTING BRAIN TUMORS" CONFERENCE**

A variety of specialists from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and its Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute, as well as guest speakers from the Children's Center for Cancer and the House Ear Clinic, will present the latest information on research and treatment for adult and pediatric brain tumors. The Oct. 23 conference is designed to educate brain tumor patients and their caregivers about the latest surgical and non-surgical treatments available, and to provide information on alternative therapies and practical matters related to treatment and recovery. Keith Black, M.D., Director of the Institute, is available for interviews.

**RESEARCHERS AT CEDARS-SINAI REPORT THAT TWO SPECIFIC PROTEINS DELIVERED
VIA A GENETICALLY ENGINEERED VIRUS PREVENTED THE PROGRESSIVE LOSS OF
NERVE CELLS THAT CAUSE PARKINSON'S DISEASE IN LABORATORY RATS**

Researchers at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center have found that two specific proteins - "Sonic Hedgehog" and Gli-1" - delivered via a genetically engineered virus into the brains of laboratory rats, prevented the progressive degeneration of nerve cells in the brain that cause Parkinson's disease. The study, published in the September issue of the journal, Molecular Therapy, may lead to a new way to treat patients with advanced Parkinson's disease. Pedro Lowenstein, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Gene Therapeutics Research Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is available for interviews.

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