

JULY
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UConn House Call

REMARKABLE CARE THROUGH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

THWARTING AMERICA'S NO. 1 KILLERS: CANCER AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Cancer and cardiovascular disease are by far America's biggest killers. In 2004, approximately 926,000 people under age 85 died from cancer or cardiovascular disease, with cancer having a slight lead with 476,000 deaths. But the good news is that overall mortality rates for both diseases continue to drop, and people with cancer and cardiovascular disease are living longer.

Cancer Prevention

"Prevention—particularly tobacco control efforts—as well as early detection and prompt treatment have been and continue to be the real keys to eliminating cancer," says Carolyn D. Runowicz, M.D., director of the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at the UConn Health Center. "Furthermore, ongoing research is allowing us to shift the paradigm from early detection and treatment to prevention based on an individual's risk factors. For example, we can now identify people at high risk for breast and colon cancer and begin risk-reduction strategies before they get cancer. About 60 percent of all cancer is preventable, so we are directing our resources where they will make the biggest impact."

Deterring Cardiovascular Disease

Breakthrough research and treatments have equally benefited patients with cardiovascular disease. "Efforts toward early treatment and prevention of cardiovascular disease are paying off," says Bruce Liang, M.D., director of the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center at the UConn Health Center. "From 1992 to 2002, death rates from cardiovascular disease declined 18 percent. Improved diagnostics, effective drug regimens and minimally invasive procedures have all contributed to this decrease. However, some segments of the population haven't seen dramatic reductions. For example, cardiovascular disease is still by far the number one killer of women in America, proving that there is more work to be done."

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UConn
Health
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Remarkable Care Through
Research and Education

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Healthy Habits

What can you do to reduce your chances of developing cancer and cardiovascular disease? These healthy lifestyle habits can reduce your risk for both diseases:

- Don't smoke.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat more than five servings of fruits or vegetables per day.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- See your doctor for regular checkups.

For more information or to make an appointment with a UConn physician, call UConnLink at 800-535-6232 (679-7692, locally).



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CANCER AND
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE, VISIT:

The Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at www.cancer.uhc.edu/

The American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org

The National Cancer Institute at www.nci.nih.gov

The Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center at www.heart.uhc.edu/

The American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at www.nhlbi.nih.gov

JOINING FORCES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

The UConn Health Center and the American Cancer Society (ACS), New England Division, have signed a collaborative agreement to work together on a number of key initiatives, including:

- Educating medical providers on new advances in cancer care
- Networking within the community to share new information about cancer care
- Providing supportive services to patients at the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Promoting awareness about cancer among employees at the UConn Health Center

“The UConn Health Center and ACS share an unwavering commitment to fight cancer,” says Carolyn D. Runowicz, M.D., director of the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at UConn. Dr. Runowicz is currently president-elect of the national office of the American Cancer Society.

SNORE NO MORE: NEW PROCEDURE STOPS SNORING AT THE SOURCE

Good sleep is as important to good health as proper nutrition and regular exercise, but if you snore, you're not getting the best rest—and neither is your bed partner. Surveys indicate that approximately one-third of older adults snore regularly, often due to a condition called sleep apnea.

However, a new minimally invasive procedure, called the Pillar procedure, is helping people who snore and their partners get better sleep. In September 2004, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the Pillar procedure for the treatment of mild sleep apnea. At the UConn Health Center, ear, nose and throat specialist Jeffrey Spiro, M.D., is offering this in-office procedure.

Snoring is caused when the soft palate, the skin at the upper back of the throat, vibrates during sleep. The new Pillar procedure stiffens the soft palate, thereby preventing vibrations. “This procedure aims to eliminate snoring by going right to the soft palate,” says Dr. Spiro. “Unlike earlier procedures, which focused on removing part of the soft palate, the Pillar procedure appears to be a more durable, long-term approach. Another advantage is that it does not require multiple steps like earlier procedures—the Pillar procedure is completed during one office visit.”

During the procedure, Dr. Spiro places three small inserts in the soft palate. The inserts are designed to be permanent. Once in place, the



PREVENTING STROKE:

NEW FDA-APPROVED PROCEDURE NOW AVAILABLE AT THE UCONN HEALTH CENTER

Each year, approximately 700,000 people suffer a new or recurring stroke. Stroke may occur as the result of carotid artery disease. The carotid arteries are the large blood vessels on the side of the neck that act as the brain's main blood supply. Carotid artery disease occurs when the arteries become clogged with fatty deposits, called atherosclerotic plaque. Until recently, if the carotid arteries were clogged, the only option to prevent a stroke was major surgery—called carotid endarterectomy—that opened the artery and removed the atherosclerotic plaque.

However, a new minimally invasive procedure to open carotid artery blockages is now offered at the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center at the UConn Health Center. Endovascular surgeon Michael S. Dahn, M.D., is the first surgeon in Connecticut to offer patients the procedure, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, called carotid angioplasty.

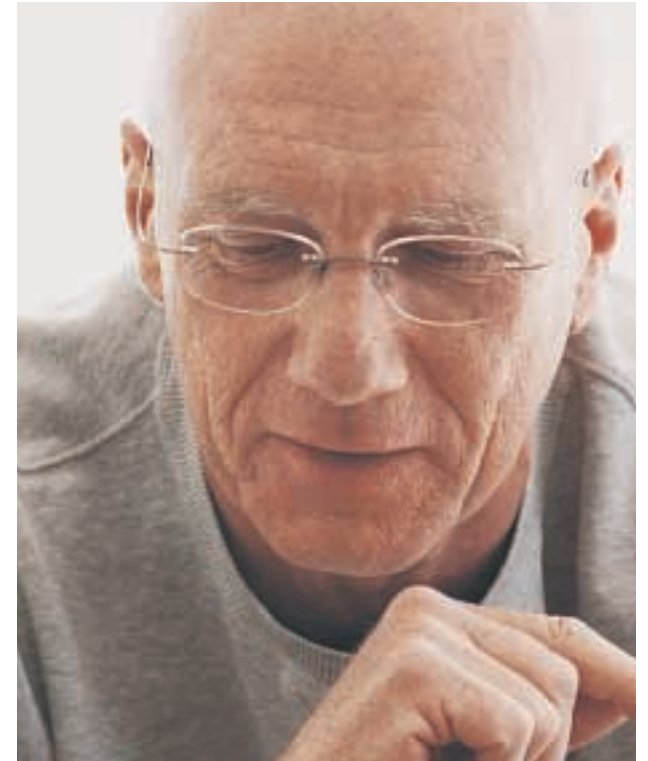
Advantages of Carotid Angioplasty

“Carotid angioplasty is a minimally invasive procedure, so it's easier on patients, especially

people who may not be good candidates for major surgery,” explains Dr. Dahn. “Several studies have found that carotid stenting is just as effective as endarterectomy, but the complication risk is substantially lower for patients who also may be suffering from cardiac and respiratory disorders. Compared to endarterectomy, carotid angioplasty requires less time, a much smaller incision and no general anesthesia. It also offers reduced discomfort and a shorter recovery time. Furthermore, older patients seem to fare better with minimally invasive carotid angioplasty.”

How It Works

“In carotid angioplasty, a tiny deflated balloon is attached to a catheter that is inserted in the groin artery and threaded through the arteries to the narrowed carotid artery,” says Melih Arici, M.D., an interventional radiologist at the UConn Health Center who participates in the procedure. “The balloon is then inflated, opening the narrowed area. When the artery is sufficiently open, a metal stent is placed in the artery to maintain the opening. Patients remain awake during the procedure and usually go home the next day.”



For more information about carotid angioplasty or for a physician referral, call UConnLink at 800-535-6232 (679-7692, locally).



inserts add structural support to the soft palate. Over time, the body's natural tissue response to the inserts increases the stiffness of the soft palate, thus reducing the ability of the palate to vibrate easily.

“The inserts are made of a type of polyester that has been used in implantable medical devices for many years and seems to be very well tolerated,” says Dr. Spiro. “The availability of this procedure is good news for people who want to stop snoring—and even better news for their partners.”

For more information about the Pillar procedure or for an appointment, call UConnLink at 800-535-6232 (679-7692, locally).

THE UCONN HEALTH CENTER IN TOP 100 OF PERFORMANCE LEADERS NATIONWIDE

The UConn Health Center is one of only 100 hospitals to be named a Performance Improvement Leader (PIL). The recognition is the result of findings in a recent study, "Solucient's 100 Top Hospitals®: Performance Improvement Leaders, 2nd Edition," which appeared in the April 25 issue of *Modern Healthcare* and covers the years 1999 through 2003.

PIL hospitals accept the challenge to initiate change, build a culture receptive to improvement and generate permanent improvement. The top 100 hospitals recognized have improved faster and more consistently than their peers across the nation. "These hospitals are increasing the value they bring to their communities year over year," says Jean Chenoweth, senior vice president of the Center for Healthcare Improvement at Solucient.

"The PIL award is not due to the work of any one individual," says Steven Strongwater, M.D., the UConn Health Center hospital director. "It is the result of everyone who interacts directly with patients or who supports patient care. The average patient comes in contact with 60 people during a hospitalization. Every step of the process has to work for care to be ideal.

"Our staff and physicians have been committed to excellence in patient care for many years. This award gives us all a sense that our hard work is paying off. It's sometimes hard to appreciate how much progress we have made in improving care."

SOLUCIENT
TOP HOSPITALS
Performance Improvement Leaders

TWO NEW STUDIES AT THE UCONN HEALTH CENTER FOCUS ON PATIENTS WITH HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

The UConn Health Center is offering two new clinical studies to help patients with high blood pressure. Both studies are being conducted by William B. White, M.D., of the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center. Dr. White is a nationally recognized expert in the treatment of hypertension and blood pressure monitoring.

One study is designed for men and women between ages 40 and 60 with high blood pressure and will compare the efficacy of two already-approved blood pressure medications. In all, the study will last about 16 weeks, and participants will receive all visits, lab tests, examinations and medications free of charge.

The second study will look at a new, FDA-approved medication to help control resistant hypertension. "This study is ideal for people who are having difficulty managing their high blood pressure, despite the use of two or more

medications," says Dr. White. "Getting high blood pressure safely under control is a critically important step to reducing a person's risk for stroke and heart disease." This study also will last about 16 weeks, and participants will receive all visits, lab tests, examinations and medications free of charge.

Dr. White is conducting the new studies through the UConn Health Center's Clinical Trials Unit. For more information, call Dr. White or Sharon Giacco at 860-679-4116.

QUICK TIP

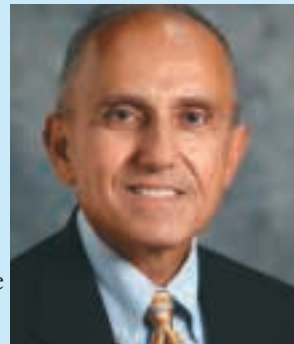
If you're using an anti-inflammatory drug to treat arthritis or pain, get your blood pressure checked within two to four weeks of beginning the drug, advises Dr. White.

INTRODUCING...

James O. Menzoian, M.D., a nationally recognized vascular surgeon from Boston Medical Center and a prominent professor of surgery at Boston University School of Medicine, has joined the UConn Health Center.

At UConn, Dr. Menzoian offers patients expertise in a range of vascular procedures. He also serves as a professor of surgery with the UConn School of Medicine and medical director of a new initiative to foster and promote excellence, called the Collaborative Center for Clinical Care Improvement.

For nearly two decades, Dr. Menzoian was chief of the section of vascular surgery at Boston Medical Center. Dr. Menzoian is a graduate of the SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn and completed his surgical internship, residency and fellowship at Boston University School of Medicine, before joining the faculty in 1976.



James O. Menzoian, M.D.

Malini Iyer, M.B.B.S., M.S., F.R.C.S., a general surgeon with expertise in breast health, has joined the UConn Health Center. Dr. Iyer sees patients at the Health Center's John Dempsey Hospital and the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center.



Malini Iyer, M.B.B.S., M.S., F.R.C.S.

Along with her surgical responsibilities, she is an assistant professor of surgery with the UConn School of Medicine, where she completed her surgical internship and residency in 2000.

Dr. Iyer completed medical and surgical training at All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, as well as additional training in Edinburgh, before completing her surgical internship and residency at the UConn School of Medicine. In addition, Dr. Iyer completed a research fellowship in surgical oncology at the University of Pennsylvania. Before joining UConn Health Center, she was a surgeon in eastern Connecticut.