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CONSULTS

NEWS FOR PHYSICIANS FROM THE UCONN HEALTH CENTER

Introducing the New Center for Joint Preservation

The New England Musculoskeletal Institute now offers the innovative Center for Joint Preservation, under the direction of orthopaedic surgeon and joint replacement expert R. Michael Meneghini, M.D.

“Joint preservation includes a variety of operative and non-operative treatment regimens for younger patients with arthritis of the hip or knee, ranging from physical therapy and medical interventions to procedures such as knee osteotomy or hip resurfacing,” says Dr. Meneghini, who joined UConn’s New England Musculoskeletal Institute earlier this year.

“Because we can now recognize the precursors to arthritis, we can intervene when patients are as young as their 20s and 30s and hopefully prolong the use of the joints they were born with, potentially postponing the need for a hip or knee replacement,” he adds.

Early-onset osteoarthritis in the hip usually originates from either impingement or developmental dysplasia, Dr. Meneghini notes. Hip impingement, also known as femoroacetabular impingement, is a relatively common abnormality that has been more recently appreciated and recognized in the past 10 years. The problem affects mostly men and is likely responsible for the vast majority of osteoarthritis of the hip

in men who are treated with total hip replacement between the ages of 30 and 55.

If the hip has not degenerated too far, impingement may be treated by surgical procedures that involve trimming the excess portion of the front of the socket and reshaping the junction between the head and neck of the femur to give the joint more clearance and relieve the impingement.

“It has not been conclusively determined whether these surgical procedures will be able to postpone hip degeneration and ultimately hip replacement surgery. However, if done in the right individual with the correct diagnosis, the procedure has been shown to successfully alleviate pain and improve function,” he says. “Studies are now in progress to learn more about the effect of these surgical treatments



PHYSICIAN DIRECTORY

With more than 350 physicians, UConn has the largest multi-specialty group in central Connecticut. We cover virtually every specialty and subspecialty in health care.

Detailed, up-to-date information about our specialists is available in our online physician directory at uconndocs.uhc.edu.

The experts at the New England Musculoskeletal Institute offer a variety of operative and non-operative treatment options for younger patients with arthritis of the hip or knee.



NEW PHYSICIANS



Christopher Pickett, M.D., an electrophysiologist and co-director of the Heart Rhythm Program, is now seeing patients at the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center. Dr. Pickett is highly trained in heart conditions such as atrial fibrillation and abnormal rhythms. A graduate of Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans, Dr. Pickett completed his postdoctoral training at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston with fellowships in cardiology and electrophysiology.



Heiko Schmitt, M.D., an electrophysiologist and co-director of the Heart Rhythm Program, is now seeing patients at the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center. A specialist in heart rhythm abnormalities, Dr. Schmitt attended the University of Giessen in Germany. He completed residencies in internal medicine at the University of Giessen and the State University of New York at Syracuse, a research fellowship at Columbia University, and fellowships in cardiology and electrophysiology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.



John W. Birk, M.D., joins the UConn Health Center as chief of the Division of Gastroenterology-Hepatology. Dr. Birk specializes in a range of gastroenterological diseases, including upper GI tumors, gastroesophageal reflux disease, and hepatobiliary and pancreatic disease. Dr. Birk graduated from Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and completed his residency and fellowship in New York at the Stony Brook University Hospital, where he was medical director of endoscopy.



R. Michael Meneghini, M.D., joins the UConn Health Center as director of the UConn Joint Replacement Center and the new Center for Joint Preservation in the New England Musculoskeletal Institute. Dr. Meneghini specializes in all aspects of hip and knee replacement, including both operative and non-operative treatments for younger patients. After graduating from Indiana University School of Medicine, Dr. Meneghini completed his internship and residency at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and his fellowship at the Mayo Clinic.



Experts with the New England Musculoskeletal Institute are now seeing patients in Southington at **1131 West Street**. Services include orthopaedic sports medicine and treatment for osteoporosis, back pain, and problems affecting the foot, ankle, and wrist. To make a referral, call **877-676-1733**.

A new Patient Service Center and Blood Drawing Facility is located at **665 Terryville Avenue in Bristol** to make it more convenient for Bristol residents who need blood tests or other standard lab services. To make a referral, call **860-585-9813**.

FAST Facts

511 Number of scientists actively involved in biomedical research at the UConn Health Center.

34,000 Number of calls annually to the Poison Control hotline at the UConn Health Center from individuals and health care providers.

Know more — visit www.KnowBetterCare.org

UConn Urodynamics Unit Evaluating and Treating Genitourinary Problems

At the UConn Center for Continence and Voiding Disorders, experts in lower urinary tract disorders use thorough evaluation and the latest diagnostics

to provide new and individualized therapies for incontinence, pelvic organ support and voiding problems. UConn doctors strive to educate patients about the causes of disease and available treatments.

“Bladder problems can be caused by a variety of conditions, including urinary tract or vaginal infections, muscle weakness, hormone imbalance, and neurological disorders,” says Phillip P. Smith, M.D., the center’s director. “Through the collaboration between medical staff in the Departments of Urology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Geriatrics, UConn provides comprehensive care for genitourinary problems.” Dr. Smith completed fellowships in voiding dysfunction and female urology at the Baylor College of Medicine. He specializes in voiding dysfunctions, bladder incontinence in men and women, and pelvic organ prolapse in women.

At the core of The Center for Continence and Voiding Disorders’ advanced diagnostic services is the UConn Urodynamics Unit. Services include cystoscopy, fluoroscopy, electrodiagnostic testing (EMG) of the pelvic floor, and multichannel urodynamics, utilizing state-of-the-art techniques and equipment.

“The urodynamics lab allows us to understand each patient’s individual situation with greater detail and accuracy,” says Dr. Smith. “This is especially important in older patients or patients with complicated medical histories. Urodynamic evaluation provides information that supplements the clinical exam, giving better chances of getting to the source of the problem.”

“There are many approaches to correcting genitourinary problems, but careful diagnostic study gives the best results because it allows doctors to tailor individual treatments,” says Dr. Smith. “It is a principle of our practice to make every effort to find the underlying causes of each patient’s condition and treat them accordingly.”

Incontinence and other genitourinary problems can be caused by childbirth, aging, and certain cancers, but they are not universal consequences of these risk factors. Prostate diseases, urinary tract infections, and neurological disorders can also cause symptoms. For most people, it is the interaction of age, lifestyle, and family history that is behind these problems.

The center offers a full range of therapeutics. Some conditions can be treated through exercises to strengthen pelvic muscles or bladder training. Medications and medical devices can also be used to influence bladder muscles, reduce inflammation, fight infection, block urine flow, or provide bladder support. Some situations require surgery, for example, removing obstructions caused by

an enlarged prostate in men, or for symptoms related to loss of uterine and vaginal support in women. Newer operations for urinary incontinence avoid many of the risks and much of the discomfort that accompanied former techniques, and are often performed on an outpatient basis.

“There are many approaches to correcting genitourinary problems, but careful diagnostic study gives the best results because it allows doctors to tailor individual treatments.”

— Phillip P. Smith, M.D.



CALL! For more information about the UConn Center for Continence and Voiding Disorders, call **860-679-4100**.



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in preventing the progression to end-stage degenerative hip disease,” Dr. Meneghini adds.

The early onset of osteoarthritis of the knee, he notes, is often linked with injuries earlier in life, frequently sports injuries. Successful treatments include osteotomy, which surgically repositions the joint and realigns the mechanical axis of the limb away from the diseased area.

“Ideal candidates for joint preservation services are young, active adults who know they have arthritis but want to maintain an active lifestyle for many years,” adds Jay R. Lieberman, M.D., professor and chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and director of the New England Musculoskeletal Institute. “This service is an excellent addition to our community,” he says.

CALL! For more information about the Center for Joint Preservation, call Dr. Meneghini at **860-679-6053**. He sees patients at the New England Musculoskeletal Institute in Farmington, and the Institute’s new office in Southington at 1131 West Street. To learn more, visit nemsu.uchc.edu.

Dental Implant Center Opens

The new Center for Implant and Reconstructive Dentistry is now open on the main level of the UConn Health Center in Farmington.

The modern, high-tech and fully renovated center includes eight treatment rooms and houses an advanced ConeBeam CT unit—a sophisticated imaging system that quickly captures 2D and 3D images of the jaws and teeth with unprecedented precision.

A full range of dental implant services are offered in the new center. Providers include nationally recognized specialists with the UConn School of Dental Medicine who have been at the forefront of dental implant care, education, and research for many years. As part of the New England Musculoskeletal Institute, the center will also support ongoing research, including NIH-funded initiatives, to improve dental implant and restorative techniques.



Donald A. Somerville, D.M.D., M.S., director, Center for Implant and Reconstructive Dentistry

CALL! To learn more or to schedule an appointment, call **860-679-7600** or visit dentalimplants.uchc.edu.



CONTACT US

Rick Daddario
Physician Outreach
Manager
860-679-1695
or **877-676-1733** or
daddario@nso.uchc.edu



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UConn Health Center
263 Farmington Avenue
Farmington, CT 06030-5385

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