

CONSULTS

NEWS FOR PHYSICIANS FROM THE UCONN HEALTH CENTER

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AN AMAZING STORY... ACTUALLY, FOUR



When it opens this spring, the new, four-story Medical Arts & Research Building on the UConn Health Center campus in Farmington will provide the most advanced treatments for problems affecting bones, joints and connective tissue. "Patients with any kind of bone or joint problems will get the full range of care, including surgical services, if necessary," says Lawrence Raisz, M.D., an osteoporosis expert who is interim director of musculoskeletal programs. "Almost all diagnostic and treatment facilities for orthopedics, neurosurgery, osteoporosis and rheumatic diseases, such as arthritis, will be combined in one convenient location."

The building will house the following services:

First floor:

- Diagnostic Imaging, which includes services such as an open, more powerful MRI, a 16-slice CT scanner and a dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) (see page 3).
- Physical therapy and rehabilitation services, including a new therapeutic pool—the region's first warm-water SwimEx (see page 3).

Second floor:

- The Farmington Surgery Center, which will include four same-day surgery operating rooms and examination and treatment rooms.

Third floor:

- Clinics and physician offices for arthritis, osteoarthritis and orthopedics, as well as X-ray facilities for orthopedics.

Fourth floor:

- Offices for orthopedic physicians, laboratory space for bone biology research and a biomechanics-testing laboratory.

The new building will be dedicated to outpatient services, which means easier access for patients to many of the services they need, all housed in one building with plenty of free parking. It also means more efficient scheduling since procedures won't have to be delayed to accommodate emergencies or urgent needs of hospital patients.

For more information on services that will be available in the Medical Arts & Research Building, please call UConn Link at 800-535-6232 (860-679-7692, locally) or visit online at www.uhc.edu.

CONTACT US

Want to learn more about the UConn Health Center?

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Rick Daddario

SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT BONE HEALTH

For years, it was pretty standard thinking that fractures due to osteoporosis were a normal part of aging. Now we know there are effective ways to improve bone health. Some of those ways are spelled out in the recent Surgeon General's Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis. "The whole point is to build awareness about something that has become a broad public health problem," says Lawrence Raisz, M.D., an osteoporosis expert who is interim director of musculoskeletal programs. Dr. Raisz served as a scientific editor of the Surgeon General's report and was recently appointed to the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) Advisory Council of the National Institutes of Health.

By the year 2020, half of all American citizens older than age 50 will be at risk for fractures from osteoporosis and low bone mass if no immediate action is taken by individuals at risk, doctors, health systems and policymakers, according to the report.

"Bone disease is a silent disease, until you fracture," says Dr. Raisz. "About 20 percent of

senior citizens who suffer a hip fracture die within a year of fracture. About 20 percent end up in a nursing home within a year, and the direct care costs of osteoporotic fractures alone are about \$18 billion annually."

Preventive measures are fairly straightforward:

- Get regular exercise.
- Increase calcium and vitamin D in the diet.
- Don't smoke.

"Physicians should be especially alert to a fracture from a moderate trauma that occurs in patients older than age 45," says Dr. Raisz. "For example, if a patient age 45 or older suffers a fracture as a result of a fall from a standing height or less, the physician should think about the possibility of poor bone health and recommend bone density testing for osteoporosis and other bone diseases. They should also be aware of other diseases and drugs that can cause bone loss."

For more information on bone health, contact Dr. Raisz at 860-679-3851, or call the Physician's Referral Line at 877-676-1733.



Lawrence Raisz, M.D.

HELP FOR SORE SHOULDERS



Kevin Shea, M.D.

Fortunately, osteoarthritis of the shoulder is not common, probably because we don't walk on our arms, according to orthopedic surgeon Kevin Shea, M.D. Unfortunately, for patients who do suffer from the painful condition, treatment options have been few. "Patients were usually put on arthritis medications and told there was little else that could be done," says Dr. Shea.

Today, however, Dr. Shea and colleague Gus Mazzocca, M.D., believe the options are increasing. "We are doing more shoulder replacement procedures and getting very good results," says Dr. Shea.

Dr. Shea also is conducting a clinical trial studying the use of injections of Synvisc®, a gel-like mixture, into the shoulder. Synvisc is made from a substance called hyaluronan, a natural substance found in the

body and present in very high amounts in normal joints. In the body, hyaluronan acts like a lubricant and a shock absorber in the joint. "The substance has been used successfully to relieve arthritis pain in knees for years," says Dr. Shea. "Our study will evaluate the effectiveness of three injections of Synvisc into the shoulder joint." The injections are done weekly and patients are followed for a year to determine the effectiveness. In the first part of the study, 50 percent of patients experienced marked pain relief and improvement in function six months after the injections, according to Dr. Shea.

For more information on the treatment of sore shoulders, call Dr. Shea at 860-679-6653 or Dr. Mazzocca at 860-679-6709, or call the Physician's Referral Line at 877-676-1733.



Gus Mazzocca, M.D.

NEW IMAGING FACILITY INCORPORATES LATEST TECHNOLOGY

Powerful new machines will be the centerpiece of the Diagnostic Imaging Department on the first floor of the new Medical Arts & Research Building, located on the Health Center's lower campus.

"Creating the new Diagnostic Imaging Department gives us the opportunity to bring together the very latest in technology," says Bipin Jagjivan, M.D., chief of diagnostic imaging at the Health Center. "We have included an open MRI with the most powerful magnet available, a fast CT scanner, digital X-ray machines and brand new ultrasound equipment.

"These new imaging tools will improve our ability to make accurate diagnoses of a variety of disorders, from cancer to cardiovascular disease to trauma. The detail and clarity of the images will allow for much more precise planning for surgery. They also will give us the capability to perform procedures, like virtual colonoscopy or cardiac angiography, without invasive surgical techniques."

The new open, high-field MRI machine is wide open on three sides. It eliminates the tube design that encloses patients and causes intense claustrophobia in many. It also has a .6 tesla magnet, the strongest currently available in open-design MRIs. "The higher field strength increases the detail of the images," says Dr. Jagjivan. "The stronger magnets also are faster. Consequently, the machine works much more quickly and allows more sophisticated imaging."



Phillips .6 open panorama MRI

The new 16-slice CT scanner will take multiple X-ray images, gathering continuous data to provide a comprehensive image of the entire area scanned. Physicians can view the images almost instantaneously.

With new digital X-ray machines, X-ray images can be viewed and shared almost instantaneously. "The images can be stored and transmitted more efficiently than standard X-ray films," says Dominic Romano, administrative director of the imaging department.

Because the imaging department is dedicated to outpatients, service is much more efficient. "We don't have to rearrange the schedule to accommodate emergencies among hospital patients," says Romano. "Those patients will be served by the imaging equipment in the hospital building."

For more information on the imaging services available in the Medical Arts & Research Building, call Dr. Jagjivan at 860-679-3626 or call the Physician's Referral Line at 877-676-4733.

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADDS THERAPY POOL

By providing central Connecticut's first SwimEx pool, the UConn Health Center adds a powerful new tool to its arsenal of rehabilitation services.

The pool provides consistent deep-water resistance for therapy to injured muscles, tendons and joints. "The pool allows patients to work on improving strength and range of motion sooner with less stress and less chance of aggravating their injury," says Barbara Boucher, director of rehabilitation services for the Health Center.

The new pool takes center stage at the Health Center's Rehabilitation Services Department, in the new Medical Arts & Research Building.

Previously, the Health Center offered aquatic therapy to patients at a nearby community pool. "Having our

own therapy pool makes it possible to provide more consistent programming without worrying about possible interruptions," says Boucher.

The new pool takes center stage at the Health Center's relocated Rehabilitation Services Department in the new Medical Arts & Research Building. "Not only have we added an effective new therapy, we have brought our staff together in the new

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LEARN ABOUT PROMISING NEW THERAPIES IN CANCER TREATMENT MARCH 30 AND APRIL 6

PRESENTED BY THE CAROLE AND RAY NEAG COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
AND THE OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION



Carolyn D.
Runowicz, M.D.

New developments in the prevention, early detection and treatment of several types of cancer will be explored in a two-part continuing medical education (CME) program for primary care physicians, internists, OB/GYNs and other healthcare providers.

Topics will include a thorough look at prevention strategies, early detection, treatment and reconstructive surgery for breast cancer; new advances in early detection and surgical treatments for colon cancer; prostate cancer treatments; and specialized care for patients with head and neck cancer.

“We will cover a wide range of services offered by UConn oncologists, surgical oncologists and other experts with strong emphasis on today’s most promising research, including vaccine therapies and other immunological approaches,” says Carolyn D. Runowicz, M.D., director of the Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center and a nationally recognized expert in gynecologic oncology who sees patients at the Health Center.

The course will be held on consecutive Wednesday evenings, March 30 and April 6, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., in the Health Center’s Keller Auditorium.



Join us for a look at today’s most promising developments.

“Considerable attention also will be devoted to enhancing patients’ quality of life through complementary and alternative therapies, palliative care and pain management,” says Dr. Runowicz.

For a complete course program, registration and more information, call 800-535-6232 or 860-679-7692.

Accreditation: The UConn School of Medicine designates this educational activity for a maximum of 4 category 1 credits toward the AMA Physician’s Recognition Award. Physicians should claim credit only for hours spent in the educational activity.

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADDS THERAPY POOL

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building to make our services more convenient and more efficient for our patients,” say Boucher.

Physicians’ offices also will be located in the building along with rehabilitation therapy, diagnostic imaging and same-day surgery facilities. “Patients can visit their doctor, and if they need to make an appointment for an X-ray or occupational or physical therapy, they can just go downstairs,” says Boucher. “The proximity also makes it much easier for our physicians and therapists to talk to each other about their patients’ progress.”



The warm-water SwimEx

For more information about rehabilitation services, call Barbara Boucher at 860-679-3961, or call the Physician’s Referral Line at 877-676-1733.



Remarkable Care Through
Research and Education