

UCSF Medical Center

# advances

CARING, HEALING, TEACHING, DISCOVERING / SPRING-SUMMER 2011



What  
You Should  
**Know**  
About  
**Alzheimer's**

Get vital updates  
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UCSF Memory and  
Aging Center

**UCSF** Medical Center

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UCSF BENIOFF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL NEWS INSIDE



## TO OUR NEIGHBORS

No doubt you're aware of the stellar reputation and exemplary record of UCSF Medical Center and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. But you may not know about

vital efforts under way to ensure that the quality of the patient experience consistently matches the clinical excellence for which we're nationally and internationally known.

That's the goal of UCSF's Culture of Excellence Committee, a multidisciplinary panel of clinical staff and management that I co-chair. We've been working hard to maintain and enhance a "culture of excellence" throughout the medical center by listening to our patients, improving their experience and executing our vision to be the best provider of health care.

Some recent examples include instituting hourly rounds by nurses; requiring all clinical staff to wear uniforms with labels that clearly identify their roles; introducing more comfortable patient gowns; installing whiteboards in patient hospital rooms to facilitate and improve communication; and initiating post-discharge phone calls, which help ensure continuity of care. Later this year, we're debuting a new electronic medical record, which, among other advantages, will allow patients to more easily connect with their doctors through our Internet portal.

So, please, let us know how we're doing by visiting [www.ucsfhealth.org/contactus](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/contactus). Be assured that we aim to deliver the safest, highest-quality and most compassionate health care. That's our commitment, today and in the future. You and your family deserve nothing less.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark R. Laret".

Mark R. Laret  
Chief Executive Officer  
UCSF Medical Center  
UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital

## ON THE RIGHT PATH

Pathway, a new Web-based guide to directions and maps for UCSF Medical Center and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, is now available to help you better navigate your way around UCSF's facilities and locations.

Simply find the destination you are looking for and you will receive step-by-step directions to that destination. These directions include driving and walking directions as well as parking and drop-off options—all designed to get you to your destination quickly and easily. [To get started, go to \[www.ucsfhealth.org/pathway\]\(http://www.ucsfhealth.org/pathway\).](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/pathway)

## EVER WANTED TO GO TO MED SCHOOL?

Now you can. The UCSF Mini Medical School offers you the opportunity to see and hear what goes on every day at UCSF with lectures from the same faculty who are teaching the health care leaders of tomorrow. [For information or to register, visit \[www.minimedicalschool.ucsf.edu\]\(http://www.minimedicalschool.ucsf.edu\).](http://www.minimedicalschool.ucsf.edu)

## LOOKING FOR A PRIMARY CARE DOCTOR IN SAN FRANCISCO?

UCSF Primary Care at Laurel Village features a team of experienced and trusted adult and pediatric physicians skilled in disease prevention, health maintenance and the diagnosis and treatment of all types of medical problems, from acute injuries to chronic, complex conditions. The practice, formerly UCSF Primary Care at Mount Zion, features a dedication to patient-centered care and service, same-day appointments, online health tools and access to UCSF's full range of specialists. [To learn more about our doctors, call \(888\) 689-8273 or visit \[www.ucsfhealth.org/adprimarycare\]\(http://www.ucsfhealth.org/adprimarycare\).](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/adprimarycare)

## BUILDING THE FUTURE: THE CAMPAIGN FOR UCSF MEDICAL CENTER

Ground has been broken and an unprecedented new hospital complex that will define the future of health care is on the rise at UCSF's Mission Bay campus. [To learn more about the project and how you can help, please visit \[www.missionbayhospitals.ucsf.edu\]\(http://www.missionbayhospitals.ucsf.edu\).](http://www.missionbayhospitals.ucsf.edu)

## PHYSICAL THERAPY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Combining exercise training and advanced science on our Mission Bay campus

On a typical day, the Physical Therapy Health and Wellness Center at UCSF's Mission Bay campus buzzes with activity. Clients participate in a variety of innovative therapies designed to treat everything from running injuries to various mobility problems related to stroke, aging, and impaired brain function associated with Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. The program, known as PhysFit, uses research-based techniques and state-of-the-art equipment in a unique marriage of exercise and science.

"PhysFit clients find our programs to be not only effective but enjoyable," says Chris Holland, PT, MS, director of Rehabilitative Services. "Participants benefit from a mutually supportive environment, under the guidance of UCSF's experienced Physical Therapy Department staff and students." PhysFit programs include:

- **PowerWalk:** This program uses the latest robotics technology to help people with traumatic injury or illness get back on their feet. Physical therapists use technological aids, including assistive walkers and bionic legs, to help gently retrain the brain and muscles, which improves balance and mobility.

- **RunFit:** Participants use a machine called a G-Trainer to build up strength, endurance and mobility after injury or surgery. By supporting the body, the G-Trainer effectively reduces up to 80 percent of body weight, thus minimizing the strain and impact of weight-bearing exercise.
- **TeenFit—Adolescent Weight Management:** Teenagers learn about exercise, healthy habits and stress management in weekly group and one-on-one coaching sessions taught by Physical Therapy Department staff and graduate students.
- **NeuroFit:** This exercise program promotes neural recovery and function for people with neurological disease or injury, such as stroke, Parkinson's disease and balance problems. Research has established the effectiveness of such programs in improving physical and mental health and fitness.
- **BrainFit:** Participants follow a regimen of mental games and exercises that have been shown to enhance memory and brain function.

The center is also a valuable resource for patients being seen at the UCSF Orthopaedic Institute, located across the street at 1500 Owens Street, shrinking the distance and increasing the continuity of care. "The patient can now go from the operating room to rehab in our new physical therapy facility and then to the Health and Wellness Center across the street to get up and running in no time," said Department Chair Kimberly Topp, PT, PhD.

The Physical Therapy Health and Wellness Center is located in the Bakar Fitness & Recreation Center, 1675 Owens Street, San Francisco. To find out more about PhysFit classes and programs (including others not described above), please call (415) 514-4816 or visit [www.ptrehab.medschool.ucsf.edu/WellnessCenter](http://www.ptrehab.medschool.ucsf.edu/WellnessCenter). There's another useful UCSF site for runners to check: <http://theruncenter.ucsf.edu>.

The Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Clinic, offering services to patients of all ages who suffer from movement dysfunction, is located at 1500 Owens Street, Suite 400, San Francisco. For more information, call (415) 353-7598 or visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/rehab](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/rehab).



## A USER'S GUIDE TO THE OSHER CENTER

Where East meets West to optimize healing and health

When someone has back pain, medication might quell the discomfort. But what if job stress caused the pain? Or weight gain?

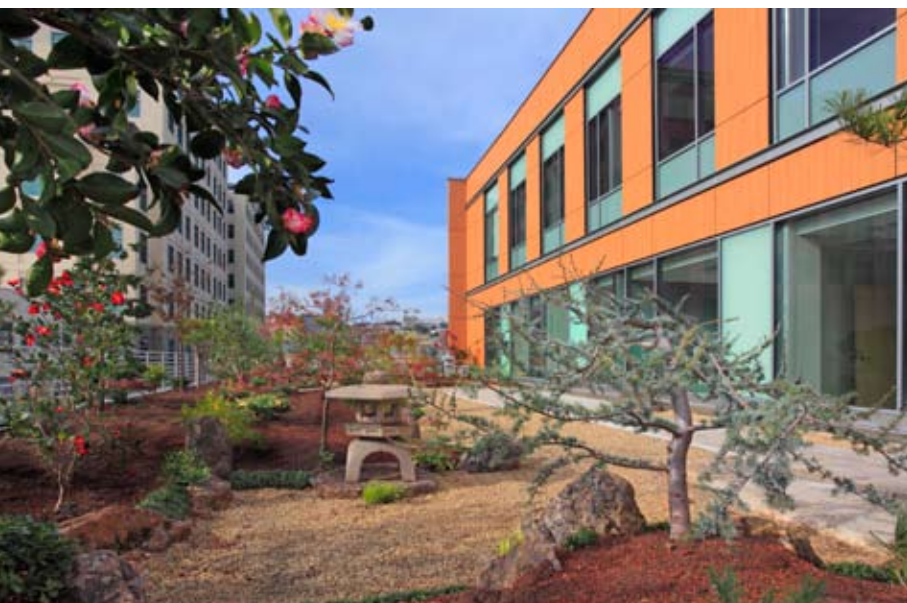
Seeing the patient as a whole human being—body, mind and spirit—can reveal hidden causes and ultimately lead to a treatment plan that enhances the person's overall wellness, staving off future problems. That philosophy drives the multidisciplinary team at UCSF's Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, which combines the best conventional medicine with evidence-based complementary treatments to optimize the body's own healing capacity.

The UCSF Osher Center, the only facility of its kind in San Francisco, combines patient care, groundbreaking research and professional education. "Our practitioners know the latest in the integrative therapies, and with our research program, we are making new discoveries and translating research into practice," says Dr. Margaret Chesney, director of the Osher Center. Recognized nationally, it was the first integrative center to receive two Center of Excellence grants from the National Institutes of Health.

"We use ancient therapies like traditional Chinese medicine and Ayurveda [an Indian approach to restoring balance], which can address health conditions before they become serious illnesses," adds Dr. Kevin Barrows, medical director of the Osher Center. "These therapies can also be effectively combined with conventional therapies to treat established disease."

The practitioners in the Osher Center clinic include specialists in general integrative medicine, manual medicine, women's health and psychotherapy; practitioners in acupuncture and biofeedback; massage therapists; and instructors in tai chi, yoga and mindfulness. Cancer patients can see a board-certified oncologist trained in both conventional and complementary medicine. Integrative pediatricians Dr. David Becker and Dr. Sanford Newmark offer integrative treatment of pain conditions and neurodevelopmental disorders, such as autism and ADHD.

"Many people come to the center for wellness, while others seek assistance in managing chronic conditions and enhancing their health," explains Dr. Chesney. "The UCSF Osher Center draws on the most effective treatments possible to support our patients—the best of conventional medicine and established healing practices from around the world." For more information or to make an appointment, call (415) 353-7720 or visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/ocim](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/ocim).

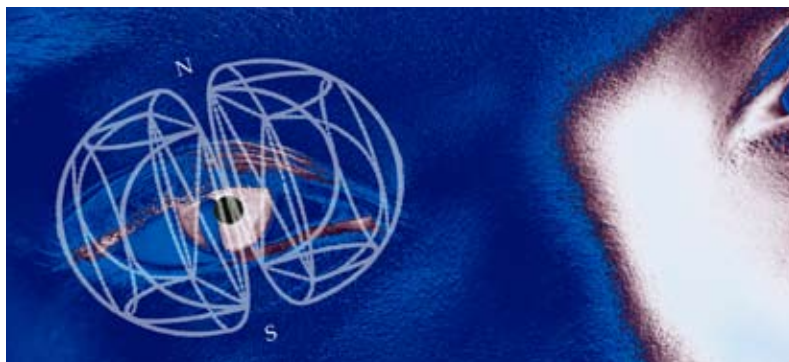


### A SOOTHING NEW SPACE FOR YOU

The Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, once scattered throughout the UCSF campus, now occupies the top three floors of a gleaming new building at 1545 Divisadero Street, San Francisco. Featuring soothing hues, natural light and open spaces, the center includes treatment rooms, a Japanese healing garden, meditation areas and rooms for classes (including yoga, tai chi, preparation for surgery, and mindfulness-based stress reduction and mindfulness-based childbirth/parenting).

## ALL HEART: ONE STOP FOR EXCEPTIONAL CARE AND PREVENTION

Preventing heart problems requires spending enough time with your doctor to create a prevention program tailored especially for you. Having a full range of care and research in one location helps make this possible. That's why heart disease prevention experts have joined a comprehensive group of services making up the new UCSF Cardiovascular Care and Prevention Center at Mission Bay. The center includes cardiology and vascular practices, as well as the Center for Prevention of Heart and Vascular Disease, all of which are now housed in the same building as the renowned Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI). Comprehensive teams of heart experts here work with anyone who has had a cardiac event or possesses any of the traditional risk factors. In most instances, during their initial visit, patients can do everything required to create a personalized prevention program. For more information, please visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/cardiocare](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/cardiocare). To schedule an appointment, call (415) 353-2873.



## KEEP YOUR EYE ON “PREMIUM” CATARACT SURGERY

When your eye's natural lens gets cloudy and a cataract develops, it seems like you're viewing the world through a dirty window. Your vision becomes cloudy, and you may notice glare or see halos around streetlights.

Enter a new approach to cataract treatment called refractive cataract surgery or premium cataract surgery, in which the patient's own lens is removed and replaced with new-technology implants that can do more than just clear up the cloudiness. These optionally available, specially configured, “premium” lenses can correct pre-existing astigmatism or provide both distance and close-up vision—thereby reducing or eliminating the need for bifocals and reading glasses. And UCSF researchers are helping to develop a next-generation “accommodating” lens—currently undergoing FDA clinical testing—that promises to provide not just distance and reading vision but also “intermediate” vision for computer work and other arm's-length viewing tasks.

For more information, visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/eyes](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/eyes) or contact the Division of Refractive Surgery at (415) 353-2020.

## SOLVING INCONTINENCE PROBLEMS

Incontinence is not just physically uncomfortable—its symptoms can have a dramatic impact on lives, preventing sufferers from going where they want to go and doing things they want to do. Incontinence is not a normal sign of aging. In fact, it affects up to 25 million Americans of all ages, and 85 percent of them are women.

Fortunately, many treatments are available, including a variety of nonsurgical options, meaning you don't need to “put up with” the inconvenience or social isolation that continence problems can cause.

The UCSF Women's Continence Center serves women with incontinence (urinary and fecal), urethral or bladder dysfunction, and pelvic support problems. Physicians from urogynecology, urology and colorectal surgery comprise the practice. Services include advanced diagnostic testing, behavioral and biofeedback procedures, and surgical and nonsurgical treatments. To make an appointment, call (415) 885-7788 and select option 1. For more information, visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/bladdercontrol](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/bladdercontrol).

# What You Should Know About Alzheimer's Disease



**A**lzheimer's disease vs. dementia. What's the difference? Actually, dementia is not a specific disease. Dementia is the general term for a progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys a person's ability to carry out daily activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, affecting as many as 5.1 million Americans. Advancing age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's—the older we get, the greater the risk.

Want to learn more details about Alzheimer's? Check the following Q&A with two of the specialists at the UCSF Memory and Aging Center: Jennifer Merrilees, a clinical nurse specialist and associate clinical professor, and Cindy Barton, a geriatric nurse practitioner and assistant clinical professor.

### **Q: What causes Alzheimer's?**

**Barton:** The major underlying mechanism of Alzheimer's is the buildup of proteins, called beta-amyloid and tau, in the brain. Medical researchers still don't know what sparks the disease process, but it is now accepted that this protein buildup goes on for many years before patients develop symptoms. As more of these proteins form in certain parts of the brain, healthy neurons stop functioning and eventually die. And as more neurons die, affected brain regions shrink, leading to memory loss and other functional problems that are signs of Alzheimer's.

### **Q: How is Alzheimer's diagnosed at UCSF's Memory and Aging Center?**

**Merrilees:** The diagnosis is primarily clinical. A typical evaluation includes a thorough medical exam plus a review of medical history, medications and the course of symptoms. Screening for conditions that can contribute to cognitive deficits is important. Abnormal thyroid levels, for example, can create cognition problems, as

Get answers to FAQs from experts at the internationally renowned UCSF Memory and Aging Center



“Those of us working in the field realize that dementia can be hardest on the family—and we’re here to offer them a helping hand, too.”

—Jennifer Merrilees, clinical nurse specialist, UCSF Memory and Aging Center

can depression. Often we do a brain MRI; that helps to detect a tumor or other structural changes. We always do cognitive testing to check memory, visual function, orientation and more.

Our neuropsychologists have access to normative data and can compare a person’s performance to what someone else their age and education might do. We also get feedback from family members or others who can corroborate or elaborate on information from the patient.

**Barton:** We have leading specialists from a number of disciplines including neurology, neuropsychology, geriatrics, geropsychiatry, pharmacy, nursing, social work and speech pathology—an experienced team that’s available to participate in a patient’s evaluation. We’re very skilled at putting together the various pieces of an evaluation to arrive at a clinical diagnosis, even if they don’t fit a typical profile. Although absolute diagnosis can only be made after death, clinicians who do this all the time are quite accurate in making a clinical diagnosis.

#### **Q: What are some of the current treatments for Alzheimer’s?**

**Barton:** Interestingly, what’s good for the heart is also good for the brain—and the reverse is true, too. Vascular disease can make Alzheimer’s symptoms appear sooner or make them worse, so we encourage people to be physically active and control their blood pressure, weight and cholesterol. We also encourage people to be engaged socially and remain mentally active.

**Merrilees:** Unfortunately, we don’t have drugs that cure Alzheimer’s. Patients are offered medications to slow memory loss. A class of drugs called cholinesterase inhibitors—Aricept is one example—helps to preserve acetylcholine in the brain and that helps memory formation. We think that another class of drugs, which includes

memantine, helps preserve neurons and probably helps to keep them healthy a little bit longer. Our patients also can have the benefit of current research. UCSF has been designated as both a state and national Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center and runs clinical trials on Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

#### **Q: How do patients and their families access services of the UCSF Memory and Aging Center?**

**Merrilees:** Typically, physicians will refer patients with concerns regarding cognitive or behavioral changes. We tend to see a lot of people with atypical symptoms, and it helps us to know a patient’s medical history. We like to review a year’s worth of medical records to get an understanding of how the person’s medical conditions may be contributing to the symptoms.

We’re always here to support patients’ caregivers as well. The nurses are especially skilled at helping caregivers deal with behavioral symptoms of dementia. We offer, and can refer to, support groups so family members and others can stay up to date. Those of us working in the field realize that dementia can be hardest on the family—and we’re here to offer them a helping hand, too.

## FIND OUT MORE

For more information about the UCSF Memory and Aging Center, call (415) 476-6880. A wealth of information is available online, including the following.

**Website:** [www.ucsfhealth.org/memoryandaging](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/memoryandaging)

**Free monthly newsletter:** [www.memory.ucsf.edu/mindmatters](http://www.memory.ucsf.edu/mindmatters)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/ucsfmemoryandaging](http://www.youtube.com/ucsfmemoryandaging)

**Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/UCSFmac](http://www.twitter.com/UCSFmac)

**Blog:** [www.memory.ucsf.edu/blog](http://www.memory.ucsf.edu/blog)

**Clinical trials:** [www.ucsfhealth.org/clinicaltrials](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/clinicaltrials)

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505 Parnassus Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94143  
(415) 476-1000

**UCSF Medical Center at Mount Zion**  
1600 Divisadero Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
(415) 567-6600

**Maps and Directions**  
[www.ucsfhealth.org/pathway](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/pathway)

**Outreach Clinics**  
[www.ucsfhealth.org/outreachclinics](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/outreachclinics)

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## UCSF MEDICAL CENTER, AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

You can keep up with the latest treatment innovations, review physician biographies, get directions and much more by visiting [www.ucsfhealth.org](http://www.ucsfhealth.org). The UCSF Medical Center website is your health care resource 24 hours a day, every day.

### ACCESS OUR WORLD-CLASS CARE

For personal help finding a specialist or primary care doctor, please contact us at (888) 689-8273 (toll free) or at [referral.center@ucsfmedctr.org](mailto:referral.center@ucsfmedctr.org).

Assistance is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (PST).

For more information on adult and pediatric primary care, please visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/primarycare](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/primarycare).

### HEALTH COVERAGE: MAKING THE CHOICE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

Whether you elect health coverage through your employer or purchase it on your own, you may have an opportunity to choose among several options. Understanding the different types of health plans is the first step in making a good choice for you and your family. Typically, health insurance companies, including large, nationally

known plans, contract with locally based medical groups to provide benefits. Before selecting a plan, confirm that the doctors you prefer are contracted to provide services through the health plan you choose.

For information about the plans accepted by UCSF Medical Center, visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/healthinsurance](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/healthinsurance).

### VISIT US ONLINE:

To read past issues of *Advances*, visit [www.ucsfhealth.org/advances](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/advances).

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If you have comments or would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact us at (888) 689-8273 or send an email to [referral.center@ucsfmedctr.org](mailto:referral.center@ucsfmedctr.org).

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*advancing health worldwide*