HEALTH CARE TODAY IS A COMPLEX enterprise, best delivered by a team. And at the head of this team is a primary care physician, or PCP, who acts as head coach.

In this important role, PCPs maintain an open and collaborative relationship with their patients. They also coordinate their patients’ care, and manage internal communication with their patients’ other health care providers, including specialists, nurses and social workers.

Here is how this team-based approach works at UCLA Health.

YOUR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN LEADS YOUR TEAM

As a patient, it is important for you to find a PCP you trust to oversee your medical care and advocate for your best interests. Your PCP should learn about your individual preferences, and develop a strategy to help you achieve your personal health goals.

If your PCP thinks you should make a lifestyle change, start a new medication or complete a preventive service, like getting a flu vaccine or a colon cancer screening, he or she should be able to clearly explain why they are making that recommendation, and how this change will help you reach your goals. Then, your PCP should encourage you to take the appropriate actions to support your long-term health.

THEY SHOULD ALSO HELP COORDINATE YOUR CARE

While your relationship with your PCP is incredibly important, so is his or her relationship with your other health care providers.

As the head coach of your health care team, your PCP should refer you to specialists, such as a cardiologist or gastroenterologist, when that outside expertise is required. When you are under the care of another health care professional, your PCP should remain updated on any new lab results, diagnoses or hospitalizations, so that he or she can adjust his or her strategy to keep you healthy.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

An essential component of teamwork is open communication between everyone involved. You should develop a partnership with your PCP, and feel free to bring up any questions or concerns.

Providers and support staff should also stay in touch and share relevant clinical information so that they are on the same page and working towards the same goal. This is best achieved when everyone works for the same place—in this case, UCLA Health—and uses the same electronic health record system.

You can stay involved by signing up for the patient portal via the MyChart app or at my.uclahealth.org.

Find a primary care physician: uclahealth.org/primary-care
HERE AT UCLA HEALTH, we are constantly making changes to improve how health care is delivered. In this second issue of The Checkup, I would like to highlight some of the ways that we have put our patients first as we have expanded.

We provide specialty services in the community. In addition to our more than 40 primary care offices, we also have more than 100 specialty and subspecialty practices in communities from Ventura to Pasadena and Santa Clarita to Laguna Hills. This means that you no longer have to travel to Westwood or Santa Monica to get top-notch cardiology, oncology or dermatology care.

We offer more urgent care and extended hours options. If you get sick or injured outside of regular business hours, we now offer several convenient alternatives to the emergency room. We recently expanded the number of UCLA Health practices that stay open on evenings, weekends and holidays—all of which offer either walk-in hours or same day access.

We connect you to extra services when you need them. UCLA Health offers a wide array of support services right in our community offices. These include pharmacists embedded in our primary care practices; nurse triage support through our Patient Communication Center; and regular diabetes education and support classes at several convenient locations.

There is more that we are excited to share with you in future issues. But in the meantime, we look forward to seeing you in one of our offices.

See our complete list of offices: uclahealth.org/locations

PREVENTIVE CARE

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE FLU – GET VACCINATED NOW

Influenza, or the flu, is a contagious viral illness that infects the nose, throat and lungs. It can be mild to severe, and even lead to hospitalization or death.

As we head into flu season, the best way to protect yourself and your family is to get the annual flu vaccine—available in our offices now. Here is what you need to know.

1. THE FLU VACCINE IS SAFE
   Despite what you may have heard, you cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine. That is because the vaccine does not contain any live flu virus. A side effect you may experience is a temporarily sore, red arm at the injection site.

2. IT IS ALSO EFFECTIVE
   While the flu vaccine does not completely protect you against the flu, it is up to 80% effective, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And if you get the vaccine but still contract influenza, your risk of having a serious flu illness drops to below 1%. This means you are much less likely to miss work or be hospitalized.

3. BUT IT DOESN’T WORK IMMEDIATELY
   It takes about two weeks for the flu vaccine to offer protection. And once you are protected, you can still get sick from other germs or viruses that may cause similar symptoms.

4. THE FLU IS DIFFERENT FROM THE COMMON COLD
   While both typically cause a fever, sore throat and fatigue, the flu also causes muscle and body aches, and typically lasts much longer.

5. ALMOST EVERYONE CAN GET THE SAME VACCINE
   Every UCLA Health patient between 6 months and 64 years old can get the same single dose vaccine. For patients 65 and older, a high-dose vaccine is recommended. Reach out to your physician with any questions.

Find more on preventive care: uclahealth.org/the-checkup
A few years ago, Shebyon Begood, 49, was dealing with an array of health problems that kept her from enjoying her life. “I was constantly in and out of the hospital,” says Begood, who lives in Santa Monica. “And these were not short stays.”

The culprit was urinary tract infections—a complication of her Type 1 diabetes and a kidney transplant she had a decade earlier—that would often turn into a serious and life-threatening condition called sepsis. Then she was diagnosed with breast cancer. “That was devastating,” Begood says, “because I’ve been sick all my life and struggling all my life.” What she really wanted, she says, was to spend quality time with her sister, her two daughters, and her three grandchildren. But being so sick made that impossible.

Urged by her family to demand better care, Begood transferred from another system to UCLA Health. But with 11 specialists and dozens of prescriptions, Begood required a higher level of care coordination than what is typical in a primary care practice. So, when UCLA launched a new initiative for high-risk, complex patients in Westwood, called the Extensivist Program, Begood was one of the first patients to join.

“When we met Shebyon, she was not able to get the cancer treatment she needed because of her frequent infections,” says Dr. Sun Yoo, the Extensivist Program’s medical director. “We came in and asked: ‘Why is this happening? And what can we do to prevent these infections from starting?’”

Dr. Yoo and her team found some simple fixes. They altered Begood’s antibiotic regimen and changed some other medications. Then, they taught her how to better drain her bladder and spot early signs of infection, so she could get treated right away. Dr. Yoo engaged all of Begood’s specialists, and they came up with a unified care plan for her together. Dr. Yoo also made it a priority to stay in contact with Begood’s robust support team, which includes nurses, a social worker, a care coordinator and her family.

The results speak for themselves. In the last 15 months, Begood has been hospitalized only twice, and for just a few days each time. She is also now cancer-free. “She looks better, she feels better, and most importantly, she is able to stay home,” Dr. Yoo says.

This change has greatly improved Begood’s quality of life. “My family comes and sees me every weekend now,” she says. “It feels like Christmas every time they walk through that door.”
WHEN AN ILLNESS OR INJURY unexpectedly occurs that is serious enough for an emergency department visit, but does require medical care, it can feel like there are no good options if your primary care office is closed.

That is why we have expanded the number of UCLA Health offices open on evenings, weekends and holidays. Each sees patients of all ages and holds same-day slots for urgent issues; some allow walk-ins. The result is more comprehensive and convenient coverage for you.

Services include:

- X-rays
- Treatment for acute illnesses, such as fever, ear infections and influenza
- Treatment for bites, burns, sunburns and other skin irritations

**Please note:** All offices bill urgent visits as regular doctors appointments. Call ahead to confirm availability.

Find out more: [uclahealth.org/urgentcare](http://uclahealth.org/urgentcare)

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**DIGITAL DIGEST**

**DIRECT SCHEDULING NOW AVAILABLE**

Making an appointment with your primary care physician just got easier. If you’re an established patient, you can now schedule appointments through the UCLA Health patient portal or mobile app. No phone calls necessary! Here’s how:

1. Sign into the patient portal at [my.uclahealth.org](http://my.uclahealth.org) or launch the MyChart app
2. Select “Schedule An Appointment” from the quick links
3. Click “Self Schedule an Appointment” from the available options
4. Pick which UCLA Health provider you want to see
5. Select a day and time that works with your schedule
6. Fill in some details about your visit
7. Confirm that the appointment details are correct, and hit “Schedule”

Try this new feature: [my.uclahealth.org](http://my.uclahealth.org)
VENTURA MEDICAL OFFICES
6633 Telephone Rd.
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm
Parking: Free parking available in lot.
More info: uclahealth.org/ventura

CARDIOLOGY
Suite 120
Phone: (805) 642-6252
Services: Cardiology, cardiac imaging, cardio-oncology.

HEMATOLOGY / ONCOLOGY
Suite 200
Phone: (805) 642-8252
Services: Comprehensive cancer care, diagnostic and therapeutic consults, therapy infusion and injections, bone marrow biopsy. Rheumatology, dermatology and GI infusions also available.

PRIMARY & SPECIALTY CARE
Suite 212
Phone: (805) 644-9121
Services: Internal medicine, endocrinology, gender health, nephrology, pulmonary and critical care medicine.

NEW LOCATION
WESTLAKE VILLAGE PEDIATRICS
UCLA Health recently opened a pediatrics practice in Westlake Village, offering care for newborns through adolescents.

This office joins the other family medicine and pediatrics practices in the area, in Porter Ranch, Santa Clarita, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks and Woodland Hills.

Where: 1250 La Venta Dr., Ste. 105
Phone: (805) 557-7187
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm
Parking: Free parking available in lot
More info: uclahealth.org/westlake-village

NEW SPECIALIST
BREAST SURGERY
UCLA Health recently hired experienced breast surgeons to join our community offices.

Dr. Gregory Senofsky sees patients in the Santa Clarita hematology / oncology practice on Tuesdays, and in the Porter Ranch and Encino hematology / oncology offices on alternating Friday afternoons. He performs breast surgery at nearby community hospitals.

More info: uclahealth.org/community-cancercare
LAB WORK AND BLOOD DRAWS NOW MORE CONVENIENT

If you need to have your blood drawn or have urine or another specimen collected for routine lab work, UCLA Health has recently made it easier to skip the trip to Westwood or Santa Monica, and go to the office that is closest to where you live or work – or where there is free parking.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- You MUST have a valid order in the system for lab work. No exceptions.
- You can walk in to have your blood drawn or routine lab work completed at any of our clinical labs or UCLA BURL Outreach Clinical Laboratory locations, represented here with the acronym BURL in front of them.
- You can have your blood drawn at any of our community offices if you call ahead to confirm that your order is in the system and that they have the availability to see you.
- Results will be shared via the online patient portal.
- Offices are open weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm, unless otherwise noted.

OFFICES NEAR YOU:

BURL Santa Clarita
27235 Tourney Rd., Suite 2100
Phone: (661) 253-4030
- Free parking

BURL Westlake Village
1250 La Venta Drive, Suite 205
Phone: (805) 379-3537
- Open Monday - Friday: 7:30 am - 6 pm
- Free parking

BURL Burbank
2625 W. Alameda Blvd. #312
Phone: (818) 843-9026

BURL Panorama City
14250 West Armita St.
Phone: (818) 989-6629
- Closes weekdays at 4:30 pm

Woodland Hills - The Village at Westfield Topanga
6344 Topanga Canyon Bl., Ste. 2040
Phone: (818) 610-0292
- Open Monday - Friday: 8 am - 8 pm; weekends and holidays: 9 am - 6pm
- Free parking for 1 hour

More locations: uclahealth.org/clinical-labs

COMMUNITY OFFICES NEAR YOU:

- Encino
- Porter Ranch - Free parking
- Simi Valley - Free parking
- Thousand Oaks - Free parking
- Ventura - Free parking

Find more ways to get in touch: uclahealth.org/contact