A S KIDS, MOST OF US SAW A doctor every year for a physical. But come early adulthood? Not so much. While young women often look to an OB/GYN to handle general and reproductive health questions, young men often avoid doctors visits entirely until an illness or injury crops up that requires immediate attention. Years can pass without having a regular checkup. But we want to change that, and the first step is finding a primary care physician.

WHY PRIMARY CARE?
Primary care physicians, or PCPs, are trained to diagnose and treat patients with a broad range of medical issues, from non-serious illnesses to complicated, chronic conditions.

But just as important as the conditions they treat are the relationships PCPs form with their patients. Your PCP will get to know your medical history and also learn who you are—where you live and work, what you eat, how much you exercise and what you do to manage stress.

This deep understanding allows PCPs to explain medical information in a way that makes sense to you, and to involve you in your medical care so that you achieve your personal health goals.

I’M HEALTHY. DO I REALLY NEED A PHYSICAL?
Yes. A wellness visit is the perfect time to review preventive health items that can keep you healthier, longer. These include vaccines for the flu and shingles; cancer screenings for breast and colorectal cancer; and disease screenings for diabetes and HIV.

A wellness visit is also the perfect time to strengthen your relationship with your doctor so that if you get sick, injured or have a health concern, you know where to go and have someone who understands your baseline health.

Your primary care physician will ensure that you receive coordinated, personalized and comprehensive care; help you navigate UCLA Health; and connect you to the appropriate specialists and services when you need them. They’re a vital member of your healthcare team.

HOW DO I FIND A PCP AND SCHEDULE A WELL VISIT?
Call 1-800-UCLA-MD1 and a patient representative will help find a PCP who meets your needs and is located close to where you live or work. We have more than 40 primary care offices, most of which offer same-day appointments for new and existing patients.

Find out more at uclahealth.org/primary-care
AN UPDATE ON OUR INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Johnese Spisso, President, UCLA Health

IT IS WITH GREAT pleasure that I’m introducing you to The Checkup, our new patient newsletter developed with you in mind. We hope that this newsletter helps you better navigate UCLA Health, and provides insights about why we’re expanding throughout Southern California—and what this means for you.

Meeting where you live and work.
UCLA Health has more than 170 primary and specialty care offices, stretching from Santa Clarita to the north to Laguna Hills to the south. This means better access, a shorter commute, less expensive parking and a more convenient overall experience.

Taking care of you in the hospital.
We also have in-patient physicians, called hospitalists, available to care for you in 17 community hospitals. They are able to access your UCLA Health medical records and work with your PCP to ensure you receive the highest quality care and have a smooth transition home.

Coordinating your care, wherever you are. As we’ve expanded, we’ve built back-end systems to improve communication between patients, offices and providers. These include a patient communication center that schedules appointments, and a team of in-office patient service representatives who assist with patient care.

Today, more than 60% of new patients establish care at a community office, and more than half of current patients receive care outside of Westwood and Santa Monica. We are all part of the same UCLA Health team, ready to care for you and help you live your healthiest life.

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

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

PREVENTIVE CARE

FIVE SCREENINGS YOU MAY NEED
When it comes to achieving optimal health, research shows that following preventive care guidelines for vaccinations, disease screenings and cancer screenings is the best way to get there. Here are details on five preventive health items that you may need.

PLEASE NOTE: The age of a first screening and its frequency is subject to change given your medical history and personal risk factors.

**LIPID PANEL**
Blood test
A lipid panel measures cholesterol levels to determine if you’re at an increased risk for cardiovascular disease, or for having a heart attack or stroke.

**DIABETES SCREENING**
Blood test
A Hemoglobin A1c test measures blood sugar control over the past three months. It can be used to diagnose diabetes or prediabetes.

**CERVICAL CANCER**
Lab test
A Pap smear screens for the presence of abnormal cervical cells. A primary care physician or OB/GYN should perform the test every 3 years, starting when a woman is about 21 years old and ending when she is about 65 years old, with less frequent tests after 30.

**BREAST CANCER**
X-ray
A mammogram is an imaging test that scans breast tissue for tumors or other abnormalities. It is typically performed for the first time when a woman is between 40 and 50 years old, and repeated every 1 to 2 years until 75.

**COLORECTAL CANCER**
Camera or lab test
A colonoscopy allows a gastroenterologist to look inside the large intestine for any abnormalities. It’s typically performed for the first time when a patient is 50 years old, and repeated every 10 years. A less-invasive home stool test, called a “FIT Kit,” can be repeated annually by average-risk patients in lieu of a colonoscopy.

DEFINITION

EVIDENCE-BASED CARE
Physicians who provide evidence-based care rely on findings from the best current research to guide their clinical decisions.

EVIDENCE-BASED CARE MEANS THAT PHYSICIANS:
1. Ask a clinical question when treating individual patients, such as, “Should he take a statin to control his cholesterol?”
2. Find research that relates to the patient based on age and other factors.
3. Assess the validity of the evidence.
4. Apply the evidence in practice, while keeping in mind the patient’s values and preferences.

Learn more about our mission and values at uclahealth.org/about-us
It was September, about three years ago, when Carl Link realized that something was seriously wrong with his health. For years, Link, then 36, had been dealing with chronic back pain that radiated out from between his shoulder blades and occasionally woke him up in the middle of the night. But recently, he had noticed some alarming new symptoms.

First, there were the cold sweats that left his arms and hands clammy, and the eczema that had spread across his chest. Then, there was the intense pain that shot up and down his legs and left him breathless every time he laughed, sneezed or coughed. Most troubling of all, his knees would randomly buckle, causing him to stumble when he walked. “It got to the point that I was scared to hold my newborn daughter,” says Link, whose older son was 3 at the time.

Link had seen various physicians over the years, and was currently being treated by an orthopedic surgeon for tight muscles and bad posture. But when he explained his new symptoms, he was told to see a primary care physician—and fast.

Within days, he sat down with Thousand Oaks internist Dr. Adam Cavallero, who despite Link’s normal blood test results and vital signs was concerned about a neurological cause. An MRI performed early the following week revealed a golf ball-sized lesion on three vertebrae in Link’s upper back, with swelling that extended from his neck to just above his waist. Soon after, UCLA Health neurosurgeon Dr. Luke Macyszyn performed a complicated 10-hour spinal cord surgery to remove the tumor, which pathology concluded was a rare malignancy called an ependymoma.

Although Link’s recovery was slow, and required him to undergo intense physical and occupational therapy, today he says he is almost completely healed. “I can walk, I can kind of jog, I can pick up and play with both of my kids,” Link says. “My pain is well-managed, and I live a really normal life.”

Link says his recovery feels like nothing short of a medical miracle, and Dr. Cavallero agrees. “Before he came into see me, Carl was on the way to becoming paralyzed,” he says.

In this case, a primary care doctor’s ability to look at the big picture, and consider how Link’s back pain might be connected to his other symptoms, meant getting him the coordinated and quick treatment that potentially saved his life.

Share your story at connect.uclahealth.org

WHAT TYPES OF DOCTORS PROVIDE PRIMARY CARE?

**Internists:** who see adults

**Pediatricians:** who see kids

**Geriatricians:** who see elderly patients

**Family medicine doctors:** who see patients of all ages, and can take care of your entire extended family

Carl Link plays with his kids, Charles, 5, and Phoebe, 3.
HEALTH SYSTEM UPDATE

IN-PATIENT CARE, CLOSER TO HOME

As UCLA Health has expanded and opened primary and specialty care medical offices throughout greater Los Angeles, we have also grown our hospital network, and placed internists who specialize in treating hospitalized patients, called hospitalists, into 17 community hospitals and counting.

If you have a medical emergency, you should always call 911. But if you think you may need to be hospitalized and it is not an emergency, you can call your primary care physician (PCP), who will help you decide where to go based on your symptoms and where you live. You can request that a UCLA hospitalist care for you during your stay and coordinate that care with your PCP so you have a smooth transition home.

If you need highly specialized care, such as a transplant or heart surgery, you will have first priority for a transfer to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in Westwood or UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, where our physicians handle the most serious cases.

WESTSIDE & LOS ANGELES
1. Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center
2. UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica
3. Providence Saint John’s Health Center
4. Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
5. Good Samaritan Hospital
6. Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center

NORTHWEST VALLEY
7. Los Robles Hospital & Medical Center
8. Northridge Hospital Medical Center
9. West Hills Hospital & Medical Center
10. Providence Tarzana Medical Center

SOUTHBAY
11. Encino Hospital Medical Center
12. Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital

NORTHWEST VALLEY
13. Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center Torrance
14. Torrance Memorial Medical Center

VENTURA COUNTY
15. Community Memorial Hospital
16. St. John’s Regional Medical Center
17. St. John’s Pleasant Valley Hospital

DIGITAL DIGEST

MAKING ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS WORK FOR U

If you’re a UCLA Health patient, the online patient portal, called myUCLAhealth, and corresponding mobile app, called MyChart, offer a way for you to become more involved in and informed about your medical care.

Access your medical information
Manage your appointments and check in
Send a secure message to your doctor
View lab results, and graph them over time
Request a prescription refill
Submit feedback
Pay your bill

Behind the scenes, physicians also use an electronic health record system, called CareConnect, to view, update and share patient medical information. Together, our patient-facing and back-end electronic health record systems ensure that your care at UCLA Health is personalized, coordinated and thorough.

Learn more and sign-up at uclahealth.org/myuclahealth
PRIMARY AND SPECIALTY CARE
25775 McBean Parkway, Suites 202, 214, 215  
Phone: (661) 753-5464 or (661) 255-2420 (Ste. 214)  
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm  
Parking: Free parking in lot  
Services: Internal medicine, cardiology, cardiac imaging, dermatology, digestive diseases (including colorectal surgery and pain management), endocrinology, infectious diseases, nephrology, podiatry, pulmonary and critical care medicine, rheumatology, urology.

For more information, visit uclahealth.org/santaclarita

PRIMARY AND SPECIALTY CARE
27235 Tourney Rd., Suite 2500  
Phone: (661) 253-5851  
Hours: Weekdays: 8 am - 9 pm; Saturdays: 9 am - 1 pm  
Parking: Free parking in lot  
Services: Internal medicine, pediatrics, dermatology, pediatric neurosurgery, ENT / head and neck surgery, Imaging, interventional radiology and women’s services available in Suite 1500.

HEMATOLOGY / ONCOLOGY
27235 Tourney Rd., Suite 2400  
Phone: (661) 255-5350  
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm  
Services: Comprehensive cancer care, diagnostic and therapeutic consults, therapy infusions and injections, bone marrow biopsy. Rheumatology, dermatology and GI infusions also available.

OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY
23861 McBean Parkway, Suite E24  
Phone: (661) 259-8252  
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm  
Parking: Free parking in lot

ONGOING PROGRAM
WOODLAND HILLS

Join UCLA Health physicians for a healthy stroll in The Village at Westfield Topanga mall as you discuss preventive medicine and ask general health questions.

When: 1st Saturday of the month at 7:30 am  
More info: uclahealth.org/walkwithadoc
EXTENDED HOURS AND URGENT CARE

Need to see a physician in the evening or over the weekend, when your primary care physician isn’t available? UCLA Health now offers convenient, high-quality medical care in our urgent care and extended hours offices.

AVAILABLE SERVICES

- X-rays
- Casts, splints, laceration repair and suture removal
- Treatment for acute illnesses, such as fever, ear infections and influenza
- Treatment for bites, burns, sunburns and other skin irritations

Please note: All of our offices bill urgent visits as regular doctor’s appointments.

For more info, visit [uclahealth.org/urgentcare](http://uclahealth.org/urgentcare)

OFFICES NEAR YOU

**WOODLAND HILLS – THE VILLAGE AT WESTFIELD TOPANGA MALL**

6344 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Suite 2040  
Phone: (818) 610-0292  
Hours: Weekdays: 8 am - 8 pm; weekends and holidays: 9 am - 6 pm. Open holidays except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day.  
About: Walk-in appointments available evenings, weekends and holidays. Same-day availability with appointment on weekdays.

**SANTA CLARITA EVALUATION & TREATMENT CENTER**

27235 Tourney Rd., Suite 2500  
Phone: (661) 253-5851  
Hours: Weekdays: 5 pm - 9 pm; Saturdays: 9 am - 1 pm. Open most holidays from 9 am - 5 pm.  
About: Walk-in appointments available. Same-day appointments available weekdays at UCLA Health Santa Clarita primary and specialty care office.  
Additional services: IV fluids and medications, X-rays (no advanced imaging) and basic laboratory services.

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Alan M. Fogelman, MD

COO, AMBULATORY AND COMMUNITY PRACTICES  
Farah Elahi

VICE CHAIR, DEPT. OF MEDICINE COMMUNITY PRACTICES  
Matteo Dinolfo, MD

VICE CHAIR, DEPT. OF MEDICINE, COMMUNITY PHYSICIANS NETWORK  
Mark S. Grossman, MD

WRITER AND EDITOR  
Anne Machalinski

DESIGN  
Sean Noyce, Noysky Projects

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Peloso Photography

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For inquiries about The Checkup, contact us via e-mail: TheCheckup@mednet.ucla.edu