Sudden Appearance of Floaters and Flashes Can Signal Serious Eye Issues

Floaters are those specks or lines that sometimes drift into one’s field of vision. While typically harmless, floaters that occur suddenly and are accompanied by flashes of light or impaired vision can signal a potentially serious eye problem, particularly among older adults.

If floaters in combination with flashes do appear, it is important to consult with an ophthalmologist in a timely manner to determine if the symptoms are produced by a condition called vitreous detachment or indicate a more serious condition, such as a tear...
We’re here for you
Providing you with easy access to the best healthcare possible is our priority. Contact us however you like, and we’ll take it from there.

If you already have a UCLA doctor:
During normal office hours, call your doctor’s office.
After hours, call your doctor’s office. Some offices may offer the Nurse Advice Line, where a nurse can answer medical questions, guide you to the appropriate care, schedule an appointment or direct you to a UCLA Urgent Care location.

If you are new to UCLA, call 1-800-UCLA-MD1 (1-800-825-2631) for a referral to a UCLA doctor.

Send a non-urgent message: Contact your doctor’s office and access your electronic health record through my.UCLAhealth.org.
eVisit: Zipnosis offers online diagnosis and treatment services by UCLA physicians for common medical conditions, seven days a week from 8 am to 8 pm. Visit uclahealth.org/zipnosis.

Same-day appointments: Call your doctor’s office or 1-800-UCLA-MD1 (1-800-825-2631). For locations, visit uclahealth.org.

Urgent Care: Visit our Urgent Care offices when your primary-care physician is unavailable and it can’t wait. These offices have extended evening and weekend hours. For locations, visit uclahealth.org/urgentcare.
You can also visit a CVS Minute Clinic near you. Visit cvs.com/minuteclinic for a list of services.

True emergency: Call 911 or go to your closest emergency department.

UCLA Health Connect
A virtual community for patients and families to connect, share their experiences and improve UCLA Health through participation.
Get started by browsing through some of the patient stories, photos and videos featured on our website. Then share your own story.
We’d love to hear from you.
Connect. Share. Improve.

to learn more about UCLA Health Connect, go to connect.uclahealth.org
Medications, Diet and Lifestyle Changes Can Help Control Acid Reflux

More than 15-million Americans experience heartburn every day. This burning sensation in the chest is a classic sign of gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD. Other symptoms include a lingering sour taste in the mouth and a dry cough. Some people vomit food or feel as if food is stuck in their throat or chest.

“GERD occurs for a variety of reasons,” says Kevin Ghassemi, MD, associate director of clinical programs at the UCLA Center for Esophageal Disorders. “One of the most common causes is a weakened sphincter that allows stomach acid or food to flow back into the esophagus. Unfortunately, we’re not sure why this valve malfunctions in some people.”

Heartburn may seem like a mere annoyance, but Dr. Ghassemi stresses that the underlying cause — acid reflux — is a serious condition. “If not properly treated, GERD can cause severe complications such as esophagitis or inflammation, a narrowing of the esophagus, breathing problems, and even increase the risk for cancer of the esophagus,” he says.

Some people find relief with over-the-counter heartburn medications like antacids. However, Dr. Ghassemi recommends contacting your physician if you’re regularly reaching for these medicines more than once a week or still have symptoms after taking them. “You could have another esophageal disorder that requires a different treatment,” he says.

Doctors typically diagnose GERD based on a history of symptoms and how well those symptoms respond to prescribed treatment. Prescription-strength medications, such as proton pump inhibitors, reduce stomach acid and help the esophagus heal.

GERD can be a chronic health condition that requires lifelong treatment, much like high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Some people are able to stop taking medications after making dietary and lifestyle changes. “If you’re overweight, losing as little as 5-to-10 percent of your body weight can dramatically improve symptoms,” says Nancee Jaffe, MS, RD, a registered dietitian at the UCLA Digestive Health and Nutrition Clinic.

People who have GERD should consider avoiding foods and drinks that stimulate acid production, including citrus fruits and juices, tomato-based sauces, spicy foods, alcohol, fatty foods and caffeinated drinks. Jaffe also recommends eating smaller meals throughout the day, not eating within three hours of bedtime and elevating your head at night either with a wedge pillow or with lifts placed under the head of your bed.

“It’s important to know that nobody is immune to GERD,” Dr. Ghassemi says. “Overweight and older people might be more likely to have it, but I see it all the time in physically fit, younger people, too.”
‘Brain Pacemaker’ Has Proven Benefits for Patients with Some Movement Disorders
Among the more than 500 patients who have undergone deep brain stimulation (DBS) — the implantation of a "brain pacemaker" and electrodes to ease symptoms of movement disorders — one of the common observations is that "they wish they had done it earlier," says Nader Pouratian, MD, director of UCLA’s Neurosurgical Movement Disorders Program.

In the United States, an estimated 10-million people have essential tremor and 1 million have Parkinson’s disease. While DBS does not cure or change the trajectory of either disease, it is a safe and effective procedure that provides symptomatic relief to many patients, Dr. Pouratian says. The procedure has most recently been approved for two more conditions, dystonia (characterized by involuntary muscle contractions) and obsessive-compulsive disorder. It is also being studied for its potential to help in a number of other conditions.

In DBS, electrodes are strategically placed in the brain while a battery-powered generator is implanted in the chest to emit continuous pulses, correcting the abnormal patterns of brain activity for patients with neurological disease.

The surgery is most commonly performed as an asleep-awake-asleep procedure. The patient is asleep and anesthetized at the start of the procedure and awakened after the brain is exposed so he or she can respond to verbal commands with feedback that assists the surgical team in optimal placement of the electrodes. Afterward, the patient is put to sleep again as the final stage of the operation is completed. Since there are no pain receptors within the brain, patients experience no discomfort while awake during the operation.

The goal of DBS "is to improve function and quality of life," Dr. Pouratian explains. That is best achieved by being able to interact with the patient during surgery "to make sure we’re getting the benefits from the stimulation while limiting the side effects,” he says. "If the electrode is not in the optimal position, that’s our opportunity to move it.” However, for patients who are uncomfortable with the idea of being awake, the surgery can be performed under image guidance while they remain asleep throughout, Dr. Pouratian says.

Medications remain the first treatment option for movement disorders and can be effective in many patients. But patients who either don’t receive satisfactory benefits from their drugs or who experience intolerable side effects should be evaluated to determine whether DBS is an option, Dr. Pouratian says. At UCLA, a patient-centered approach features a multidisciplinary team, with the neurosurgeon and neurologist Yvette Bordelon, MD, working closely together before, during and after the surgery.

“We have excellent large, long-term studies showing that overall, those who are candidates for the surgery experience significant improvement in their quality of life, well beyond what patients receive from the available medications,” Dr. Pouratian says. “This is not a cure, but it’s quite clear that patients spend much more of their day in a better condition — able to participate in many more activities and to enjoy their lives more.”
Surgeons increasingly are using robotic surgery to operate on patients, resulting in less blood loss, less pain and faster recovery. Since 2003, UCLA urologic surgeons have performed more than 3,000 procedures robotically to treat prostate, bladder and kidney cancer. The robots don’t do the surgeries themselves; a surgeon and a dedicated team control the robotic arms and their highly maneuverable “endowrists,” which grasp the surgical instruments, from a console as they operate through small incisions. A high-definition image of the surgical field is provided by a camera that is inserted through a separate incision.

Robert Reiter, MD, director of UCLA’s Prostate Cancer Program, operated with his hands for 13 years before moving to robots in 2003. “It’s almost hard to remember [what it was like],” Dr. Reiter says. “The robots provide a far better operation. They’re more precise. There’s far less blood loss. There’s better visualization. It’s less invasive and less painful.” In traditional laparoscopic surgery, Dr. Reiter adds, “the instruments did not have any rotation so they didn’t function like a human hand. There was only two-dimensional vision. In robotic surgery, there is magnification, and you can get to places through smaller incisions. All of these things provide significant advantages.”

Robots were first used in urologic surgery for prostate-cancer surgery, followed by bladder and kidney-cancer procedures. In addition, urologic surgeons use the robots to treat
enlarged prostates, incontinence for both men and women and testicular cancer.

The technology has improved dramatically, Dr. Reiter says. "It’s almost like a television. Imagine going from analog to digital and now high definition...the instruments have gotten better, the robots have gotten better."

Technological advances have broadened their capabilities. Now, for example, surgeons use robots to not only remove cancer tumors from diseased bladders, but also to remove and then reconstruct and reinsert them. During kidney surgeries, surgeons can remove the entire kidney, or just the tumor. Recently, they have been performing kidney transplants using a robot.

Surgeons are integrating robotic surgery with better imaging to create precise maps of the prostate and the kidney before they remove them. In aggressive forms of prostate cancer, surgeons are using a green fluorescent dye, ICG, to identify the primary location to which the cancer has spread, called the sentinel lymph node. For kidney cancer, surgeons use the same dye to identify the vascular structure of the kidney so that they can remove the blood vessels supplying the tumor rather than the normal vasculature.

In addition to urology, robotic surgery is utilized in many different fields, including head and neck surgery, general surgery, cardiac, gynecology and thoracic surgery. “There’s really not anything we’re not using it for these days," Dr. Reiter says.

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**Sudden Appearance of Floaters and Flashes Can Signal Serious Eye Issues**

or detachment of the retina.

"After the age of 50, about 40 percent of the population already has a vitreous detachment. The more nearsighted the person is, the higher the chance for them to have this condition happen to them,” says Gad Heilweil, MD, an ophthalmologist at Doheny Eye Center UCLA. “By itself, we don’t consider vitreous detachment a disease.”

In most people, vitreous detachment is harmless and causes no symptoms, says Pradeep Prasad, MD, assistant professor of ophthalmology at UCLA Stein Eye Institute. As people age, the gel-like substance in the eye, called the vitreous, begins to liquify and contract, he explains. As the vitreous contracts, it peels away from the retina, the light-sensitive tissue that lines the back of the eye. In some patients, as the vitreous pulls away from the retina, a retinal tear or detachment may occur. This can be vision-threatening and requires urgent medical attention, Dr. Prasad says.

“It’s impossible for a patient to be able to distinguish between a vitreous detachment, which is bothersome, and an associated tear or detachment,” Dr. Prasad says. “That’s why it’s so important to see an ophthalmologist and have the symptoms evaluated.”

To evaluate the condition, an ophthalmologist dilates the eye to examine it and make sure there is no retinal tear or detachment. In 90 percent of cases, no problem exists and patients are reassured that the floaters and flashes will eventually go away without treatment. But it takes an examination to know that, Dr. Heilweil says.

“Everyone knows that with chest pain and other types of symptoms, you need to see your doctor right away,” he explains. "But people don’t realize sudden floaters or flashes in one eye is also a reason to call your doctor that same day. About half of people come in too late. It’s a pity because they’ve had symptoms for a week or two and they think the symptoms will go away.”

A tear in the retina can almost always be successfully treated with a laser, the doctors say. The outpatient procedure requires only a topical anesthetic and is painless. “The types of lasers we use today are very precise. They are just as efficacious but gentler on the eye,” Dr. Prasad says. A detached retina, on the other hand, requires surgery. There is a 90 percent or greater chance the retina can be reattached, Dr. Heilweil says.

“But sometimes vision is permanently affected,” he adds. "So the take-home message is: If, all of a sudden, you experience floaters or flashes or a combination of these two, contact your doctor or see an eye doctor as soon as possible.”

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To view a video about robotic surgery, go to: uclahealth.org/roboticsurgeryvideo
Mindful Awareness
Offers a Gentle Antidote to Daily Stress

More than 20-million American adults report using some form of meditation, and that number is on the rise. At UCLA, experts in the Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC) train people to increase their attention and focus on present-moment experiences through meditation. Diana Winston, director of mindfulness education at MARC and author of *Fully Present*, has been teaching mindfulness practices since 1993.
What is mindful awareness?

Most of the time, our minds are lost in the past or the future. Mindful awareness invites us to pay attention to present-moment experiences with openness, curiosity and a willingness to be with what is. Our lives are more stressful than they have ever been, and we must find ways to deal with that stress. By inviting us to stop, breathe, observe and connect with our inner experience, mindful awareness can be, for many people, an antidote to these stresses of our modern society.

How is it practiced?

Mindfulness can be cultivated through a meditation practice. The simplest way to practice is to find a relatively quiet place and time in your daily life, sit down and be comfortable, and focus your attention on your breathing. Usually people notice their breath in their abdomen, chest or nose. When your attention starts to wander — and everyone’s attention wanders — gently redirect your attention back to the sensations of breathing. Start with five minutes a day and gradually increase over time.

Mindfulness is more than just a meditation practice. It is a quality of attention that you can bring to any moment in the day.

What are the potential benefits?

People who practice mindful awareness may reap significant health benefits. In the last 10 or so years, research has shown that mindfulness is beneficial to reduce stress, anxiety, depression and chronic physical pain, as well as improve attention, concentration, self-awareness and positive emotions. Some studies suggest meditation can help lower blood pressure and boost immune-system function. Mindfulness practices are a tool that people may not have considered using, but which can positively impact their brains and improve their happiness and general sense of well-being.

How does one learn more about this?

At MARC, we offer classes, workshops, retreats and online resources to teach mindfulness practices. We have a six-week program called Mindful Awareness Practices (MAPs) that is available to the public and lays the foundation for individuals to understand basic principles of mindfulness, develop a personal meditation practice and apply the principles in their daily life on an ongoing basis. We also offer free drop-in meditation classes — at the Hammer Museum, at UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica and on the UCLA campus.

What happens on a meditation retreat?

It starts with a meditation before breakfast followed, after the meal, by meditation instruction and a silent morning of sitting and walking meditation. There is more instruction after lunch, and an evening lecture on mindfulness and more practice. Some people are concerned that they cannot handle the prolonged periods of silence, but they are surprised by how the supportive environment with other students and ongoing teacher guidance enables them to sit for much longer periods.

How have people responded to learning these practices?

I receive notes from people all over the world telling me how mindful awareness has helped them. People talk about improving their sleep, helping them be better parents or partners. I hear stories of less reactivity and more patience. Mindfulness can be a life changer for people.

For more information about MARC, upcoming events and video and audio meditation downloads, go to: marc.ucla.edu
About 25 years ago, a British researcher noted that younger children in large families seemed to have fewer allergies than older siblings. The researcher suggested that younger siblings may develop protection from allergies because they’re exposed to a variety of germs early in life, thanks to their older siblings.

Around the same time, doctors in many Western countries were noting a huge upswing of allergies. Many wondered if smaller families and cleaner living conditions — less exposure to various microbes early in life — could be behind the surge. “Why do we have more allergies and autoimmune disease now?” asks Maria I. Garcia Lloret, MD, assistant clinical professor of allergy and immunology at UCLA. “What is it about us? Is it that we are too clean?”

The answer may be yes. The so-called “hygiene hypothesis” has gained credence and has evolved into an even more sophisticated understanding of the “microbiome,” or the diversity of microbes that surround us, permeate our bodies and influence our health. Sophisticated tools to look at the genetic signatures of various microorganisms now suggest that we are awash in microbes. While some are harmful, others support normal bodily functions.

“Microbes on our skin and in our guts rule a lot of what happens to us, aside from causing infection,” Dr. Garcia Lloret explains. “The microbial diversity contributes to our health. Therefore, if you disrupt the microbial environment, you are interfering with the good things that are able to control the allergic response.”

Now doctors think that babies and young children who live in very clean environments may be more likely to develop allergies, allergic skin conditions and inflammatory bowel disorders. “The less diverse your microbes are, the more prone you are to diseases like inflammatory bowel disease and allergies,” Dr. Garcia Lloret says. “The new understanding is that we require microbial diversity to thrive.”

However, the hygiene hypothesis still has not yielded much practical advice, says UCLA pediatric pulmonologist Sande O. Okelo, MD, PhD. “I don’t think the evidence is there yet that would allow physicians to start prescribing any particular type of therapy relative to the hygiene hypothesis,” he says.

The one exception is the use of probiotics to reduce the incidence of eczema in babies at high risk for allergies. Recently, the World Allergy Organization issued guidelines stating that pregnant women with allergies or asthma can consider taking probiotics — live microbes that can be formulated into many different types of products, including foods, drugs and dietary supplements — in the second half of pregnancy. The guidelines also recommend breast feeding infants that are at high risk for allergies — those with a parent or sibling with an allergy have a 20-to-30 percent risk of also having an allergy — and giving them probiotics.

Further advice for consumers awaits more study. But, says Dr. Okelo: “The hygiene hypothesis is definitely worth exploring because prevention is the ultimate medicine.”
California law requires that women be informed if a mammography shows they have dense breast tissue. This legislation is intended to encourage women with dense breast tissue to discuss breast-cancer risk and screening with their doctors. Such information is part of a growing trend aimed at individualizing breast-cancer screenings, says Deanna J. Attai, MD, an assistant clinical professor of surgery and president of the American Society of Breast Surgeons.

“Screening mammography is one-size-fits-all, but breast-cancer risk is not one-size-fits-all,” she says.

The breast is composed of fat and glandular tissue — the higher the proportion of glandular tissue, the denser the breast. It is more difficult for a radiologist to spot a potential tumor in dense breast tissue, which means cancer may be missed during mammography. Independent of detection challenges, studies also show that women with dense breast tissue have a higher risk of developing breast cancer, says Lawrence Bassett, MD, a professor of radiology and section chief at the Iris Cantor Center for Breast Imaging.

“Most experts now believe that there is a risk factor involved in breast density,” he says. “It makes some sense because breast tumors don’t come from fat; they come from fibroglandular tissue.”

However, there are no guidelines from medical organizations on whether or not women with dense breasts who are at average risk for breast cancer should undergo additional screening or have a different type of screening, such as a digital breast tomosynthesis (3-D mammography), MRI or ultrasound. “We know additional imaging will pick up more breast cancer, but we don’t have long-term data to suggest that will actually help with survival rates,” Dr. Bassett says.

Currently, there are no simple answers on how women with dense breasts should approach screening. One option is for women with dense breasts to undergo tomosynthesis, Dr. Bassett says. "With tomosynthesis, we see the breast tissue in 1 millimeter slices in addition to the composite image. If there is tissue covering a tumor, it should appear on tomosynthesis.”

For women with very dense breasts, doctors may recommend ultrasound imaging in addition to mammography, he says. And for women with a breast-cancer risk that is 20 percent or higher than average, breast MRI should be considered, Dr. Bassett says.

Increasingly, doctors are focusing on each patient’s individual risk factors to advise patients on screening, Dr. Attai says. Doctors and patients also should discuss the fact that additional screening may produce a higher rate of “false positives” (areas that look suspicious but aren’t cancer), which can lead to additional tests and anxiety for the patient.

“Doctors should consider family history, age, weight, whether or not the patient used hormones, breast density and other factors we know can contribute to their risk of breast cancer,” Dr. Attai says. “I think it’s also important that physicians have a discussion with women about the potential downside of picking up every little thing.”
JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH 2016 COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS

UCLA Health offers community programs and events to help our neighbors lead healthier lives through wellness education. Go to uclahealth.org/calendar for more information.

**AGING AND MEMORY**

**Brain Boot Camp**
This intensive course will teach participants healthy lifestyles and ways to enhance memory for people with age-related memory concerns. Cost: $300 for 3 hours of Brain Boot Camp.
**When:** Sessions are scheduled on individual basis
**Where:** UCLA Longevity Center, 10945 Le Conte Av, Ste 3119
**Info:** (310) 794-4055

**Memory Care**
A weekly program for both caregivers and people experiencing memory loss to learn memory techniques as well as strategies to lower stress and stimulate the mind and the body.
**When:** Thursdays, 1 – 4 pm
**Where:** UCLA Longevity Center, 10945 Le Conte Av, Ste 3119
**RSVP:** (310) 794-0680

**ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE**

**Caregiver Support Group**
A support group for family members and caregivers coping with a loved one’s Alzheimer’s disease.
**When:** 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month / 1 – 2:30 pm
**Where:** Mary S. Easton Center for Alzheimer’s Disease Research at UCLA, 10911 Weyburn Av, 3rd Fl
**Info:** (310) 794-6039 or bdwyer@mednet.ucla.edu

**ANXIETY DISORDERS**

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Anxiety and Tolerating Emotional Pain**
Anxiety disorders bring about emotional pain and oftentimes efforts to get rid of the pain result in more pain. Shana Doron, LCSW, PhD, will discuss ways to stop the cycle of emotional pain and live a more meaningful life.
**When:** Tuesday, January 26 / 7 – 8:30 pm
**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Auditorium, 1250 16th St
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**CANCER**

**Cancer of the Brain: Primary Tumors and other Metastatic Disease**
Phoan An (Leia) Nghiemphu, MD, UCLA neurologist, will discuss individualized brain cancer treatment with emphasis on glioblastoma and the management of brain metastases from other types of cancers.
**When:** Tuesday, January 12 / 7 – 9 pm
**Where:** Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Ctr, Rm B130
**Info:** (310) 794-6644

**Treating Cancer with the Immune System**
Antoni Ribas, MD, PhD, director, UCLA Tumor Immunology Program, will discuss how cancer immunotherapy redirects the immune system to fight cancer. Specific antibodies used for patients with advanced melanoma and other cancers will also be discussed.
**When:** Tuesday, February 9 / 7 – 9 pm
**Where:** Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Ctr, Rm B130
**Info:** (310) 794-6644

**Cancer and Emotional Eating**
Carolyn Katzin, CNT, will discuss how a cancer diagnosis can lead to emotional eating and exacerbate underlying conditions such as glucose control or hypertension. She will also discuss ways to integrate self-soothing modalities to reduce stress-associated emotional eating.
**When:** Tuesday, March 8 / 7 – 9 pm
**Where:** Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Ctr, Rm B130
**Info:** (310) 794-6644

**Colorectal Cancer Update**
Kevork Kazanjian, MD, chief of Colorectal Surgery at UCLA will focus on screenings and the latest treatments available, and how to prevent colorectal cancer.
**When:** Wednesday / March 16, 7 – 8:30 pm
**Where:** Santa Clarita Family YMCA, 26147 McBean Parkway, Valencia
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**Look Good, Feel Better Class**
This specially designed American Cancer Society program teaches how to use scarves, wigs and makeup to address the side effects of cancer treatments and regain confidence. For cancer patients only.
**When:** Monday, March 21 / 2:30 – 4:30 pm
**Where:** 1821 Wilshire Blvd, Ste 200, Santa Monica
**RSVP:** (800) 227-2345

**CATARACT**

**Cataracts: What You Need to Know**
Olivia Lee, MD, UCLA ophthalmologist, will give an overview of the past, present and future of cataract surgery and discuss advancements in cataract surgery that make it safer and easier to perform surgery.
**When:** Thursday, February 25 / 2 – 3:30 pm
**Where:** The Fair Oaks, 951 S. Fair Oaks Av, Pasadena
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**DEMENTIA**

**Dementia with Lewy Bodies**
Sarah Kremen, MD, will discuss how dementia with Lewy Bodies is the second most common form of dementia after Alzheimer’s disease and how it can easily be mistaken for it. This webinar will review the symptoms, diagnostic criteria and management of this neurodegenerative disease.
**When:** Thursday, January 21 / 11 am – Noon
**Where:** Webinar
**Info:** uclahealth.org/ucalmdchat

Events in gold are offered near our UCLA community offices.
**DIABETES**

**Second Annual Healthy Living with Diabetes Patient Conference**
This half-day event, sponsored by the UCLA Diabetes Education Program, will include a product fair, presentations on various timely topics on diabetes research and management and special breakout sessions targeting type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

**When:** Saturday, March 5 / 8 am – 12:30 pm
**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, 1250 16th St, Conference Center
**RSVP & Info:** (310) 794-1299 or diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu

**Diabetes**
Learn the symptoms, diagnosis and treatments for diabetes and how to manage it.

**When:** Tuesday, March 8 / 2 – 3:30 pm
**Where:** Westside Family YMCA, 11131 La Grange Av
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**Living with Type 2 Diabetes (ONGOING)**
This ADA-certified self-care class will help you gain important skills, knowledge and confidence to successfully manage your diabetes. This class is offered in Santa Monica, Torrance and Porter Ranch. A physician referral is required. Covered by most medical insurance policies.

**Info:** (310) 794-1299 or diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu

**DIGESTIVE DISEASES**

**Healthy Gut Series**
Nancee Jaffe, registered dietitian for the UCLA Digestive Health and Nutrition Clinic, will discuss how to improve bowel habits, avoid reflux, combat gas and bloating, as well as understand functional disorders such as IBS and the role of probiotics in digestive well-being. The series includes two classes for two hours each.

**When:** Thursday, February 18 & 25 / 7 – 9 pm
**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 1250 16th St
**RSVP & Info:** (800) 516-5323 or gastro.ucla.edu/communityevents
**Cost:** $35 registration fee (checks only accepted on date of event) for both dates. Discounted rates are not available to attend one evening only.

**ETHICS**

**Ethics Center Noon Lecture Series**
Rebecca Dresser, MS, JD, from Washington University School of Law, will discuss the complexity of decision making when patients make “bad choices” in treatment planning.

**When:** Wednesday, February 17 / Noon – 1 pm
**Where:** Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Ctr, Rm B130
**Info:** (310) 794-6219

**22nd Ethics of Caring Conference**
Come learn about exploring the heart of ethics.

**When:** Tuesday, March 15 / 8 am – 4 pm
**Where:** UCLA Carnesale Commons
**RSVP:** ethicsofcaring.org

**UCLA Health Ethics Center Noon Lecture Co-Sponsored by UCLA Faculty Women’s Club**
Victoria Sweet, MD, PhD, associate clinical professor of medicine at UCSF will discuss her book, God’s Hotel: A Doctor, a Hospital and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine.

**When:** Monday, March 21 / Noon - 1 pm
**Where:** Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Ctr, Rm B130
**Info:** mmazraani@mednet.ucla.edu

**HEART DISEASE**

**WomenHeart West Los Angeles**
This peer-led support group is part of WomenHeart, a national coalition for women with heart disease. Sessions will provide peer support, advocacy and education by leading professionals in the field.

**When:** Monday, January 11, February 8 & March 14 / 7 pm
**Where:** UCLA Cardiac Rehab Center, 200 UCLA Medical Plaza, Ste 206C
**Info:** (310) 825-0014

**Blood Pressure and U**
Anjey Rastogi, MD, PhD, UCLA nephrologist, will discuss the importance of managing high blood pressure through lifestyle and medication management.

**When:** Wednesday, February 10 / 7 – 8:30 pm
**Where:** Santa Monica Bay Woman’s Club, 1210 4th St
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**Aortic Stenosis Update**
Olçay Aksoy, MD, UCLA interventional cardiologist, will discuss symptoms of aortic stenosis and nonsurgical treatment options.

**When:** Tuesday, February 23 / 6:30 – 8 pm
**Where:** Torrance-South Bay Family YMCA, 2900 W. Sepulveda Bl
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323

**KIDNEY DISEASE**

**Kidney Smart Classes**
This specially designed two-hour class focuses on how your kidneys function, ways to manage your diet and health to promote healthy kidneys and information about kidney disease.

**When:** Thursday, January 7, January 28, February 11, February 25, March 10, March 24 / 2 – 4 pm
**Where:** 1821 Wilshire Bl, Ste 200, Santa Monica
**RSVP & Info:** (888) 695-4363 or kidneysmart.org

**MIDWIFE SERVICES**

**UCLA Midwives**
Come and meet the UCLA Midwives and discuss UCLA services offered and ask questions.

**When:** Tuesdays, January 5 & 19, February 2 & 16, March 1 & 15 / 1:15 – 2 pm
**Where:** 200 UCLA Medical Plaza, Rm 447

**MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)**

**REACH to Achieve Program (ONGOING)**
This weekly wellness program focuses on fitness, memory, emotional well-being, recreation, nutrition and health education for individuals with multiple sclerosis (MS).

**Where:** Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA, 1000 Veteran Av
**Info & Application:** (310) 267-4071

**Beyond Diagnosis: Moving Forward with MS**
Join MS professionals at the MS Achievement Center and the National MS Society in a conversation about the disease and wellness practices to help you live your best life with MS.

**Where:** Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA, 1000 Veteran Av
**Info & Application:** (310) 481-1113

**CogniFitness**
A four-week program for those with MS experiencing mild cognitive problems. Learn strategies to improve concentration, memory, organization, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

**Where:** Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA, 1000 Veteran Av
**Info & Application:** (310) 481-1113

**PARKINSONIAN DISORDERS**

**Parkinsonian Disorders Support Group**
The Parkinsonian Disorders Support Group meets monthly to provide information, education, resources and support for families dealing with the following disorders: PSP, CBD, MSA and PD. Facilitator: Loretta Mazorra, RN, NP, MN, MA

**When:** 1st Friday of each month from 2 – 4 pm
**Attention – No meeting January 1, 2016**
**Where:** 300 UCLA Medical Plaza, 3rd Fl, Marisa Leif Conf Rm
**Info:** Dolly West at (310) 206-2154 or dwest@mednet.ucla.edu

**PLASTIC SURGERY**

**Facial Aesthetics and Rejuvenation**
Jason Roostaeian, MD, UCLA plastic surgeon, will discuss the latest techniques in facial aesthetic surgery and rejuvenation that give real results without losing one’s natural appearance.

**When:** Thursday, January 28 / 7 – 8:30 pm
**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Auditorium, 1250 16th St
**RSVP:** (800) 516-5323
PODIATRY

Bunion and Bunion Surgery
Bob Baravarian, DPM, will discuss bunions and the latest surgical and nonsurgical treatments for this common condition.
When: Tuesday, January 19 / 5:45 – 6:45 pm (date subject to change)
Where: 2121 Wilshire Bl, Ste 101, Santa Monica
RSVP: (310) 828-0011

Heel and Ankle Pain
Gary Briskin, DPM, will discuss the common causes of ankle and heel pain, including plantar fasciitis, arthritis, tendinitis and tendon tears. Surgical and nonsurgical therapies, including arthroscopy and shockwave, will be explored.
When: Tuesday, February 16 / 5:45 – 6:45 pm (date subject to change)
Where: 2121 Wilshire Bl, Ste 101, Santa Monica
RSVP: (310) 828-0011

Footing and Ankle Pain
Doctors from the Santa Monica Podiatry Group will present the latest techniques in the treatment of heel pain, nerve pain, arthritis, tendinitis, ankle injuries and peripheral neuropathies. They will also explore the newest technologies, such as the Class 4 MLS laser and other treatment options for common foot ailments.
When: Thursday, March 17 / 5 – 6 pm
Where: 1260 15th St, Ste 1014, Santa Monica
RSVP: (310) 451-1618

WELLNESS

Strategies to Get the Most out of Your Doctor’s Visit
Eyal Maidan, MD, UCLA internal medicine physician, will explore how to communicate with your physician and prepare for preventive care, urgent care and hospital visits. He will also discuss how to advocate for yourself and a loved one, as well as offer reliable resources to learn about your health online and in the media.
When: Saturday, January 30 / 10 – 11:30 am
Where: Belmont Village, 10475 Wilshire Bl
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

General Health Effects on Your Eyes
Vikas Chopra, MD, UCLA ophthalmologist, will explain how high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, shingles and diet are examples of systemic issues that can cause changes in your eyes. He will also discuss ways to preserve your eyesight, while taking care of your general health.
When: Wednesday, February 17 / 2 – 3:30 pm
Where: The Fair Oaks, 951 S Fair Oaks Av, Pasadena
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

Breaking Bad Health Habits
Allison Leung, MD, UCLA internal medicine physician and pediatrician, will discuss techniques and steps to help you reach your health goals. The key is to make these changes work for you and your lifestyle so you can live your life the way you want.
When: Saturday, February 20 / 10:30 am – Noon
Where: UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Auditorium, 1250 16th St
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

Understanding End-of-Life Decision Making: What You Really Need to Know
Adam Cavallero, MD, UCLA internal medicine physician, will discuss the essentials of end-of-life decision making, including advance directives, durable power of attorney and Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST). Special attention will be on demystifying topics such as code status, artificial nutrition, palliative care and hospice.
When: Tuesday, March 8 / 6:30 – 8 pm
Where: Camarillo Health Care District, 3639 E. Las Posas Rd, Bldg E, Ste 117
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

FEATURED EVENT
THE GIFT OF LIFE: ORGAN DONATION — MYTHS AND FACTS
Organ donation is a generous and worthwhile decision that can be a lifesaver. One donor may save up to eight lives and enhance many others through organ or tissue donation. A panel of experts from UCLA transplant programs, a donor recipient, a live donor and a representative from an organ procurement organization will dispel myths and answer questions about organ donation.
When: Saturday, March 12 / 10 am – Noon
Where: UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Auditorium, 1250 16th St
Info: (800) 516-5323

Mastering Resilience and Success
Stephen Sideroff, PhD, UCLA psychologist, will explain the connections between stress, emotions and physical symptoms and present the model of resilience, healing and optimal functioning.
When: Wednesday, March 9 / 7 – 8:30 pm
Where: Santa Monica Bay Woman’s Club, 1210 4th St
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

Advance Directives
Robert Ashley, MD, UCLA family medicine physician, will discuss end-of-life care, how to choose a durable power of attorney for healthcare and how to make choices about the direction of your healthcare.
When: Wednesday, March 23 / 2:30 – 4 pm
Where: Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

Breastfeeding 101
Megan Chen, MD, UCLA family medicine physician, will discuss how to provide the best possible nutrition for your baby from the perspective of a physician and a mother.
When: Thursday, March 24 / 9 – 10:30 am
Where: UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Auditorium, 1250 16th St
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

Yoga as Medicine
Elizabeth Ko, MD, UCLA internal medicine physician and yoga instructor, will lead an interactive session on posture, mindfulness and meditation as a means to promote health and wellness.
When: Tuesday, March 29 / 1:30 – 3 pm
Where: Culver City Senior Center, 4095 Overland Av
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

RESEARCH AND TRIALS
UCLAconducts research on a wide range of medical disorders. Go online to learn more information about opportunities to participate in research and clinical trials: uclahealth.org/calendar.

UCLA HEALTH.ORG 1-800-UCLA-MD1 (1-800-825-2631)
UCLA HEALTH 50 PLUS IS A PROGRAM offering educational lectures, a walking program, information on community and health resources, membership amenities, a free community flu shot clinic and special events. To sign up, call (800) 516-5323.

FEATURED EVENT
CAREGIVER U — A MORNING ABOUT TAKING CARE OF U
UCLA Health, WISE & Healthy Aging and the Alzheimer's Association invite you to a special FREE event for caregivers. This program includes interactive workshops on self-care techniques to reduce stress, resource navigation, the latest treatments in Alzheimer's disease, effective communication strategies and tips to build confidence when coping with caregiver demands. Also featured are one-on-one consultations with UCLA physicians, pharmacists, physical therapists, Urban Zen integrative medicine practitioners and geriatric care managers. Respite care available for $20, advance reservations required — call (310) 394-9871.
When: Saturday, February 27 / 9 am – 12:30 pm
Where: Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4th St, Santa Monica
RSVP Conference: (800) 516-5323

50 Senior Scholars (ONGOING)
Attend and audit undergraduate courses taught by UCLA's distinguished professors and enjoy intergenerational learning. Sign up for Spring Quarter classes in February.
Where: Locations vary on UCLA Campus
Info & Cost: (310) 794-0679 or sgoldfarb@mednet.ucla.edu

50 Memory Training Course (QUARTERLY)
Learn practical memory-enhancing techniques in a course designed for people with mild memory concerns; not for those with dementia. Two hours per week for four weeks.
Where: Locations vary
Info & Cost: (310) 794-0680 or sgoldfarb@mednet.ucla.edu or longevity.ucla.edu

50 Westside Walkers
Sign in at Macy's storefront on level 2.5, Westside Pavilion on Pico Bl between Overland Av and Westwood Bl, West Los Angeles.
When: Tuesdays and Thursdays / 8 – 10 am
Info: (800) 516-5323

50 Fitness U
UCLA Stay Active and Independent for Life, a fitness and education program led by UCLA physical therapists, is designed for healthy seniors. Cost: $40 per month for unlimited participation. First-time participants should arrive at 1:30 pm for physical therapy screening.
When: Mondays and Wednesdays / 2 – 3 pm
Where: YWCA Santa Monica/Westside Auditorium, 2019 14th St, Santa Monica
RSVP: (424) 259-7140

50 Vaccinations for Older Adults
Learn which vaccinations are recommended for older adults for disease prevention and to maintain good health and vitality.
When: Tuesday, January 12 / 2 – 3:30 pm
Where: Westside Family YMCA, 11311 La Grange Av, Los Angeles
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

50 Wellbeing: A Journey into Aging
A FREE three-part series offering practical, lifestyle information and resources at workshop sessions focusing on community, body/mind and health connections. Space is limited.
RSVP: (800) 516-5323
Workshops:
- “How to Make New Friends” and “Connecting and Reconnecting Online”
- “Finding New Meanings/Moving Forward” and “The Science of Mindfulness”
When: Saturday, February 27 / 1 – 4 pm
Where: Westside Family YMCA
RSVP: (800) 516-5323

WEBINARS ON DEMAND
If you missed one of our UCLA MDChat Webinars, visit our Webinars On Demand library to view programs led by UCLA physicians. For more information, visit: uclahealth.org/uclamdchat
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Or contact Jason Gross, director of gift planning, (310) 267-1832 or jgross@support.ucla.edu.

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