

# The Checkup

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER TO HELP YOU

## HOW LIFESTYLE CHANGES CAN IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH



**W**E ARE ALL AT RISK FOR developing health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer in our lifetimes. In many cases, that risk increases with age alone. But other factors are also at play.

Non-modifiable risk factors are things that you cannot change, such as family history, genetic profile, ethnicity and gender. Modifiable risk factors are things that you can change, often just by making healthier choices every day.

Primary care physicians, or PCPs, calculate their patients' individual risk for being diagnosed with common health conditions based on all these factors. They share these results and encourage their patients to make lifestyle changes to support their long-term health. Here is what this process looks like in practice:

### KEEP YOUR DATA UP-TO-DATE

At your annual physical, your PCP will want to know about your current lifestyle—what you eat, how often you

exercise and what you do to manage stress. If you have made any lifestyle changes since your last appointment, you should share this information.

If you are seeing a new physician, you should let them know about any family history of cancer, diabetes or cardiovascular disease. You should also update your PCP if a family member is diagnosed with a serious medical condition during the course of your care.

Along with these background details, your PCP may also want to collect some clinical data, such as your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and hemoglobin A1c levels. Gathering some of this information will require a blood test.

### COMMIT TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Once your PCP has reviewed this information, they can spot trends, such as increases in weight or cholesterol levels, and also calculate your risk for being diagnosed with specific conditions. Your PCP can then suggest some

next steps to keep you healthier. These might include more frequent blood pressure checks; lifestyle modifications, such as more exercise or a healthier plant-based diet; or the use of a medication to lower your cholesterol.

These next steps are designed to avoid a diagnosis, which is known as primary prevention, or to reverse or reduce the impact of a current diagnosis, which is known as secondary prevention.

### NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

A new year is the perfect time to take stock of your health and make lifestyle changes to improve it. Is your blood pressure in a healthy zone? Are you due for a colon cancer screening? Do you need a flu vaccination? We can help you take action to support your long-term health.

Call **1-800-876-8320** to schedule an appointment or establish care.

**Find a primary care physician:**  
[uclahealth.org/EIMG](https://uclahealth.org/EIMG)

## THE KEY TO BETTER HEALTH: OUR SUPPORT

Johnese Spisso, President, UCLA Health



IN THIS THIRD ISSUE OF *The Checkup*, timed to come out in the beginning of a new year, we are focusing on how your UCLA

Health team can empower you to make lifestyle changes that support your long-term health. Here are some initial steps you can take to make 2019 your healthiest year yet:

### Go for your annual physical.

With more than 40 primary care offices throughout greater Los Angeles—most of which offer same-day appointments—we make it easy for you to establish care with a primary care physician and come in for your annual wellness visit.

### Follow along in the patient portal.

The UCLA Health patient portal, accessible online at [my.uclahealth.org](http://my.uclahealth.org) or through the MyChart app, offers several features to help you better understand your health. For instance, you can view recent test results in the patient portal and graph them against prior results. You can also read general information about many of these lab tests, and see if your cholesterol and hemoglobin A1c levels fall within the healthy range.

In addition to learning more about your health, you can use the patient portal to check on referrals, directly schedule primary care appointments, request prescription refills and ask your physician's office non-urgent medical questions.

### Get extra help when you need it.

Your primary care physician should always be your first stop if you are sick, injured or have a health concern. If you need to see a specialist, such as a gastroenterologist, or join one of our specialty programs, such as cardiac rehab, your PCP can work with you to identify the best option and provide the appropriate referral.

Thank you for reading, and here's to a happy and healthy year ahead.

## PREVENTIVE CARE

# PREDIABETES: 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW



About 30 million people in the United States, or 1 in 10, have diabetes. Most have Type 2 diabetes, which may be preventable and takes years to develop as blood sugar levels increase. On the path to Type 2 diabetes, many people are first diagnosed with a reversible condition called prediabetes. Risk factors for both conditions include being overweight, being physically inactive and having a family history of diabetes. Here is what you need to know:



### 1. PREDIABETES MEANS YOUR BLOOD SUGAR IS ELEVATED

People diagnosed with prediabetes have blood sugar levels higher than normal on a glucose

tolerance test or a hemoglobin A1c test, which measures blood sugar control over three months. An A1c between 5.7% and 6.4% means prediabetes, and an A1c of 6.5% or greater means Type 2 diabetes.



### 4. IT IS ALSO REVERSIBLE

If you are diagnosed with prediabetes, you can often get your blood sugar under control and within a normal range by losing about 10 pounds, or 5% of your body weight if you weigh 200 pounds or more; exercising regularly; and cutting out simple carbohydrates, such as juice, soda, chips and sweets.



### 2. IT IS VERY COMMON

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 84 million American adults, or 1 in 3, have prediabetes. However, 9 out of 10 of them don't know they have it.



### 3. YOU WON'T NECESSARILY EVER GET DIABETES

Even if your A1c is in the prediabetic range, it won't necessarily ever tip into the diabetic range, especially if you make positive lifestyle changes to turn things around.



### 5. HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you have prediabetes or are at an increased risk for developing Type 2 diabetes, your primary care physician can provide resources on diet and exercise to help you manage or reverse this condition. UCLA Health patients can also work with a registered dietitian or attend a referral-based diabetes education program.

Find more diabetes resources: [uclahealth.org/diabetes](http://uclahealth.org/diabetes)



Michael Bannon stops to stretch during his morning bike ride in Santa Monica.

#### PATIENT STORY

## FROM 'DEAD ON THE ROAD' TO HEALTHY AND ACTIVE

**O**N FEB. 22, 2016, MICHAEL Bannon was taking his daily morning bike ride when tragedy struck. Somewhere along his one hour route through Santa Monica, Bannon, now 57, suffered a massive heart attack and was left “dead on the road,” he says.

A passerby found him and started chest compressions; then emergency personnel resuscitated him when they arrived. He was transported to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, where physicians used hypothermia protocol to place him in a medically induced coma. He woke up three days later, and soon after, underwent a quadruple bypass surgery.

After a successful procedure, performed by Dr. Peyman Benharash, and about 10 days of in-hospital recovery, Bannon was sent home. At a follow-up appointment, cardiologist Dr. Melkon

Hacobian referred him to outpatient cardiac rehab—an important step in the recovery process that is clinically shown to improve patient outcomes and quality of life.

Bannon was specifically referred to the Ornish Lifestyle Medicine program, which takes place over the course of nine weeks and is held in twice weekly 4-hour sessions. In each meeting, up to 10 participants complete one hour of supervised exercise and another hour of meditation or yoga. They also listen to a nutrition lecture, have a group meal and talk with their peers in a support group. “It is equal parts exercise, nutrition, love and support, and stress management,”

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**‘My heart attack really improved my life.’**

says Bannon, noting that he experienced the benefits of the program right away.

Before his heart attack Bannon says he was healthy, but never “peak healthy.” He went on a daily bike ride, but also knew that he had high cholesterol and did little to address it.

After his heart attack, Bannon made the healthy changes he learned in the Ornish program. When he was told that bypass grafts can fail when people resume bad habits, he saw an incentive to stick with the positive changes. “I told him that if he continues his aggressive lifestyle modifications, he can control this, and prevent disease progression,” Dr. Hacobian says.

Today, Bannon eats a plant-based diet, rides his bike every morning and meditates four times per week. In the last three years he has lost 30 pounds, reduced his “bad” LDL cholesterol by 62%, and reduced his total cholesterol more than 50%, from 224 to 105 mg/dL.

While this time has been difficult, Bannon says he is thankful for it all. “I wouldn’t wish this experience on anyone,” he says, “but in the end, my heart attack really improved my life.”

## PRIMARY CARE OPTIONS NEAR YOU

**E**VERYONE SHOULD HAVE A primary care physician. This is the doctor you should see for an annual physical and work with to manage chronic medical conditions. Your PCP should also be your first stop if are sick, injured or have a health concern.

As a member of the Entertainment Industry Medical Group, you can choose from three dozen primary care physicians located in six health centers. Most offices offer same-day appointments for new and existing patients; all provide care that is patient-centered, convenient and coordinated.

The adjacent map details EIMG health center locations. Call your doctor's office to schedule an appointment, or **1-800-876-8320** to establish care.

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



1. **Bob Hope Health Center**
2. **Jack H. Skirball Health Center**
3. **Santa Clarita Health Center**
4. **Toluca Lake Health Center\***
5. **Westside Health Center**
6. **Age Well Program (Geriatric Medicine)**

\* EXTENDED WEEKDAY AND HOLIDAY HOURS

### DIGITAL DIGEST

## OPTIMIZE YOUR USE OF THE PATIENT PORTAL

The UCLA Health patient portal, which you can access online at [my.uclahealth.org](http://my.uclahealth.org), offers several ways for you to stay involved in your medical care. It is also convenient, and can help you save time that you may have otherwise spent in a waiting room or on the phone.

Try it: [my.uclahealth.org](http://my.uclahealth.org)



### DOWNLOAD AND START USING THE MOBILE APP

Want to access your medical information on the go? The features offered in the online patient portal are also available in a mobile app. Download the "MyChart" app from the App Store or Google Play Store, open it, and select UCLA Health as your organization. Your login information remains the same.



### DIRECT SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS

If you are an established patient, you can now directly schedule primary care appointments through the online patient portal or mobile app. Just select "Schedule An Appointment" from the quick links; select which UCLA Health provider you want to see; choose a day and time that works for you; and hit "Schedule." No phone calls are necessary!



### GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE

If you are a current patient, you can use the patient portal to ask your physician a non-urgent medical question, check on a referral, or submit feedback. Just select "Ask a Question" from the quick links and select the appropriate option.

# The Checkup EIMG Edition

COVERING THE SANTA CLARITA HEALTH CENTER, JACK H. SKIRBALL HEALTH CENTER AND AGE WELL PROGRAM IN WOODLAND HILLS, WESTSIDE HEALTH CENTER IN WEST L.A., TOLUCA LAKE HEALTH CENTER IN BURBANK, AND BOB HOPE HEALTH CENTER IN HOLLYWOOD



## PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

# TOLUCA LAKE HEALTH CENTER



## PRIMARY AND SPECIALTY CARE

**4323 Riverside Drive  
Burbank, CA 91505**

**Phone:** (818) 556-2700

**Parking:** Free parking beneath building; enter on Valley Street.

**More info:** [uclahealth.org/toluca-lake](http://uclahealth.org/toluca-lake)

**Hours:** Monday - Friday: 7 am - 8 pm;  
weekends and holidays: 8 am - 4 pm.

**Open 365 days/year**

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- Mental health services
- Sleep / family medicine – Dr. Reuben J. Ram

- Sports / family medicine – Dr. Sagir G. Bera
- Radiology services, including X-ray, bone density, mammography and ultrasound. X-rays are the only radiology service offered on weekends.
- Dept. of Transportation physicals

## PLEASE NOTE

The **Jack H. Skirball Health Center** is open weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm and Saturdays from 8 am to 4 pm. Extended weekday and holiday hours are no longer offered.

## FEATURED SPECIALTIES

### BURBANK

UCLA Health recently added more specialists to the Burbank office. All are accepting new patients, and some offer same day appointments.

- **Cardiology - Suite 322:** General and interventional cardiology, plus cardiac imaging services, including treadmill tests and echocardiograms.
- **Gastroenterology - Suite 322:** General gastroenterology appointments. Physicians specialize in colon cancer screening and functional GI disorders. Procedures performed off-site.
- **Urology - Suite 310:** General urology and urologic oncology services. Same day appointments available.

**Where:** 2625 W. Alameda Ave.

**Phone:** (818) 843-9020;

Urology: (310) 794-7700

**Parking:** Paid parking in lot; \$1 every 15 minutes, \$9 maximum.

**More info:** [uclahealth.org/burbank](http://uclahealth.org/burbank)

## NEW PHYSICIAN

# DR. LARA ATCHABAHIAN



A new primary care physician recently joined the Toluca Lake Health Center. Dr. Lara Atchabahian is a Los Angeles native who is board certified in internal medicine. Her clinical interests include preventive medicine and the management of acute and chronic medical conditions. She is currently accepting new patients.

**Where:** Toluca Lake Health Center, 4323 Riverside Drive, Burbank

**Phone:** (818) 556-2700

**More info:** [uclahealth.org/toluca-lake](http://uclahealth.org/toluca-lake)

CLINICAL UPDATE

# ARE YOU TAKING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING?

- sleeping pills
- anxiety medication
- pain medication
- medication to sharpen focus
- medication to stimulate appetite

WHILE ALL OF THESE MEDICATIONS HAVE appropriate and time-honored uses, they can also be misused or abused.

To screen prescriptions for possible issues, the State of California recently developed an oversight program called CURES. Here is what you need to know:

- Because physicians are now required to consult CURES before prescribing these medications, it may take a bit longer to get refills. To avoid a delay or interruption, please plan ahead and give your physician's office at least one week to process refills.
- If you have questions about this process or you want to know if your prescription is impacted by CURES, please reach out to the UCLA Health MyMeds/Clinical Pharmacists team to discuss. They are available by phone at (323) 22-DRUGS [(323) 223-7847].

Find more health news: [uclahealth.org](http://uclahealth.org)

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU



### PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Email us at  
[UCLAHealthExperience@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:UCLAHealthExperience@mednet.ucla.edu)



### BILLING QUESTIONS

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### SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

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### SHARE YOUR STORY

Write in at  
[connect.uclahealth.org](mailto:connect.uclahealth.org)



### NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

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