

June 24, 2002

Advisory for Monday, June 24

Doctors from UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital Discuss Plans to Separate Conjoined Twins

WHAT: The upcoming surgery at UCLA to separate 11-month-old conjoined Guatemalan twins will be the topic of a news conference featuring two UCLA surgeons, the vice provost of the UCLA Medical Center and the director of the California chapter of Healing the Children. The twin girls, who are otherwise in good health, are joined at the skull.

WHO:

- Dr. Jorge Lazareff, UCLA associate professor of neurosurgery, will discuss the surgery, scheduled for mid-July.
- Dr. Henry Kawamoto, surgical director, UCLA Craniofacial Clinic, will explain a procedure, scheduled for June 24, to expand the twins' skin on their scalp.
- Dr. Michael Karpf, vice provost, UCLA Medical Center, and Cris Embleton, director, California chapter, Healing the Children, will provide background on how the twins were brought from Guatemala to UCLA.
- Mother, Leticia Alba, may participate.

WHEN: 10:45 a.m., Monday, June 24.

WHERE: Marion Davies Conference Center, room 12-407, 1st floor, Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA.

VISUALS: B-roll of the twins, beta copies will be provided; X-rays of recent diagnostic tests; enlarged graphic (courtesy of the Los Angeles Times).

BACKGROUND: Maria Teresa and Maria de Jesus Quiej Alvarez, born in Guatemala on July 25, 2001, arrived in Los Angeles with their mother, Alba Leticia Alvarez, on June 7. Healing the Children, a nonprofit group that helps find medical care for children in underdeveloped countries, approached Dr. Lazareff, one of the group's volunteer physicians, for help in accepting the twins' cases. Drs. Lazareff and Kawamoto are leading the team of more than 50 physicians, nurses and medical staff who will treat the twins' rare case.

MEDIA CONTACT: UCLA Health Sciences Media Relations, (310) 794-0777.

PARKING: See parking kiosk attendant at corner of Le Conte and Tiverton for CHS lot parking pass. Oversized TV trucks may park at the circle drive entrance of Mattel Children's Hospital on Tiverton.