

# Vital Signs

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FEATURE STORIES

**Telehealth**

Page 4

**COVID-19**

Page 6

**Extensivist Program**

Page 8

**Community calendar**

Page 12



## ATLAS project aims to usher in era of personalized health care

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the urgency to develop tools that will enable physicians to personalize treatments based on each patient's genetic makeup, helping them to understand who is at highest risk and to provide the right treatment to the right patient at the right time.

The UCLA Institute for Precision Health (IPH) has accelerated efforts to build the largest genomic resource based on patients' de-identified DNA samples, which can be used to develop uniquely tailored treatments and interventions to change the way health care is delivered.

[Continued on page 7](#)

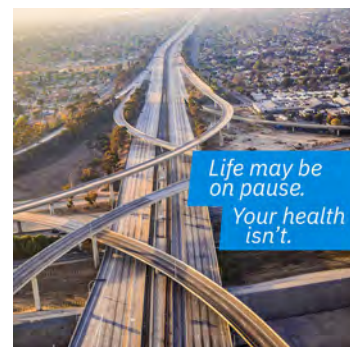


## In this issue

- 2 **What's new at UCLA**
- 3 **In your community: Coping in a crisis**  
UCLA offers services and support near you.
- 4 **Telehealth's time has come**  
In the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has taken a lead role to deliver care to patients at home.
- 6 **COVID-19**  
Convalescent plasma study aims to yield an effective treatment.
- 7 **ATLAS project**  
UCLA has launched an ambitious effort to create one of California's largest genomic resources to translate research findings into advances in health care.
- 8 **Q&A: Extensivist Program**  
UCLA Health's Extensivist Program is improving the quality of life and reducing preventable hospital admissions among patients with complex medical conditions.
- 10 **Proper masking**  
Effectiveness of anti-COVID-19 face covering depends on wearing it properly.
- 11 **Ask the Doctors**  
UCLA's Drs. Eve Glazier and Elizabeth Ko answer readers' questions: Exercise and older adults.
- 12 **Community calendar**  
Health and wellness for the community.

## UCLA, 5 health systems unite to encourage patients to access care when needed

UCLA Health and five of Los Angeles County's largest nonprofit health systems have joined together to encourage community members to put their health first and access care when needed. The BetterTogether.Health public-service campaign will broadcast on multi-language radio and television channels such messages as "Life may be on pause. Your health isn't," "Thanks L.A. for doing your part" and "Get care when you need it." The messages will also be displayed on billboards and in newspapers, magazines and social media. The educational campaign addresses growing concern among health professionals that anxiety over COVID-19 is hindering many people from seeking needed medical advice and assistance when it is critical to do so, and to let the public know that health care providers remain committed and available to serve the community's health care needs — including emergency, primary, specialty and urgent care.



For more information about BetterTogether.Health and to access television and radio spots, go to [tinyurl.com/la-better-together](https://tinyurl.com/la-better-together)

## "Chatbot" addresses questions about COVID-19

UCLA Health has launched an automated tool on its home page to help people navigate the expanding volume of information about COVID-19. Go to [uclahealth.org](https://uclahealth.org) and find the "chatbot" on the lower-left corner of the page. Click on it and then the link for Coronavirus Information to find FAQs and sections addressing such issues as anxiety, social distancing and testing. You can type in your own questions as well.

The "chatbot" also is available for patients to find a doctor or make an appointment. This new feature is in addition to a dedicated UCLA Health website for information about COVID-19: [uclahealth.org/coronavirus](https://uclahealth.org/coronavirus).

## New UCLA Health locations

UCLA Health is expanding with a newly opened primary care location in Marina del Rey and a newly opened primary and specialty care location in Downtown Los Angeles. These practices join the UCLA Health network of more than 180 primary and specialty clinics in convenient locations throughout Southern California.



For more information on these locations, go to: [uclahealth.org/marinadelrey](https://uclahealth.org/marinadelrey) or [uclahealth.org/dtla](https://uclahealth.org/dtla)

# Coping strategies in a time of crisis

While the novel coronavirus poses unique health and personal challenges to the entire population, the experience of crisis is part of the human condition. Whether from an earthquake, a job loss or the loss of a family member, everyone can expect to face upheaval at some point in life. Natalia Ramos, MD, MPH, and Reem Abu-Libdeh, MD, are UCLA psychiatrists in Century City and Brentwood, respectively. They offer strategies for coping when crisis strikes.

## What happens to a person physiologically and psychologically when a crisis occurs?

“The body’s stress-response system, which releases chemicals like norepinephrine and cortisol, gets activated under threat and wanes as the threat recedes,” Dr. Ramos says. “In a prolonged crisis, the system remains activated, leading to symptoms such as disturbed sleep, memory problems and loss of concentration.” Dr. Abu-Libdeh adds that “psychologically, the uncertainty of crisis often puts people in the world of what ifs and worst case scenarios. There can also be grieving, whether for the loss of a person or the loss of how life used to be.”

## How can people help themselves in stressful times?

**Stick to a routine.** “Going to bed at a certain time, eating meals consistently, keeping a schedule for work and exercise gives days a

consistent cadence,” Dr. Ramos says. “A routine can help people feel on track and grounded in times of turmoil and change.”

**Acknowledge feelings.** “It’s helpful for people to accept where they are,” Dr. Ramos says. “Things may be really tough during crisis, and that’s okay. People should focus on influencing the things they have some control over or that are important to them.” Dr. Abu-Libdeh adds, “Try to be generous with yourself during this time. Nobody’s expecting you to be perfect.”

**Try mindfulness.** “Mindfulness helps people to come back to the present, where they’re okay, rather than in the future, where they may be catastrophizing,” Dr. Abu-Libdeh says. She also recommends people take a few minutes each day to name three things for which they are grateful. The UCLA Mindfulness Resource Center (MARC) offers free guided meditations and weekly live podcasts online at [uclahealth.org/marc](https://uclahealth.org/marc) and through its UCLA Mindful app.

**Care for your body.** Remember the basics: Engage in regular physical activity, eat nutritious foods, stay hydrated and prioritize sleep. Avoid masking feelings with alcohol, drugs or other harmful substances, Drs. Ramos and Abu-Libdeh counsel.



Photo: Getty Images

**Look outward.** “Give back to the community in some small way, if possible, whether by donating money, volunteering or helping a neighbor,” Dr. Abu-Libdeh says. This can decrease the sense of helplessness and increase feelings of wellbeing.

## Are there special considerations for children?

“Even more than adults, children need a sense of routine and normalcy in the house,” Dr. Ramos says. “It helps when they know what to expect throughout the day.” She also recommends mediating children’s exposure to information about the crisis and giving honest, straightforward and age-appropriate answers to children’s questions.

## When is it time to seek professional help?

“It’s normal for people to feel stress during a crisis situation, but when someone’s anxiety or mood profoundly interferes with going about their regular day-to-day activities, they should talk to their health care providers,” Dr. Ramos says. “Their primary care physician may be able to address their concerns or may refer them to see a therapist or psychiatrist.”



To find a UCLA Health location near you, go to: [maps.uclahealth.org](https://maps.uclahealth.org)



Natalia Ramos, MD



Reem Abu-Libdeh, MD

Photos: UCLA Health

# Telehealth's time has come

The COVID-19 pandemic confronted health care providers nationwide with a dilemma: how to provide care for patients who were self-isolating at home. At UCLA Health, the answer has been telehealth.

In 2018, UCLA Health ramped up its telehealth program, called Connected Health, to enable every UCLA health care provider and patient to communicate via telephone or web-based technologies. While no one at that time anticipated the COVID-19 pandemic, UCLA Health leaders believed telehealth could benefit patients by providing them with easier access to care.

Using the myUCLAhealth patient portal, Connected Health enables physician-to-physician consultations; remote patient monitoring; and live, two-way visits between a doctor and patient in place of an office visit (a service that typically is referred to as video visits).

Prior to the pandemic, telehealth already had been adopted in some departments, such as psychiatry and for post-hospitalization follow-ups, says Mark S. Grossman, MD, clinical professor of medicine and pediatrics, who has helped oversee UCLA telehealth. But it was during the COVID-19 pandemic that patients and health care providers embraced the technology. Suddenly, primary care doctors were seeking training to use the technology, and patients were clamoring for video visits, he says. In March, Medicare and many private insurers announced they would reimburse for telehealth visits. Since then, telehealth visits have soared. From January to April, the number of telehealth visits performed by UCLA Health increased from 958 in a month to nearly 80,000. More than 1,200 UCLA Health providers are now trained to conduct video visits.

"We were very lucky to have this infrastructure in place," Dr. Grossman says. "By March 16, we realized this was going to be a broad pandemic, and we needed to get all our physicians on board with video visits as soon as possible. We needed to protect patients, staff and physicians from potential exposure. Telehealth is a great way to assess patients in home isolation and determine if they need a higher level of care."

The lightening-fast embrace of telehealth during the pandemic has likely changed attitudes about the technology and service forever, says Daniel M. Croymans, MD, a primary care physician and medical director of quality for the Department of Medicine. He expects that utilization of telemedicine will increase in the post-COVID-19 era. "Expanded use of video visits may be one of the few positive outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic," he says. "There is a lot you can see with your eyes, without doing a touch-based physical exam. Video visits allow us to provide excellent, often equivalent, care for many different patient concerns."

Besides assessing patients for potential COVID-19 infection, video visits have been useful during the pandemic to "meet" with patients, especially those with chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension and mental health disorders, to provide care and minimize their risk of coronavirus exposure, Dr. Croymans says. Video visits are a critical bridge to ensuring our patients continue to

receive the best possible care during this challenging time.

"Telehealth adds a valuable option for patients to connect with providers and complements in-person visits," says Anne Lin, MD, associate professor of colon and rectal surgery and medical director of telehealth programs at UCLA.

But the technology has found a niche that will flourish even after the pandemic wanes, Dr. Lin predicts. "I expect that many patients will have had a positive experience and that, moving forward, they will continue to use telehealth."



**For information and to access telehealth at UCLA, go to:**  
[uclahealth.org/video-visits](https://uclahealth.org/video-visits)  
or [uclahealth.org/telehealth](https://uclahealth.org/telehealth)



Photo: Getty Images

# Donated plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients could help to save lives

The convalescent plasma study is open to patients who have recovered from COVID-19 and have been well and symptom-free for at least 14 days. Antibody testing is not being offered as part of the study.



UCLA is part of a nationwide effort to study if convalescent plasma collected from people who have recovered from COVID-19 may yield a treatment for the deadly virus. There is currently no treatment for COVID-19, but small studies have suggested that the disease-fighting antibodies found in convalescent plasma may help people recover from the virus, says Alyssa F. Ziman, MD, medical director of transfusion medicine in the UCLA Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

This type of treatment is not new; convalescent plasma was used to treat those who suffered from the Spanish Flu, SARS, MERS, H1N1 and other viruses. For COVID-19, “we will transfuse convalescent plasma to patients who are currently hospitalized with severe symptoms through the Mayo Clinic-led expanded access program,” Dr. Ziman says. “UCLA will also be participating in additional national research protocols to study if plasma can be used to prevent infection in health care

## UCLA patients need blood donations

In the wake of COVID-19, Los Angeles County has issued a “Safer at Home” order, but UCLA Health hospitals in Westwood and Santa Monica are facing a critical shortage of donated blood, which many patients depend on for lifesaving treatment, transplants and surgeries. Blood donation is considered an essential service that is exempt from the Safer at Home directive, and it is a way for healthy people to make a significant contribution during this difficult time. The UCLA Blood & Platelet Center follows the recommended guidelines of the American Association of Blood Banks to keep donors and staff safe.

**For more information and to schedule an appointment to donate, go to:**  
[uclahealth.org/gotblood](http://uclahealth.org/gotblood)



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## ATLAS project aims to usher in era of personalized health care

Through the ATLAS Community Health Initiative, the IPH is creating a biobank consisting of blood, saliva and other tissue samples collected from patients during the course of routine care who volunteer to participate. These biospecimens, which are “de-identified” to preserve patients’ confidentiality, will be used, along with clinical, environmental and lifestyle information, to provide important insights that will help researchers and physicians to move toward health care that is tailored to the individual patient.

“We need to look at the whole person to determine when an individual can maximally benefit from targeted screening, given that it will be influenced by individual and other lifestyle factors,” says Clara Lajonchere, PhD, deputy director for the UCLA Institute for Precision Health. “This initiative is a critical step in building a core infrastructure that will pave the way for studies designed to increase the precision with which we can approach diagnostics and therapeutics.”

Creating a database to facilitate studies showing meaningful differences in how people’s genetic makeup interacts with environmental and lifestyle factors in health and disease requires large numbers of volunteer participants, Dr. Lajonchere notes. ATLAS aims to leverage the diversity of patients within the UCLA Health system and Los Angeles County to reflect the breadth of the communities served, which is critical.

“The majority of what we know about the genetics of disease is based largely on European populations,” says Daniel Geschwind, MD, PhD, vice chancellor for precision medicine and director of the Institute for Precision Health. “We now know that what is a genetic liability in a European population does not necessarily apply to individuals of Asian or African-American descent.”

“Our goal is not just to enroll 150,000 patients but to ensure that participants are representative of the UCLA Health population in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, age, sociodemographics, health status and disease burden,” explains Arash Naeim, MD, PhD, UCLA Health’s chief medical officer for clinical research and an associate director for both the Clinical Translational Science Institute and the Institute for Precision Health. “Health care in the future will be much more nuanced.”

All UCLA Health patients at participating locations are being offered an iPad to watch a universal consent video that explains the study goals and how it works. They are then given the choice to opt in or to decline participation. In the fall, patients will be able to complete the universal consent process on their mobile devices or personal computers.

With access to the de-identified samples, researchers from across the UCLA campus — including computer science, engineering and informatics — will use sophisticated big-data analytics and complex machine-learning strategies to develop so-called disease-risk-prediction models that can ultimately be used to guide decisions about patients’ health care.

“ATLAS is creating a powerful big-data engine that brings together patients’ clinical and health information with biological data so that we can better understand what health conditions patients might be most at risk for and what therapies and prevention strategies can be tailored for them,” Dr. Lajonchere says. “We want all of our patients to have the opportunity to be part of something bigger that is ultimately going to benefit generations to come. This is the future of medicine, and the future of medicine is now.”

workers who have been exposed and in patients with mild disease.”

The UCLA Convalescent Plasma Initiative screens patients who have recovered from COVID-19 and confirms that these patients meet all standard eligibility requirements for blood donation. The UCLA Blood and Platelet Center will collect the convalescent plasma from eligible donors.

In addition to potentially saving lives, the clinical trial will help researchers better understand antibody response to COVID-19, test development for neutralizing antibodies and the relationship between the amount and type of antibody in convalescent plasma units and patients’ response to plasma treatment, Dr. Ziman says.

The convalescent plasma study is open to patients who have recovered from COVID-19 and have been well and symptom-free for at least 14 days. Antibody testing is not being offered as part of the study.



**If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered and wish to participate in the study, register and take a survey at:** [uclahealth.org/gotblood/covid-19-plasma-donation](https://uclahealth.org/gotblood/covid-19-plasma-donation)



**For more information about the ATLAS project, go to:** [uclahealth.org/precision-health/atlas](https://uclahealth.org/precision-health/atlas)

# Extensivist Program bolsters care for patients with complex medical conditions

UCLA Health's Extensivist Program is improving the quality of life and reducing preventable hospital admissions among patients with complex medical conditions through a multidisciplinary, collaborative and proactive approach to their health care. *Vital Signs* spoke with Sun Yoo, MD, MPH, medical director of the three-year-old program, about this emerging model of managing a vulnerable patient population.



Dr. Sun Yoo consults with a patient in the UCLA Extensivist Program.  
Photo: UCLA Health



### What need was UCLA addressing in starting the extensivist program?

For patients with one or more chronic conditions that require multiple specialists and place them at risk for frequent hospitalization, we thought it would be important to establish a medical home and a team of physicians, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, care coordinators and patient-service representatives who would work with primary care doctors and specialists to navigate and optimize care across all settings — outpatient, hospital, skilled nursing facility and home. Ours is among the only programs of its kind that is based in the outpatient setting in a large academic health system; it has expanded as the value of a team approach has become clear, from one extensivist physician when the program was launched in 2017 to eight primary extensivist physicians by July 2020 working at UCLA facilities in both Westwood and Santa Monica.

### What patients is the program designed for and why?

We enroll patients with conditions such as congestive heart failure, cancer, diabetes, prior stroke, complex neurologic or rheumatologic conditions and a history of solid-organ transplantation — many of whom have more than one chronic condition that further complicates their care. Patients who have been admitted to the hospital two or more times in the previous year are strong

candidates to benefit from the extensivist approach. It's very helpful for this complex and vulnerable population to have a robust, multidisciplinary team that can work together to develop a comprehensive plan, coordinate when they see their providers and work with the subspecialists they need. We also help to ensure smooth transitions of care. When patients are admitted to the hospital, they are seen by different teams, and then they return to their primary care doctor after they are discharged. Those transitions can be vulnerable periods for patients, with the potential for delays or miscommunications. Having the same doctors follow them in all settings is designed to make sure the care is well coordinated.


### Once patients are enrolled in the program, how is their care managed differently from in the past?

Patients who are referred to the UCLA Extensivist Program — typically by primary care physicians or hospital-based subspecialists, or after being identified as high-risk for hospital admission by UCLA's population-health group — receive a comprehensive evaluation by the team, which meets regularly to discuss and devise care plans for patients, with input from their subspecialist physicians. We look at the medications they're taking to determine whether any are no longer needed. We can track patients at home with remote monitoring devices to ensure, for example, that their blood pressure isn't elevated.

We address their quality of life through education and counseling about nutrition and exercise, physical therapy, and assistance in navigating the health system so that they get the care they need at the time they need it. The program's nurses are in regular contact with patients, and an extensivist nurse practitioner makes visits to patients at home and in nursing facilities. It's a much more coordinated, proactive approach to their care.

### What evidence do you have of the program's efficacy?

Preliminary evidence of the first 150 patients enrolled in the UCLA Extensivist Program found a 69 percent decrease in hospitalizations and a 67 percent decrease in emergency department visits when comparing their experience in the six months prior to their enrollment with their first six months in the program. Program evaluation is still ongoing. A significant advantage is that each extensivist physician has a smaller panel, which allows us to spend the time to build relationships and really get to know them. In doing so, we are not only coordinating their care comprehensively, but looking at each individual holistically to address the medical, behavioral and social components that affect their health.

 For more information about the UCLA Extensivist Program, go to: [uclahealth.org/extensivist](https://uclahealth.org/extensivist)



Sun Yoo, MD, MPH



Photos: UCLA Health

# A how-to guide for effective use of face coverings

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has issued an order requiring Angelenos to wear face coverings outside of their homes. While they are likely to be a part of our daily dress for the foreseeable future, there remain questions about how to make the best and most effective use of a face covering.

“I’ve seen people wearing them around their neck and pulling them up. That is problematic,” says Annabelle de St. Maurice, MD, an infectious diseases specialist and director of UCLA’s Pediatric Infection Control and Antibiotic Stewardship Programs. “The challenge is, if you’re touching the front of the mask frequently, that’s likely to be the most contaminated part, and there is greater risk of contaminating your nose and eyes in that process.”

Rule No. 1, Dr. de St. Maurice says, is that after donning a mask, try to avoid adjusting it or pulling it up and down. Remove it from the back of the head or by the elastic ear loops. Make sure the mask fits well, covers the nose and mouth, that there are no gaps around the face and that it allows comfortable breathing.

Wearing a mask correctly probably is more important than the type of mask one selects, Dr. de St. Maurice says. However, if making one’s own or buying a cloth mask, look for one with multiple layers of fabric. A mask with a high thread-count cotton fabric is a good choice because of the tight weave, she says.

It also is important to understand what a face covering can and can’t do, Dr. de St. Maurice says. Its primary purpose is to prevent the spread of large droplets from one’s nose or mouth that may carry the virus. “If you generate droplets [when you breathe, cough, sneeze, talk or laugh], your mask can prevent you from potentially infecting someone close to you, and vice versa if they are wearing a mask and cough, talk or sneeze,” she says. “What a mask can’t do is be a substitute for

physical distancing and proper hand hygiene and staying home when you’re sick. Those are the key tenets in preventing the spread of COVID-19.”

Dr. de St. Maurice says that a mask should be laundered daily with a normal machine washing. Avoid purchasing medical or surgical-procedure masks or N95 respirators; these are critical, high-demand masks that should be reserved for health care professionals who come into direct contact with COVID-19 patients.

Placing a mask or face covering on an older child is fine, but one should not be used on children younger than age 2, or on someone who has difficulty breathing or is incapacitated and unable to remove the mask on their own, Dr. de St. Maurice cautions.

Finally, one might wish to consider adding a lightweight, plastic face shield. No public health organizations currently are recommending face shields, but that could change in the future as more is learned about viral transmission. “As we find out more about this virus, they may be option. If you can tolerate a shield along with your mask, it does provide an extra layer of protection,” Dr. de St. Maurice says.



 For instructions on how to make a mask using cotton fabric, go to: [tinyurl.com/CDC-face-mask](http://tinyurl.com/CDC-face-mask)

 For information about helping children wear face coverings, go to: [tinyurl.com/children-face-covering](http://tinyurl.com/children-face-covering)

## ASK THE DOCTORS

# Exercise never grows old

“Ask the Doctors” is a nationally syndicated column written by Eve Glazier, MD, president of the UCLA Health Faculty Practice Group, and Elizabeth Ko, MD, medical director of the UCLA Health Integrative Medicine Collaborative.



Drs. Elizabeth Ko and Eve Glazier  
Photo: Juliane Backman



Photo: iStock

**Dear Doctors:** Our dad is 78 years old and has started spending a lot more time indoors and on his recliner. He’s in good health, but he says he’s getting too old for exercise to matter. What can we say to persuade him to become active again?

**Dear Reader:** Exercise is an important part of ongoing health and fitness and, despite your dad’s feelings to the contrary, we never age out of our need for it. In fact, studies show that becoming or remaining active as an older adult offers a wide array of benefits. On the physical side, regular exercise can improve cardiovascular health; help to lower blood pressure; lessen the risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, colon cancer and heart disease;

help with balance, strength and flexibility; maintain healthy weight; improve strength and stamina; maintain joint health; help with swelling and pain due to arthritis; and lower the risk of falls. Regular exercise has mental health benefits as well. Older adults who incorporate even moderate amounts of exercise into their daily lives report enhancement to mood and outlook, improved cognitive function and a reduction in symptoms of anxiety and depression. Remaining physically active also has been shown to help older adults maintain their ability to live independently.

For a well-rounded exercise program, think in terms of a mix of activities to improve endurance, increase strength and maintain flexibility. And be creative. Walking, jogging, swimming and biking all fit the bill for moderate aerobic activities for endurance, but so do dancing, raking the lawn or playing badminton. We lose muscle mass as we age, so strength and resistance exercises, such as weight lifting or Pilates, are important. Activities like stretching, tai chi and yoga help keep joints strong and muscles limber. Current guidelines recommend that people 65 and older should do 2.5 hours of moderate aerobic exercise each week, which averages out to a manageable 20-ish minutes per day.

With that said, we would be remiss not to mention the precautions that must be taken during this COVID-19 pandemic, during which older adults are at greater risk. Physical distancing and wearing a mask

now are the norm, and access to many areas for outdoor activities like exercise has been limited. But as restrictions ease and more spaces reopen, people are going to want to get outside more to participate in some of the activities we have mentioned. That includes older adults. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says it is safe to do so, as long as precautions such as physical distancing and wearing a mask continue to be observed. Continue to wash your hands often, stay at least six feet away from others at all times and avoid crowded areas or gathering with others outside of your household. Swimming and other water-related activities are great ways to get the physical activity needed for a healthy life, and the CDC says it is safe to jump into a pool if you are not sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and take appropriate steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Before making any significant changes to his exercise regimen or activity, your dad should check in with his doctor or other health care provider. They will be able to evaluate his condition and fitness level and point him in the direction of appropriate activities. Not only will it help your dad to stay safe, he’ll have another partner and cheerleader in his corner.



To Ask the Doctors, e-mail:  
[askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu)

# Community Health Programs

## JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2020 COMMUNITY CALENDAR EVENTS

UCLA Health offers community programs and events to help our neighbors lead healthier lives through wellness education. Go to [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) for more information.

### ADULT EDUCATION

#### Senior Scholars

The UCLA Longevity Center invites adults 50 years of age or older to audit undergraduate courses taught by UCLA's distinguished professors.

**When:** Fall classes begin Oct 1  
Applications open Aug 3, close Sep 4

**Where:** Locations vary by UCLA campus

**Info & Cost:** [www.semel.ucla.edu/longevity/srscholars](https://www.semel.ucla.edu/longevity/srscholars) or [srscholars@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:srscholars@mednet.ucla.edu) or 310-794-0679

### ADVANCE HEALTH CARE PLANNING

#### Advance Health Care Planning

Learn how to communicate your health care wishes to your family and friends, appoint someone as your surrogate decision maker, and review health care decision-making documents.

**When:** Tuesdays, Aug 11 & Sep 8 / 6 – 8 pm

**Where:** Online

**Info & Cost:** [uclahealth.org/50PlusSeminar](https://uclahealth.org/50PlusSeminar) or 800-516-5323

#### FEATURED EVENT

#### HOW MANY LIVES WILL U SAVE? BE A HERO! DONATE BLOOD!

Donating blood is one of the most selfless and gracious gifts you could ever give anyone. Learn how you can save lives through blood and platelet donations. Dawn Ward, MD, and Thomas King, from the UCLA Blood and Platelet Center, will answer your questions, and you can become a hero!

**When:** Thursday, Sep 10 / 1:30 – 3 pm

**Where:** WISE & Healthy Aging,  
1527 4th St, Santa Monica

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

#### Memory Care (ongoing)

Memory Care is a weekly, three-hour program for dementia patients and their loved ones. It teaches memory techniques and strategies to lower stress and stimulate the mind and the body and offers support for people with memory challenges and their caregivers.

**When:** Tuesdays or Thursdays, 1 – 4pm

**Where:** UCLA Longevity Center,  
10945 Le Conte Ave

**Info & Cost:** 310-794-0676 or [longevity@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:longevity@mednet.ucla.edu)

### CANCER

#### Breast Cancer Update

Due to advances in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment, patient outcomes have steadily improved. Evangelia Kirimis, MD, UCLA oncologist, will focus on the history of breast cancer treatment as well as how even patients with advanced disease can live well with chronic medical therapy.

**When:** Tuesday, Sep 8 / 6:30 – 8 pm

**Where:** Cancer Support Community Pasadena,  
76 East Del Mar Bl, #215

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

#### Colorectal Cancer Prevention

Gobind Sharma, MD, UCLA gastroenterologist, will give an overview on colorectal cancer, how and when to screen, screening options and simple steps one can take to prevent it.

**When:** Friday, Sep 18 / Noon – 1:30 pm

**Where:** Cancer Support Community – LA,  
1990 S Bundy Dr, Ste 100

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

#### FEATURED EVENT

#### HEALTHY LIVING WITH DIABETES

This half-day event includes a health fair, presentations on diabetes topics and breakout sessions for type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

**When:** Saturday, Sep 26 /  
8:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica,  
1250 16th St, Conf Ctr

**RSVP:** 310-794-1299 or [diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu)

### DIABETES

#### Diabetes Visits Via Telehealth

As an ADA-certified organization, our diabetes program will help you gain important skills, knowledge and confidence to successfully manage your diabetes. The UCLA Diabetes Education Team has now expanded services to include one-on-one visits via telehealth for type 1 and 2 diabetes, gestational and nutritional education. A physician referral is required. Covered by most medical insurance policies.

**When:** Please call for next available appointment

**Where:** Online/Telephone

**RSVP:** 310-794-1299/310.828.1050 or [diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:diabeteseducation@mednet.ucla.edu)

### KIDNEY HEALTH

#### UKEEP | CKD: What You Should Know

UCLA CORE Kidney Program presents Anjay Rastogi, MD, PhD, Professor of Medicine and Clinical Chief of Nephrology, who will speak on what you should know about chronic kidney disease (CKD). Please join us for this free interactive event to learn and ask questions. There will also be free blood-pressure tests and other educational resources available on-site.

**When:** Sunday, Aug 16 / 1 – 4 pm

**Where:** UCLA Medical Ctr, Santa Monica,  
1250 16th St, Conf Ctr

**RSVP:** 800-516-5323

## MEMORY CARE

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### Memory Training Course (quarterly)

Memory Training is an innovative, four-week educational program for improving memory designed for people with mild memory concerns (not dementia). Participants will develop good memory habits and techniques to improve their memory.

**When:** Please call for next session date (two hours per week, once a week, for one month)

**Where:** Online

**Info & Cost:** 310-794-0676 or [longevity@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:longevity@mednet.ucla.edu)

### Brain Booster (quarterly)

Brain Booster will provide information on healthy aging research and exercises to enhance overall cognitive function. Limited seating available.

**When:** Please call for next session date (90 minutes)

**Where:** Online

**Info & Cost:** 310-794-0676 or [longevity@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:longevity@mednet.ucla.edu)

### Brain Boot Camp

This interactive educational program provides participants with lifestyle strategies and tools to keep their brains vital and healthy.

**When:** Classes held monthly

**Where:** Online

**Info & Cost:** Patricia Ramos at 310-794-6314 or [pmramos@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:pmramos@mednet.ucla.edu) to watch the rest

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

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### REACH to Achieve Program (ongoing)

This weekly comprehensive wellness program focuses on fitness, yoga, cognitive stimulation, emotional well-being, recreation, nutrition and health education for individuals with multiple sclerosis.

**Where:** Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center

**Info & Application:** 310-267-4071

### Free From Falls

An eight-week program designed for people with multiple sclerosis who walk with or without a cane and may be at risk for falling. Learn about risks for falls, how to reduce those risks and exercises to improve balance and mobility.

**Where:** Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center

**Info & Application:** 310-267-4071

## ORTHOPAEDICS

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### Foot and Ankle Injuries

When is it more than “just a sprain”?

Ajay Gurbani, MD, UCLA orthopaedic surgeon, will discuss common foot and ankle injuries, focusing on diagnosis and treatments.

**When:** Wednesday, Sep 23 / 6:30 – 8 pm

**Where:** Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](http://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## PODIATRY

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### Bunions and Bunion Surgery

Bob Baravarian, DPM, will discuss bunions and the latest surgical and nonsurgical treatments.

**When:** Tuesday, Jul 21 / 5:45 – 6:45 pm

**Where:** 2121 Wilshire Bl, Santa Monica, Ste 101

**RSVP:** 310-828-0011

### Heel and Ankle Pain

Gary Briskin, DPM, will discuss common causes of heel and ankle pain, as well as surgical and nonsurgical therapies.

**When:** Tuesday, Aug 18 / 5:45 – 6:45 pm

**Where:** 2121 Wilshire Bl, Santa Monica, Ste 101

**RSVP:** 310-828-0011

### Ankle Arthritis and Ankle Replacement

Bob Baravarian, DPM, will discuss the latest advances in treating foot and ankle arthritis, including injection joint lubrication, arthroscopic cleanup, joint-preservation surgery, fusion surgery and ankle-replacement surgery.

**When:** Tuesday, Sep 15 / 5:45 – 6:45 pm

**Where:** 2121 Wilshire Bl, Santa Monica, Ste 101

**RSVP:** 310-828-0011

## THYROID

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### Thyroid Disease

James Wu, MD, UCLA endocrinologist, will discuss the anatomy and function of the thyroid, how thyroid blood tests are viewed, concerns about a thyroid nodule and when surgery is necessary.

**When:** Thursday, Aug 20 / Noon – 1:30 pm

**Where:** Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](http://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## TREMORS

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### How to Shake the Shakes

UCLA movement-disorders specialists will discuss treatment options to cope with tremors, including medicines, surgery (deep-brain stimulation) and noninvasive therapies.

**When:** Saturday, Sep 26 / 9 am – Noon (lectures and Q&A)

**Where:** teleconference session

**RSVP:** [ucla.tremor@gmail.com](mailto:ucla.tremor@gmail.com)

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

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### Weight: Beyond a Number

Elizabeth Ko, MD, UCLA internist, will answer the question — is there an ideal weight for me? She will explore concepts including body mass index and body composition, and review the optimal components of an exercise regimen.

**When:** Wednesday, Jul 29 / 1 – 2:30 pm

**Where:** WISE & Healthy Aging, 1527 4th St, Santa Monica

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](http://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### Nutrition for Weight Management

Susan Ahern, MD, UCLA endocrinologist, will discuss different types of meal plans, how to develop an individualized nutrition plan, and current concepts in weight management nutrition.

**When:** Tuesday, Sep 22 / 6:30 – 8 pm

**Where:** Camarillo Health Care District, 3639 E Las Posas Rd

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](http://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

**UCLA HEALTH 50 PLUS IS A FREE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM** that offers individuals age 50 and older access to educational lectures, exercise opportunities, information on community and health resources, a free community flu-shot clinic and special events. Call 800-516-5323 or go to [uclahealth.org/50plus](https://uclahealth.org/50plus) to sign up. To learn more about our 50 Plus program and events, subscribe to our *Focus: 50 Plus* e-newsletter by e-mailing us at [fiftyplus@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:fiftyplus@mednet.ucla.edu).

**The Community Health Programs listed in *Vital Signs* was compiled during the Safer At Home policy throughout California. Before attending any program, please contact us to check if it is still happening as described, or if it is now virtual or rescheduled. Stay safe and take care.**

### 50+ Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL)

Join the SAIL fitness and education program led by UCLA physical therapists, designed for healthy seniors. First-time participants must receive a physical therapy screening ahead of time.

**When:** Mondays and Thursdays / 9 – 10 am or 10 – 11 am

**Where:** St. Monica Catholic Church, 725 California Av

**RSVP:** 424-259-7140 or visit UCLA Rehabilitation, 1131 Wilshire Bl, Ste 200, between 8 am and 5 pm for a screening.

**Cost:** \$40 per month (unlimited participation)

### 50+ Aging and Brain Diseases

Gal Bitan, PhD, UCLA neurology, will focus on aging, different types of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, other aging-related neurodegenerative diseases, recent developments in research, how to prevent these diseases and what to do if a loved one has been diagnosed.

**When:** Tuesday, July 28 / 1 – 2:30 pm

**Where:** Oasis Baldwin Hills, 4005 Crenshaw Bl, inside Macy's 3rd fl

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Is It a Stroke and What to Do

Learn what a stroke is, the warning signs and symptoms, and strategies to help if you think you or someone else is experiencing a stroke.

**When:** Wednesday, Aug 12 / 1 – 2:30 pm

**Where:** WISE & Healthy Aging, 1527 4th St, Santa Monica

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Skin Care for Women of Color

Sara Hogan, MD, UCLA dermatologist, will give an overview of dermatology and special considerations for ethnic skin, hair and nails.

**When:** Monday, Aug 17 / 1 – 2:30 pm

**Where:** Oasis Baldwin Hills, 4005 Crenshaw Bl, inside Macy's 3rd fl

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Finding Humor in Mental Health

Ze'ev Korn, LCSW, UCLA psychotherapist, will explore ways to maintain, regain and keep your sense of humor to help your mental health.

**When:** Tuesday, Aug 25 / 1 – 2:30 pm

**Where:** Oasis Baldwin Hills, 4005 Crenshaw Bl, inside Macy's 3rd fl

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Losing Balance? Falls? Don't Fear!

As humans age, there is a decline in balance that contributes to falls. Fear of falling increases the decline in activity level and a loss of independence. Learn about balance, knock down the fear of falling, learn how to recover from a fall, and discover balance exercises to challenge yourself.

**When:** Wednesday, Aug 26 / 5 – 6:30 pm

**Where:** Collins & Katz Family YMCA, 1466 S Westgate Av, West Los Angeles

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Living Well with Arthritis and Pain

This seminar will explore the importance of using holistic approaches to better manage maturing bodies, focusing on yoga, mindfulness, movement strategies and other conservative methods of pain management to live a life with more ease in our bodies and minds.

**When:** Thursday, Aug 27 / Noon – 1:30 pm

**Where:** Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Spirituality and Well-Being

Blake Arnall, MDIV, Manager of Spiritual Care at UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, will explore spiritual practices that support well-being, relaxation, health, and creating meaning and purpose in your life.

**When:** Wednesday, Sep 9 / 1:30 – 3 pm

**Where:** WISE & Healthy Aging, 1527 4th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

### 50+ Health Care Maintenance as U Age

Milica Simpson, MD, UCLA family medicine, will focus on screening exams, fall prevention and recommended supplements to maintain good health as you age.

**When:** Tuesday, Sep 15 / 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Where:** Malibu Senior Center, 23825 Stuart Ranch Rd

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## 5+ Memory and Aging

Learn how the brain changes with age, what is normal, what is not and what you can do about it. The latest research around brain health will be discussed as well as practical tips to stay focused and mentally sharp.

**When:** Thursday, Sep 17 / 10 – 11:30 am

**Where:** Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## 5+ Stroke Prevention

What can you do to decrease your risk for stroke? Learn what steps you can take to help prevent a stroke from happening! And what strategies you can take if you or someone else is experiencing a stroke.

**When:** Thursday, Sep 17 / Noon – 1:30 pm

**Where:** Santa Monica Family YMCA, 1332 6th St

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## 5+ Osteoporosis Update

Learn about the symptoms, diagnosis, treatments and prevention of osteoporosis.

**When:** Tuesday, Sep 22 / 2:30 – 4 pm

**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, 1250 16th St, Conf Rm 3

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## 5+ Heart Health and COVID-19

Boris Arbit, MD, UCLA cardiologist, will discuss the effects of novel corona virus, COVID-19, on cardiovascular health. During the talk he will address concerns as they relate to the pandemic.

**When:** Thursday, Sep 24 / 10:30 am to Noon

**Where:** ONEgeneration, 18255 Victory Blvd, Reseda

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

## 5+ Making Sense of Your Medicare Options

Learn about your Medicare options with UCLA Health, what choices you have, how to maximize your Medicare benefits, how to fill the gaps, meet representatives from Medicare Advantage and Medigap plans, and get answers to your questions.

**When:** Saturday, Oct 3 / 10 am – Noon

**Where:** UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, 1250 15th St, Conf Ctr

**RSVP:** [connect.uclahealth.org/calendar](https://connect.uclahealth.org/calendar) or 800-516-5323

# COVID-19 Clinical Trials

UCLA conducts research for a wide range of medical disorders and offers patients opportunities to participate in research and clinical trials. Below are some of our active clinical trials dedicated to the research and treatment of COVID-19.

## COVID-19 Recovered Volunteer Research Participant Pool Registry

This is a prospective observational registry of COVID-19 recovered patients who are no longer symptomatic. This registry is intended to serve as a pool of individuals who can participate in studies associated with serological testing, characterization of immunity and immune response, vaccine development and convalescent plasma donors.

## Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Leronlimab for Mild to Moderate COVID-19

This is a phase 2, two-arm, randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled multicenter study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of leronlimab (PRO 140) in patients with mild-to-moderate symptoms of respiratory illness caused by coronavirus 2019 infection.

## Expanded Access to Convalescent Plasma for the Treatment of Patients with COVID-19

This expanded access program will provide access to investigational convalescent plasma for patients in acute care facilities infected with SARS-CoV-2 who have severe or life-threatening COVID-19, or who are judged by a health care provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening disease.

## Hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 PEP

This is a clinical study for the prevention of SARS-CoV-2 infection in adults exposed to the virus. The study will enroll up to 2000 asymptomatic men and women 18 to 80 years of age (inclusive) who are close contacts of persons with laboratory confirmed SARS-CoV-2 or clinically suspected COVID-19. Eligible participants will be enrolled and randomized to receive the intervention or placebo at the level of the household (all eligible participants in one household will receive the same intervention).

## A Study to Evaluate the Safety and Efficacy of Tocilizumab in Patients with Severe COVID-19 Pneumonia

This study will evaluate the efficacy, safety, pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of tocilizumab (TCZ) compared with a matching placebo in combination with standard of care (SOC) in hospitalized patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia.

## Donation of Convalescent Plasma from Patients who have Recovered from COVID-19

This pilot study will: 1. Collect apheresis plasma from patients who have recovered from COVID-19, with >14 days without symptoms, and laboratory recovery established by subsequent negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests. As serological testing becomes available, donors and/or units will be tested for titers of anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. 2. Provide apheresis plasma units collected above to support research efforts, such as the development of serologic tests and defining rotocols for enrichment of neutralizing antibodies. 3. Provide apheresis plasma units collected above for treatment and/or post-exposure prophylaxis of COVID-19. For more information on this study, visit [uclahealth.org/gotblood/covid-19-plasma-donation](https://uclahealth.org/gotblood/covid-19-plasma-donation)

## Compassionate Use of Remdesivir for Treatment of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2 Infection)

## Compassionate Use of Leronlimab for Treatment of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2 Infection)

**To learn more about all of our clinical trials, visit [uclahealth.org/clinical-trials](https://uclahealth.org/clinical-trials). Explore our active research studies by drilling down to specific categories, such as treatments for hospitalized COVID-positive patients, treatments for nonhospitalized patients, studies for health care workers and first responders, among others.**

405 Hilgard Avenue  
Box 956923  
Los Angeles, CA 90095-6923



U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospital Survey ranks UCLA No. 1 in California and No. 6 in the nation.

David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA ranks No. 6 in Research and No. 11 in Primary Care nationwide.

**#TeamLA**

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At UCLA Health, discretionary funds allow us to address the most urgent needs facing our community. From providing vital resources for infectious disease research to supporting families adjusting to hospitalization, both the UCLA Health President's Greatest Needs Fund and the Dean's Highest Priorities Fund at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA uniquely position us to respond to any crisis while still providing the best, most compassionate care.

Your tax-deductible gift to either of these funds will play an important role to enhance every corner of health. Together, we can heal humankind.

**Give online:** [giving.ucla.edu/greatestneeds](http://giving.ucla.edu/greatestneeds)

**By mail:** The UCLA Foundation,  
P.O. Box 7145, Pasadena, CA 91109-9903

**By telephone:** 310-206-6484



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## Vital Signs

**CHIEF OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Rhonda L. Curry

**CHIEF OF MARKETING**

Tanya E. Andreadis

**EDITOR**

David Greenwald

**CALENDAR EDITOR**

Michael Pollock

**MEDICAL EDITOR**

Robert Oye, MD

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Dan Gordon

Shari Roan

Nancy Sokoler Steiner

**ASK THE DOCTORS**

Eve Glazier, MD

Elizabeth Ko, MD

**ADVISORY BOARD**

Bernard Katz, MD

Carlos Lerner, MD

Janet Pregler, MD

Gary Small, MD

**DESIGN**

Donenfeld & Associates

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For inquiries about *Vital Signs*, contact  
UCLA Health  
Marketing Communications, Box 956923  
Los Angeles, CA 90095-6923  
[uclahealth.org](http://uclahealth.org)  
e-mail: [VitalSigns@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:VitalSigns@mednet.ucla.edu)



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