MEDICATIONS AND PATIENTS WITH ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

Gaby T. Thai, M.D.

Doctors are often asked whether there are any medications that someone with Alzheimer’s disease should avoid. Patients with Alzheimer’s disease may need medicines to treat symptoms of the disease, as well as for other health problems such as bladder incontinence, mood disturbances, high blood pressure, etc. However, when a person takes many medications, there is an increased risk of adverse effects, including confusion, mood swings, sleepiness, and worsening memory problems. Some medications can worsen symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease and should be avoided, if at all possible.

Antidepressants

Certain antidepressants, such as the older tricyclic antidepressants amitriptyline (Elavil), nortriptyline (Pamelor), and imipramine (Tofranil), can cause sedation and worsening cognition. The tricyclic antidepressants have anticholinergic effects, meaning that they can further suppress the activity of acetylcholine, one of the main brain cell messenger chemicals whose activity is reduced by Alzheimer’s disease. For low mood and irritability in patients with Alzheimer’s, the SSRI (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor) antidepressants including citalopram (Celexa), fluoxetine (Prozac), paroxetine (Paxil), sertraline (Zoloft) and the SARI (serotonin antagonist reuptake inhibitor) such as trazodone (Desyrel) can be considered instead.

Antipsychotics

Antipsychotics are sometimes given to treat behavioral symptoms such as agitation, aggressiveness, hallucinations and delusions. However, both the older antipsychotic drugs such as haloperidol (Haldol) and the newer atypical antipsychotics such as risperidone (Risperdal), olanzapine (Zyprexa) can cause serious side effects including sedation, confusion, and sometimes Parkinsonian-like symptoms.
There is a simple adage that states “aging sure beats the alternative.” The challenge for the research community is to make discoveries to ensure that people age gracefully. Until that goal is realized, it is critical that individuals complaining of memory disorders are evaluated as early as possible, when existing therapies are considered to be the most effective.

Besides coordinating and overseeing a large research portfolio, UCI MIND also runs its own memory assessment clinic out of Gottschalk Plaza on the Irvine campus. Individuals concerned about their memory are given a complete neurological and physical exam by Dr. Gaby Thai. During the physical exam, analysis of blood is also conducted to rule out any metabolic disorders that might underlie the memory impairment. Patients then undergo a thorough neuropsychological battery to determine the nature of the cognitive disorder. This battery can distinguish if the individual is forgetting recent events or suffering from language problems, and helps to diagnose the nature of the memory impairment.

As you can imagine, running the clinic requires substantial financial resources, of which, until last year, a significant portion was derived from state revenues. In this past year, the state of California slashed their allocation to our clinic by over 50%, a move necessitated by the downturn in the economy, but that has dire consequences for our local community. Hence, the Institute was faced with a difficult decision: shut down the clinic or appeal to our supporters and grateful patients so that we can continue serving the needs of the elderly, one of the most vulnerable segments of our population. Because the clinic serves many underprivileged groups and fulfills a unique niche in Orange County, particularly in helping to diagnose complicated cases of dementia, we decided to fight back with the assistance of a team of community supporters led by Dr. Jacqueline DuPont.

There are no words that can adequately express our extreme gratitude for the vision and dedication of Dr. DuPont and her committee. Please see their names highlighted below. This group of concerned citizens strongly believed that the UCI MIND Clinic is so vital to the citizens of Orange County that they staged a spectacular event called Wine for the MIND. Fortunately, they helped raise the funds needed to keep the UCI MIND Clinic doors open for one more year.

For UCI MIND, our vision is to research ways to make memories last a lifetime. Research is the only hope that exists for finding a way to prevent or cure Alzheimer’s and other age-related dementias. Hopefully, one day in the not so distant future, there will be no need for our memory assessment clinic. For right now, however, the citizens of Southern California can find comfort in knowing the UCI MIND Clinic will continue to serve the community and those worried about their memory, and can thank the generous people who continue to step forward.

Stay tuned for details regarding next year’s event.
IN THE NEWS
Exciting discoveries, achievements, and updates from the Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders

**First National Breakthrough Ride**
UCI MIND researchers Frank LaFerla, David Cribbs, Rodrigo Medeiros, Nick Castello and Nabil Dagher pedaled from Los Angeles to Palm Springs on July 22 and 23 as part of the first National Alzheimer’s Breakthrough Ride. Team UCI MIND completed the southern California segment of the cross-country ride that began in San Francisco and ends in Washington, D.C. The event organizers hope to collect 50,000 signatures for a petition urging lawmakers to make Alzheimer’s disease a national priority. The petition will be presented to Congress on World Alzheimer’s Day, Sept. 21. If you are interested in signing the petition online, please go to [www.alz.org/research/breakthroughride/overview.asp](http://www.alz.org/research/breakthroughride/overview.asp).

**Betty’s Foundation**
Betty’s Foundation raised $12,000 to support UCI MIND’s student and postdoctoral group, ReMIND (Research and Education in Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders). Betty’s Foundation, formed by five family members (Betsy and Matt Bower, Clint and Jamie Woesner, and Karah Woesner) in their late 20s and early 30s, honors their grandmother, Betty, who has Alzheimer’s disease. They raised the money through garage sales, a jewelry party and a band night last fall. Go to [www.BettysFoundation.org](http://www.BettysFoundation.org) to check out “Remember the Music” the band night set for September 17, 2010.

**Emerging Scientists**
UCI MIND and its student subsidiary ReMIND held their inaugural Emerging Scientist Symposium earlier this year. The event provided a platform for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to present their latest research to the UCI community. Researchers from over 17 different UCI MIND labs presented, and the highlight included a keynote address by Dr. Rudy Tanzi, the Joseph P. and Rose F. Kennedy Professor at Harvard Medical School. Two students, Christopher Lay and Christopher Sontag were acknowledged for giving the best presentations.

**Annual Research Conference: September 17**
The UCI Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders and the UC Irvine School of Medicine, in collaboration with the Alzheimer’s Association Orange County Chapter and Alzheimer’s Family Services Center are pleased to announce the 2010 Regional Alzheimer’s Disease Research Conference, *The Dementias: It’s Not Always Alzheimer’s Disease*, to be held on Friday, September 17. Over 11 million individuals in the USA suffer from dementia, including an estimated 5.3 million from Alzheimer’s disease. The goal of this conference is to introduce the clinical, molecular, and neuropathological differences that distinguish the different dementias (Alzheimer’s disease, Lewy body dementia, frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia and Parkinson’s disease dementia), and to discuss treatment strategies.

Early bird registration deadline is Friday, August 27. We are pleased to offer CME for physicians this year. The University of California, Irvine School of Medicine designates this educational activity for a maximum of 6 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity. Professional Continuing Education Units also available for BRN, RCFE, BENHA, and NHAP. Please see back cover for more information. To register for this event please visit [www.alzoc.org](http://www.alzoc.org) or by calling (949) 757-3703.
Meet the Neuropathologist at UCI MIND

RONALD KIM, M.D.

Dr. Ronald Kim, currently clinical professor of pathology and neurology at UCI, received his M.D. degree from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. Afterwards, he was trained in neuropathology at the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Columbia University. While serving as a junior faculty member of the Department of Pathology at the Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, NY, he was recruited, together with Dr. Byung Ho (“Ben”) Choi, into the division of neuropathology at UC Irvine in 1981.

During his stay in Syracuse, Dr. Kim became interested in understanding dementing disorders. He provided one of the earliest clinicopathological descriptions of what is now referred to as frontotemporal dementia, based on a family with this disorder. He recalls with some amusement, that, around 1980, his chairman insisted that he not teach the medical students about Alzheimer’s disease, arguing that it was so rare that they would never see it! This example serves to emphasize the transformation in thinking since that time on the part of the medical, scientific, and lay community about the importance and the frequency of Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders.

Based both at UCI and at the Long Beach VA Medical Center, Dr. Kim bears primary responsibility for examining tissues obtained from the brain tissue repository of the UCI MIND Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center (ADRC), for purposes of precision in diagnosis and initiation of research studies.

Dr. Kim is particularly pleased to see in recent years, the establishment of NIH-funded ADRCs on a national level, such as that at UCI. These ADRCs contribute their findings to a national database. Dr. Kim feels that a multi-institutional collaborative approach to be the most effective method of discovering the mechanisms for the development of scientifically based therapies for dementia disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease.

Meet the Tissue Repository/Brain Bank Director

WAYNE POON, PH.D.

I arrived at UCI after receiving my Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from UCLA. I started as a post-doctoral researcher in the lab of Dr. Carl Cotman, because of my interest in understanding the molecular mechanisms underlying memory formation and brain networks and studying why these pathways breakdown in Alzheimer’s disease. My initial research focused on how apoptosis, also called programmed cell death (which exists to remove cells that have been damaged), is activated during Alzheimer’s disease; the activation of this process can lead to tangle formation, which is one of the neuropathological hallmarks of this disease. This hypothesis could only be validated by examining brain tissue donated to the UCI Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center Tissue Repository.

Without the availability of human brain tissue, these studies would not have been possible. I am forever grateful to the families of those patients who agreed to brain donation for research purposes. I cannot stress what an important contribution this is to our society. I appreciate the importance of UCI MIND and its ADRC in providing an infrastructure to support research here at UCI. Hence, in 2008, when I was offered the opportunity to become the ADRC Tissue Repository Director, I accepted this position with great enthusiasm.

As the repository director, I have many responsibilities including overseeing the repository staff and facilitating research that utilizes the many resources available within the Institute (brain tissue and blood/cerebrospinal fluid samples often used in biomarker discovery). This may involve coordinating multi-center research projects with other centers including UCLA, USC, and Penn as well as working with pharmaceutical companies attempting to develop novel therapeutics.

I am hopeful that in the coming years, our contributions by UCI MIND’s team of researchers, clinicians and patients, will lead to a better understanding of the disease, and eventually a cure, treatment, or a means to prevent it.
symptoms. Studies have shown that both atypical and older antipsychotics are associated with increased risk of death in elderly dementia patients. These drugs should not be used routinely, and if needed, the minimum dosage should be used for the minimum amount of time, under careful supervision of an experienced clinician.

Patients and caregivers should also be cautious of over the counter medicine containing diphenhydramine (Benadryl). Diphenhydramine is an antihistamine that tends to make people drowsy. It also has anticholinergic effects that may result in confusion and worsening cognition. Diphenhydramine is found in sleep aids such as Compoz, Nytol, Sominex, Unisom, and also in “night time” or “pm” version of popular pain relievers, cold and sinus remedies.

In essence, patients with Alzheimer’s disease are particularly vulnerable to side effects from various medications. It is best to consult with your doctors and pharmacists to learn about the benefits and potential adverse effects of any new treatment therapy, including seemingly benign over the counter remedies.

Physical therapy provides numerous benefits for people with Alzheimer’s disease. Alzheimer’s patients who perform flexibility, balance, and strength exercises combined with medical management are less depressed and have more improvement in their physical functioning than patients who are treated solely with medical management. Exercise also maintains motor skills, improves memory and communication skills, and reduces rate of disease-associated mental decline.

Physical therapy incorporates flexibility and strength exercises as well as balance and gait training. Expert physical therapists tailor exercise programs for each patient to suit their individual needs. An affordable physical therapy program combines exercises and balance and gait training to greatly improve patients’ motor skills and physical function, decrease risk of falls, and provide pain relief.

As we age, our balance and strength deteriorates. This degeneration can pose more problems for Alzheimer’s patients including a greater risk for falls. Here are five fall prevention tips to consider:

1. Wear shoes with non-slip soles and avoid wearing socks only.
2. Remove or secure any loose rugs or mats.
3. Sit in higher chairs or chairs with armrests – they are easier to get in and out of.
4. Be sure walkways are well lit and clutter free.
5. Contact a physical therapist who specializes in Alzheimer’s disease to set up a physical therapy program to emphasize exercise, balance training, and fall prevention.
Saving memories one glass at a time

Wine for the MIND, save memories one glass at a time. That was the theme chosen for the first-ever community wide fundraising effort held by UC Irvine’s Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders, UCI MIND, to raise funds for the Memory Assessment Clinic. The event raised $100,000 to keep the doors open to the clinic which is currently coping with a California State budget funding cut of 50% or a $300,000 shortfall for the year.

The committee quickly responded to the drastic cuts threatening the unique program that ties patient research in the clinic with the basic research in scientific labs headed by Frank LaFerla, Ph.D., director of UCI MIND. Committee chair, and UCI MIND Advisory Board member, Jacqueline DuPont, Ph.D., brought together a dynamic committee of individuals dedicated to fight Alzheimer’s and to save the clinic. The committee members worked diligently to find donated services and resources so that the majority of the funds raised went directly to fund the clinic budget shortfall.

Committee member, Mima Ransom of Newport Beach, created the sophisticated design logo around a wine theme to capture the attention of the benefactors who attended the wine tasting event. “Wine is known for its properties to maintain good brain health,” Ransom stated, “and so, it was a natural for us.”

Guests enjoyed tasting wines from 21 wineries selected by Darren Coyle, WineWorks for Everyone, all of them donated for this event. Tim Busch, The Busch Firm’s unique Trinitas Cellars, dedicated a Pinot Noir 2008 that returned a percentage of the purchase price for each bottle sold back to the Institute. The spacious South County Bear Brand Ranch home donated by Kerry and Scott Kavanaugh, provided the elegant setting for the 250 guests. Scott is with First Foundation Bank, Irvine.

The event received generous underwriting and support from the Crean Foundation, Hoag Hospital, The Cottages, Silverado Senior Living, VITAS Hospice Care, Vintage Senior Living, St. Michael-Hospice, the Alzheimer’s Association, Sonnet Home Health, Assured InHome Care, Atria Senior Living, JetSuite, Care Dimensions, Xan Confections and Elite OC Productions.

Pictures: (1) UCI MIND Faculty (from Left to Right) David Cribbs, Ph.D, Leslie Thompson, Ph.D., Frank LaFerla, Ph.D., Claudia Kawas, M.D., Carl Cotman, Ph.D., Andrea Tenner, Ph.D., and Malcolm Dick, Ph.D. (2) Kerry Kavanaugh, Monica Castillo, and Miriam Romo. (3) Jeanine Hattas, artist, cap-turing the night (painting donated to UCI MIND by Jacque DuPont). (4) Guests enjoying silent auction, wine tasting, and festivities. (5) Marc Carlson, Jan Western, and Alison Hahn. (9) Elizabeth and Tom Tierney. (10) Frank LaFerla and Mark Mostow. (11) Scott and Kerry Kavanaugh. (12) Alaina Stamos, in
Every 71 seconds someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. It is the sixth leading cause of death in California. In Orange County alone, 60,000 people are living with Alzheimer's. These are alarming numbers, especially given that Alzheimer's is only one of a number of dementias our society is facing, and numbers will dramatically increase as the baby boomer generation ages.

“Right here in Orange County, significant research and valuable services are provided by the UC Irvine Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders (UCI MIND). It is one of the few research institutes, one of only 29 in the nation, bridging science-based discoveries regarding dementias with services for people assessed at the clinic”, stated chair, Jacqueline DuPont. “We are fortunate that it is here and that it is doing such a wonderful job fighting the wave of dementia that is looming as our population ages.”

For more information on UCI MIND and plans for the 2011 Wine for the MIND event underway, please visit www.mind.uci.edu or contact Linda Scheck, UCI MIND Community Relations Director, at (949) 824-3251.
### Gammaglobulin Alzheimer’s Partnership Study (GAP) Clinical Trial

This clinical research study is designed to evaluate the effectiveness, safety, and tolerability of an investigational drug for Alzheimer’s, and to determine if this investigational drug may help slow the progression of this disease.

Patients may be eligible to participate in the GAP Study if they:
- Are 50 to 89 years old.
- Have been diagnosed with probable mild-to-moderate Alzheimer’s disease.
- Have a study partner (a spouse, child, sibling, or other caregiver) who can be present at every study visit to monitor the participant, and to help him or her complete key study procedures.

If the individual agrees to participate, they will be one of 360 subjects enrolled in the study, which will take place at 36-40 AD treatment sites in the United States. Approximately 10 subjects from this facility will participate in this study. This is a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. If the patient is found to be eligible for this study, the total period of his/her participation will be approximately 20 months. In this study, the patient will be given either a placebo (an inactive substance) or IGIV infusions intravenously (through a vein in the arm) every two weeks over a 70-week period followed by a 6-week follow-up period without treatment. All participants receive study-related care and monitoring and study-related drugs, at no cost.

### LY2062430 Study for Alzheimer’s Disease Clinical Trial

A double-blind, placebo-controlled 80-week study to evaluate whether LY2062430 is able to slow the rate of mental decline in individuals with Alzheimer’s Disease (AD).

LY2062430 is a passive immunization approach for the possible treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease. “Passive immunization” is when the antibodies are given directly, so the body does not need to make its own antibodies.

**This study is recruiting participants who:**
- Have a diagnosis of probable AD
- Are 50 years of age or older
- Are able to receive intravenous medications
- Have a study partner – friend or relative who can accompany the participant to all clinic visits and answer questions about him/her
- There are 23 total visits to the UC Irvine campus. Visits are every 2-4 weeks

### Nicotinamide (NA) Clinical Trial

A double-blind, placebo-controlled 7-month study to find out more about Nicotinamide and its effects on Alzheimer’s disease progression.

**Nicotinamide (NA)** is a class of drugs known as a HDAC inhibitor, a dietary supplement that is being studied to determine whether chronic use is safe and effective in improving brain function in subjects with mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease (AD).

**This study is recruiting participants who:**
- Have a diagnosis of probable AD
- Are 50 years of age or older
- Have a study partner – friend or relative who can accompany the participant to all clinic visits and answer questions about him/her
- There are 7 total visits to the UC Irvine campus. Visits are every 2-6 weeks
GET INVOLVED IN RESEARCH
Help Us Find the Answers...

Research studies can be meaningful and valuable in the understanding of diseases from prevention to treatment. For more information, please call the study coordinators listed.

fMRI Study Measuring Brain Structure and Memory Performance in Normal Older Adults and MCI

In our lab, we are studying the relationship between changes in brain structures as they relate to memory performance. One way that we can look at changes in these brain structures is to observe changes in memory that occur in normal aging as well as those changes associated with disorders of aging, such as mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s disease. We use fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) to observe changes in activity in the brain while individuals perform memory tasks. By comparing the changes in activity to memory performance, we can observe which areas of the brain are involved in different kinds of memory operations.

Who: Successful aging program participants
Mild cognitive impairment diagnosis
Questionable cognitive impairment

Time: 2 visits, each 1-2 hours each

Risk: Minimal, but we will conduct a thorough screening for MRI compatibility

Compensation for the first session is $15 per hour. Compensation for the second session is $25 per hour. Both sessions are located on the UCI main campus. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please call the Stark Lab at (949) 824-4230 and ask for Shauna Stark.

Alzheimer’s Disease Neuroimaging Initiative

Why are we doing this research study?
Our goal is to determine whether imaging of the brain (through MRI, PET and amyloid imaging scans) can help predict and or the onset and progression of Alzheimer’s disease. In addition to neuroimaging, the study will collect and test blood and cerebral spinal fluid to determine if biomarkers can predict and monitor the disease. Testing cerebral spinal fluid is the only way to obtain important brain information.

Who is sponsoring this research study?
This research study is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health through the Research and Research Infrastructure “Grand Opportunity” (GO) grant program.

Where will the research study take place?
This research study will take place at 50 major university sites across North America. Researchers are looking for persons who:
• Are between 55 and 90 years of age
• Are in good general health but have memory problems or concerns
• Are fluent in English or Spanish
• Are willing and able to undergo the test procedures
• Have a study partner – a friend or relative who can accompany the volunteer to all clinic visits

Your health will be closely monitored by a team of doctors and nurses, at no cost to you. Any new information about your physical health will be shared with you and your physician (you are encouraged to continue seeing your regular doctor).

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please call Deeba Sultani at (949) 824-5733.
DONATIONS
from January 2010 - June 2010

We thank the following benefactors who are making a difference in supporting our mission to advance research into understanding the causes of memory impairments and neurological disorders. They are helping us reach our goal to diagnose the disease, identify the means to effectively treat it and to provide help to the individuals, families and caregivers.

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Last a Lifetime...

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Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Gielow

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Honoraria/Memorials continued

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<tr>
<td>Age 80</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 87</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rates as of July 1, 2010 call for the latest rates.

A gift annuity is a simple contract where we agree to pay you a fixed payment every year for life. The payment rate is based on your age. Benefits begin immediately and you will receive a net income tax deduction this year for part of the funding amount that will help you with your 2010 taxes. Then every year for the rest of your life, your payments will continue (partially tax-free and partly taxed as income).

People who fund gift annuities often have a CD that has rolled over for several years; a desire for dependable, regular, fixed payments; appreciated assets such as stock that are not producing income; and a desire to donate to research and receive cash back.

After a lifetime of payments to you, any funds remaining in the gift annuity go directly to UCI MIND. The funds are not part of your estate, so a gift annuity also helps with estate taxes. This service is provided at no cost to you through the UCI Office of Legacy Planning. Call (949) 824-3251 for questions.
THE AGING BRAIN is the newsletter publication of the UCI Institute for Memory Impairments and Neurological Disorders in collaboration with the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center (ADRC) and the California Alzheimer’s Disease Centers (CADC). The ADRC is funded by a grant from the National Institute on Aging and supports and promotes interdisciplinary research on Alzheimer’s disease. The CADC is funded by the California Department of Public Health. The CADC provides expert clinical assessments and diagnosis of memory complaints related to Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

* Layout for The Aging Brain Newsletter was prepared by Shirley Sirivong

Grants have been received by the following in support of this activity:
- Hoag Memorial Presbyterian Hospital
- Silverado Senior Living
- Regents Point
- Belmont Village Senior Living

The conference is open to the public and is designed to heighten the community’s awareness and knowledge of Alzheimer’s disease and related neurological disorders. For physicians, psychologists, and other health care professionals, educational units available. Please visit www.alzoc.org or call (949) 757-3703 for more information and to register.