

UCSD to Host Free HIV/AIDS Community Forum November 2, 2006

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A free community forum on current HIV and AIDS treatment and research will be held on Thursday, November 2, from 6-8 p.m., in the auditorium of the UCSD Hillcrest Medical Center at 200 W. Arbor Drive. The forum, sponsored by the UCSD AIDS Research Institute and the UCSD Antiviral Research Center (AVRC), will include a light dinner and free parking. Advance reservations are required.

Speakers will include UCSD School of Medicine faculty members Douglas Richman, M.D., director of the UCSD Center for AIDS Research; Constance Benson, M.D., head of the AIDS Clinical Trials Group; Susan Little, M.D. director of UCSD's clinical core in the Acute Infection and Early Disease Research Program; Richard Haubrich, M.D., of the AVRC; and Scott Letendre, M.D., of the AVRC and the UCSD HIV Neurobehavioral Research Center. The forum will include presentations by these researchers, as well as a question-and-answer session.

"Despite tremendous medical advances in the treatment of AIDS, challenges remain," said Richman, who adds that many patients have trouble adhering to the grueling lifelong therapy, while others develop resistance to available treatments. Individuals may suffer life-restricting drug side effects, and some patients are not helped by current therapies for brain-related problems.

More than 40 million people worldwide are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS. More than a million Americans are living in some stage of HIV disease, with an estimated 40,000 new infections occurring each year. In San Diego County alone, approximately 14,000 men, women and children are infected with the virus.

The UCSD HIV/AIDS program ranks among the nation's top AIDS programs in the United States and includes:

- The Owen Clinic, providing primary health care services for patients with HIV/AIDS;
- The UCSD Antiviral Research Center, for patient clinical trials and educational programs;
- The UCSD Mother, Child and Adolescent Program, for care, psychosocial services and clinical trials;
- The Southern California Primary Infection program which studies newly transmitted HIV infection;
- The HIV Neurobehavioral Research Center, which investigates the causes, effects and treatments of HIV associated brain disorders; and
- Numerous other research projects investigating important areas of HIV virology and pathogenesis.

The UCSD AIDS Research Institute promotes collaborative scientific research, innovative clinical trials and public education in the San Diego Community, with the aim of halting the spread of HIV and AIDS. The Antiviral Research Center provides quality treatment and care for people living with HIV.

To enroll for the free HIV/AIDS Community Forum, call (619) 543-5023. For more information about the program, call (619) 543-4746. Spanish translation will be available upon request.