

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR THE GOOD HEALTH OF NEVADA

NEWS RELEASE

Conference to Highlight Recent Advances Bringing Scientists Closer to a Cure for Cystic Fibrosis (CF)

Lynette Hein, Media Liaison
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LAS VEGAS - The University of Nevada School of Medicine Cystic Fibrosis Center, in conjunction with University Medical Center, will be sponsoring a conference on Saturday, **April 25**, at Alexis Park Resort Hotel (375 E. Harmon Ave.) from **7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.** "THE CURE FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS: How close are we really," will highlight the medical strides that have been made since the discovery of the CF gene in August 1989.

Cystic Fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease in the U.S. today, affecting some 30,000 individuals. According to the National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, some 1,400 new cases are diagnosed each year, usually within the first three years of life.

CF causes the production of a thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and leads to infection and lung damage. This mucus also obstructs the ducts of the pancreas, preventing its enzymes from reaching the intestine to digest food.

Research has accelerated since the discovery of the CF gene. In 1990, scientists made a copy of a normal gene, added it to CF cells in laboratory dishes, correcting the

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CF defect. The second major step toward such gene therapy is now underway; CF researchers are refining new gene transfer technology.

The School of Medicine's Cystic Fibrosis Center in Las Vegas, serving some 90 patients, is the only CF Center in Nevada. The comprehensive care center is directed by Dr. Ruben Diaz, Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, who is the only pediatric pulmonologist in Nevada.

Among those scheduled to present at the conference will be Gary Green, Director of Development, Southern California/Southern Nevada Chapter of the National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation; Dr. Colleen Morris, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and director of Nevada Genetics Network; Dr. Paul Waters, director of the Lung Transplant Program at Cedars Sinai Medical Center; and Tahmineh Ronagh Langroodi, a nutritional support dietician at University Medical Center of Southern Nevada.

For additional information on the conference or on the Cystic Fibrosis Center, contact Lynette Hein, Media Liaison, at 383-2638 or Tara Brascia, CFC Program Coordinator, at 598-4411.