

HOUSTON Medical Times

Bringing Healthcare News to the Forefront

Volume 13 | Issue 5

May Edition 2023

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Mitigating Your Greatest Data Privacy Risk



By Kathryn T. Allen, J.D.
Kelsey L. Brandes, J.D.
Polsinelli, PC

I. Third-party vendors pose a significant risk

The greatest data privacy threat to companies is commonly thought to be that company's employees. While employees can be a threat, the majority of data breaches and intrusions (63%) are tied to or directly caused by third-party vendors.

II. The concept of vendor management

Companies can effectively manage their vendor risk if they follow a comprehensive vendor management program. Many companies rely on their procurement department to gather information on vendors and/or to establish a risk profile through vendor assessments. But as more and more vendors have cloud-based or Internet-of-Things components, it is time to pull vendor management away from the procurement team and implement different measures.

III. The information security agreement

The company must be the party establishing parameters for its risk tolerance and legal and regulatory obligations. A written document, whether a stand-alone agreement or an exhibit or addendum to the underlying relationship agreement, that sets forth specific physical and technical standards as well as ongoing obligations by your vendors is commonly referred to as an information security agreement ("ISA").

At a minimum, an ISA should address the following:



“...the majority of data breaches and intrusions (63%) are tied to or directly caused by third-party vendors.”

- **Certifications.** Certain industries have required certifications (e.g., the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act), while others follow industry standards (e.g., SOC2). Vendors should provide copies of their certifications.
- **Data encryption, storage/destruction.** Where can and can't the vendor store your data? What happens to your data when your agreement with the vendor is over?
- **Malware.** What internal processes does the vendor have in place to detect malware and prevent cyberattacks? Does the vendor regularly scan its systems (and make the results of those scans available to you upon request)? What happens if the vendor passes a virus on to you?
- **Disaster recovery/business continuity.** If the vendor experiences a major interruption in business, how long will it need to recover? This is particularly important to infrastructure vendors
- **Insurance.** Does the vendor have sufficient insurance in place that will make you whole in the event the vendor experiences a data breach? Is the vendor properly capitalized to stand behind its liability?
- **Liability.** What is the minimum liability your company will be comfortable with accepting in the event of a vendor's data breach or
- **Data breach notification.** How will the vendor notify you if your data is breached? When must the vendor notify you of a breach? What does the vendor have to do for you and the data subjects post-breach?
- **Employee/subcontractor management.** Do vendor employees need background checks? Can the vendor engage subcontractors

see Data Risk ...page 14

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Special Announcement

The Future of Health Care is Here!

Texas A&M School of Engineering Medicine is Training a New Kind of Health Care Professional, Known As A "Physicianer," Who Combines The Problem-Solving Skills of Engineering with the Clinical Expertise of Medicine.

On May 19-20, 2023, Texas A&M School of Engineering Medicine will host the inaugural graduation for the World's First Class of Physicianers. This will feature a celebratory colloquium to include both a poster session of ENMED student innovations and a Nobel Laureates & Inventor of the Internet Colloquy.

ENMED is a collaboration between Texas A&M's School of Engineering Medicine and Houston Methodist Hospital, designed to train this new generation of health care leaders who can use their blended technical and medical expertise to tackle some of the biggest challenges in health care. Graduating the

world's first class of Physicianers is a significant milestone for the School of Engineering Medicine and the health care community. This momentous event represents a new era in health care education globally, where students are trained to be health care leaders who are equipped to use engineering and technological innovation to transform health care.

Roderic I. Pettigrew, PhD, MD, inaugural dean of the School of Engineering Medicine, will host the landmark graduation of the World's First Class of

Physicianers. As a precursor to the commencement, a scientific poster session presenting ENMED Student Innovations and a Nobel Laureates & Inventor of the Internet Colloquy will kick off the excitement. In this ground-breaking, historic event, multiple distinguished Nobel laureates will come together to share their insights and perspectives on the convergence of science, engineering, and medicine and the ways in which their groundbreaking work has paved the way for new discoveries and advancements in health. ♦

Please join us for these historic events:

Event Dates

May 19, 2023 – Nobel Laureates & Inventor of the Internet Colloquy

May 20, 2023 – ENMED Graduation, World's First Class of Physicianers

Location

The Westin Hotel,
5th Floor Ballroom
1709 Dryden Rd.
Houston, TX 77030

Registration Link

<https://enmed.tamu.edu/2023-inaugural-graduation/>



TEXAS A&M SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING MEDICINE/ENMED HOSTS NOBEL LAUREATES AND INVENTOR OF THE INTERNET COLLOQUY



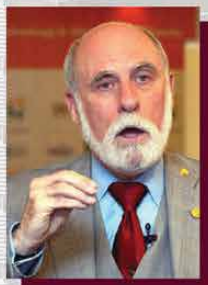
Carolyn Bertozzi, PhD
Stanford University, Nobel 2022



Martin Chalfie, PhD
Columbia University, Nobel 2008



Phillip Sharp, PhD
MIT, Nobel 1993



Vinton Cerf, PhD
Co-Inventor of the Internet, Google VP
(Live via Zoom)



Peter Agre, MD
Johns Hopkins University, Nobel 2003
(Live via Zoom)



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Oncology Research

Spending Time in The Great Outdoors When You Have Cancer



By Sonal Sethi, M.D.,
Texas Oncology

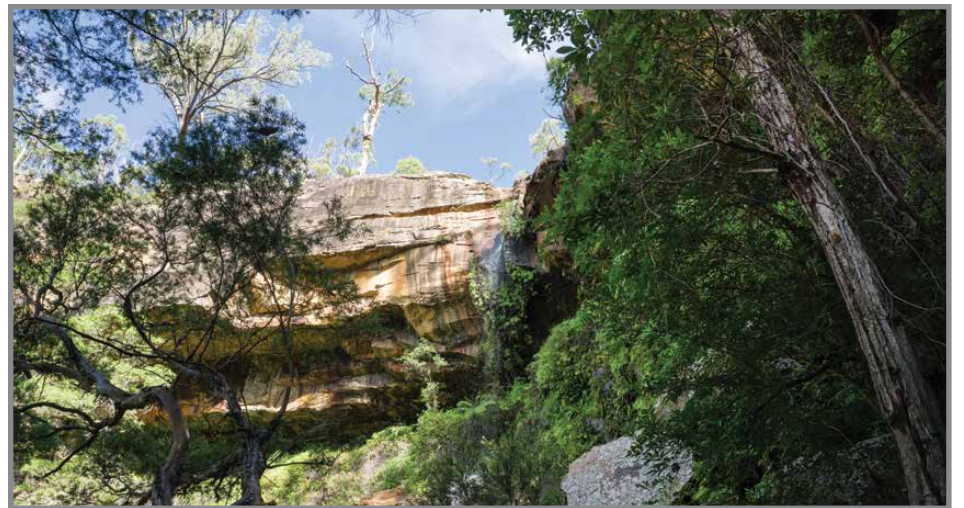
taking a few deep breaths of fresh air may provide a brief and comforting escape from the daily stresses of cancer for both patients and caregivers.

Benefits of spending time outside

In a recent poll, current and former cancer patients were asked about the impact of cancer on self-perception, body image, and mental and emotional health. 70% of respondents said they experienced one or more symptoms of depression during cancer treatment.

Research has shown that spending time outdoors reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety and helps the mind to rest. One study found that contact with nature decreased mental distress and increased feelings of happiness, positive social interactions, and a sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Feelings of stress are also common among cancer patients. Adding time outside can be beneficial in helping



Think about the last time you were outdoors. Did you feel happier, calmer, a sense of peace? Studies have shown being outside can benefit one's health and well-being, offering opportunities for physical activity while also reducing stress and improving mental health.

For cancer patients, a compromised immune system often requires them to be more cautious of where they are spending their time. For many, it means staying indoors, which can lead to feelings of isolation and depression.

However, spending time outside and feeling the sun on your skin or

patients cope with a cancer diagnosis or while going through treatment. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, as little as 20 minutes a day spent outdoors can reduce stress.

Other notable benefits of spending time outside include:

- Better breathing
- Improved sleep
- Motivation to exercise
- Escape from over stimulating technology and sounds
- Boosted immunity

Outdoor activities suitable for cancer patients

Adding outdoor time doesn't

require hours of commitment. Activities may vary based on treatments, side effects, and how patients feel on any given day. Sometimes just a few minutes outside each day is all that is needed to improve one's mood.

Exercise releases hormones called endorphins which reduce feelings of stress and pain. Easy, low-impact outdoor activities like walking or hiking through one of over 80 state parks across Texas, swimming, riding a bike, yoga, or gentle stretching can improve blood circulation, appetite, and muscle strength. It

see Oncology Research...page 14

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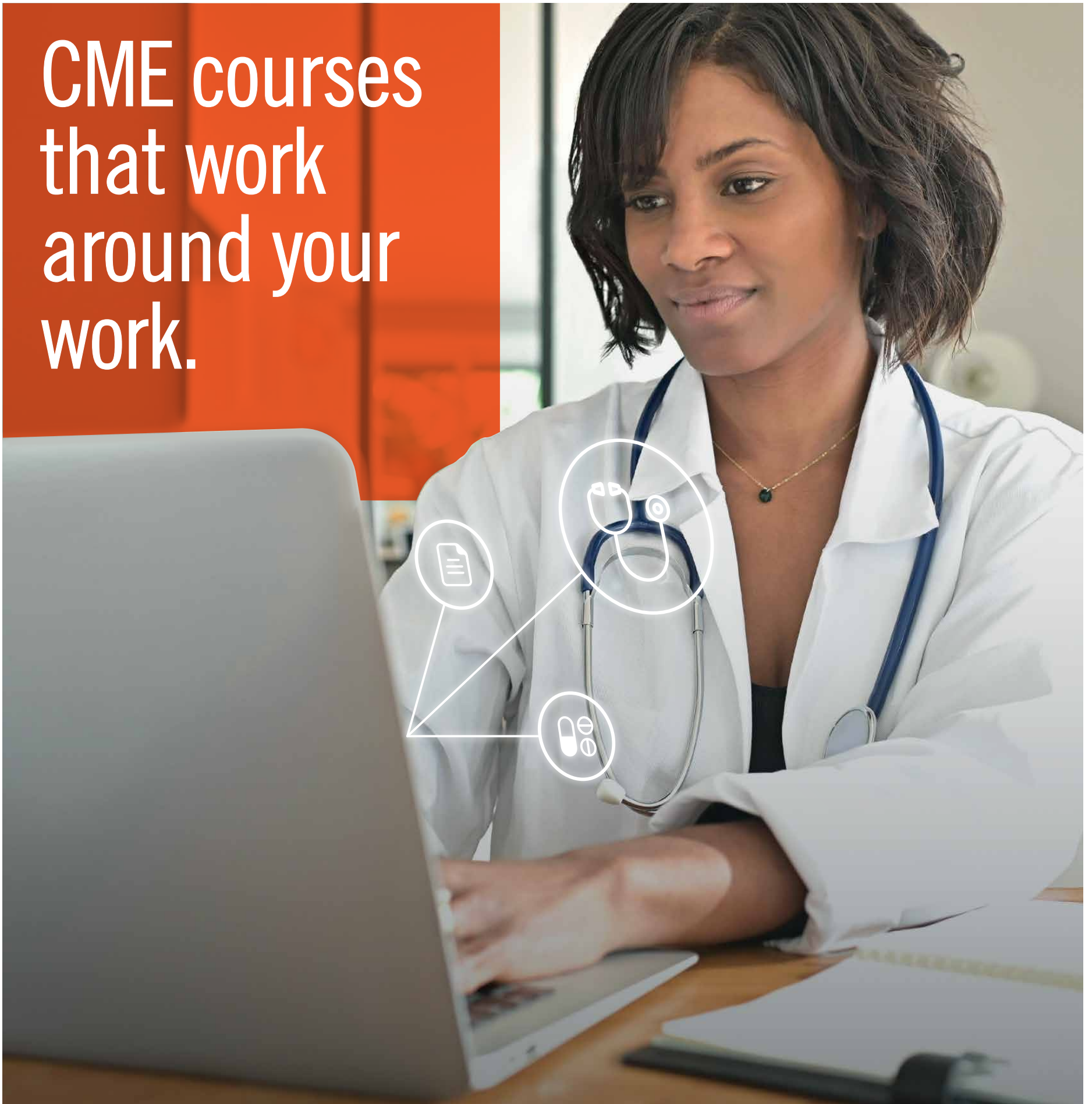


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St. Luke's Health Ushers in New Era of Care with O'Quinn Medical Tower at McNair

With a blessing from Auxiliary Bishop Italo Dell'Oro C.R.S., Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, St. Luke's Health ushered in a new era of internationally renowned outpatient and cancer care with the new O'Quinn Medical Tower at McNair. It is the latest addition to the Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center McNair Campus and adjoins the existing McNair Hospital Tower, which opened in 2019.

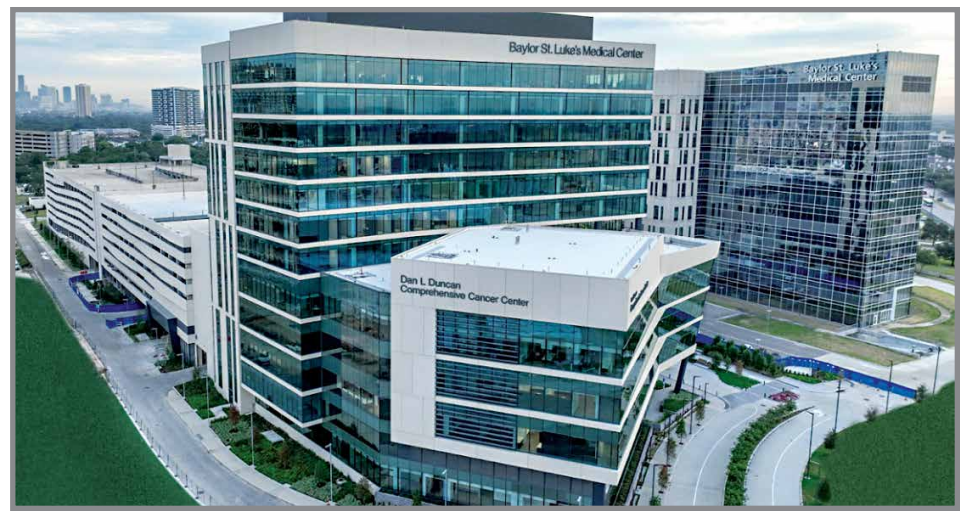
"The O'Quinn Medical Tower at McNair strengthens our ability to allow our best and brightest clinicians to excel at providing world-class care to our patients and community," said Doug Lawson, PhD, CEO of St. Luke's Health. "We are positioning our ministry of healing to continue as the high-value provider of choice for generations to come."

A 12-story, 420,000 square foot ambulatory care center, O'Quinn Medical Tower is home to savvy and cutting-edge amenities and resources.

It features an environment of healing, incorporating natural lighting and balcony gardens, curated artwork with calming nature scenes, an ambulatory surgery center with 12 additional operating rooms and 10 new endoscopy suites, and ample on-site parking.

"We were very intentional in thinking through every detail of the patient and visitor experience when designing the building," said Liz Youngblood, president of Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center. "The O'Quinn Medical Tower is a purposeful space that promotes healing and well-being where our expert caregivers and staff can continue delivering compassionate high-quality care for our patients."

The O'Quinn Medical Tower enhances the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center by tripling it in size with an additional 80-bay infusion center, more than 70 exam rooms, and state-of-the-art imaging and radiation treatment



equipment. Through Baylor College of Medicine, it is one of only three NCI-designated comprehensive cancer centers in Texas, ranked among the nation's best cancer programs by U.S. News & World Report, and home to groundbreaking cancer research in specialties like breast, colorectal, liver, prostate, and gynecologic cancers.

"It was vital for us to incorporate patient feedback in the design process to ensure we offer an exceptional patient-centered experience at the new Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center," said Nike Onifade, vice president of oncology at St. Luke's Health. "For example, feedback from our patient focus groups is reflected in

how we designed the infusion suites, which offer our patients the option of privacy or community while receiving their treatments."

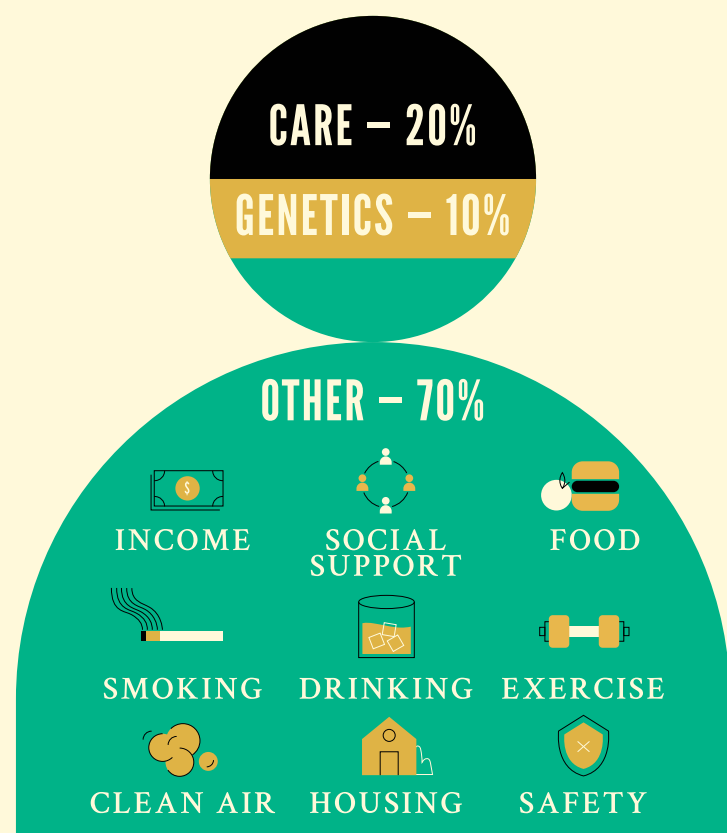
"Our goal is a single welcoming location for our dedicated clinical and support staff to provide safe, quality, compassionate care to all our patients," said Dr. Mothaffar Rimawi, executive medical director of the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center and professor of medicine – hematology and oncology at Baylor College of Medicine. "The new tower conveniently puts all Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer

see St. Luke's ...page 14

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Single-Dose Nasal Spray Could Soon Treat Traumatic Brain Injury

A Single Intranasal Dose of Anti-Inflammatory Stem Cell-Derived Extracellular Vesicles Is A Promising Means of Treating Traumatic Brain Injury

By Ann M. McKelvey

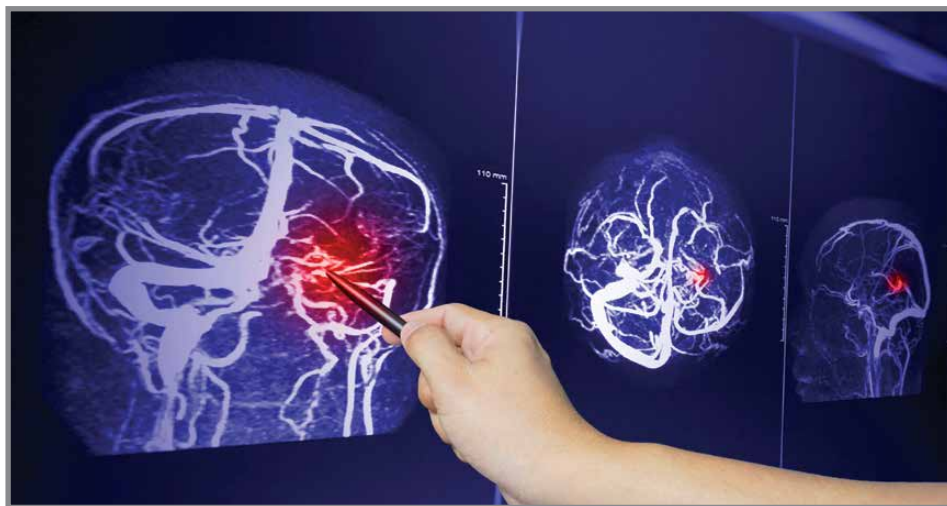
Researchers at the Texas A&M University School of Medicine are working to combat the severe outcomes of traumatic brain injury, also called TBI, with a non-invasive therapeutic they believe could prevent the cycle of neuroinflammation that leads to long-lasting complications.

TBI has been at the forefront of public attention in recent years. More than 50 million TBI cases occur annually, creating a global financial burden of \$70 billion and making TBI a major health problem. In America, more than 611 TBI-related hospitalizations occur per day. The hallmarks of mild to moderate TBI are progressive cognitive

decline and changes in mood resulting in long-term behavioral impairments, including the development of mental disorders in surviving patients. These devastating outcomes have fueled researchers' investigations into how to resolve the long-lasting issues that follow TBI.

Chronic neuroinflammation and long-term TBI symptoms

The devastating outcomes of TBI have been linked to a condition that develops in the brain after TBI called chronic neuroinflammation. Prior work has identified the actors in this inflammatory process, which include a specific type of central nervous system cell called microglia, or resident immune cells of the brain. After a person sustains



a TBI, these cells become activated as a response to neuron death. While such activation is beneficial for removing cellular debris in the acute phase after TBI, their unrelenting activation, called chronic neuroinflammation, adversely affects brain function. These cells begin a mechanism that works through the signaling system p38/MAPK, known for communicating external stimuli into the body. Hyperactivation of this pathway in microglia leads to a continuous release of multiple pro-inflammatory molecules, which then affect and degrade neuronal function, leading to brain tissue loss and myriad symptoms.

Previous work has explored using

mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) as a means for modulating the responses of the immune system. These cells can self-renew and are capable of developing into various types of cells. Beyond this capacity, MSCs can also secrete anti-inflammatory cytokines and other molecules that directly modulate the inflammatory response of the immune system through receptors on their cell surfaces that sense the presence of pro-inflammatory molecules.

Using stem cell-derived extracellular vesicles to combat chronic neuroinflammation

see Brain Injury ...page 13



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AI Can Spot Early Signs of Alzheimer's in Speech Patterns, Study Shows

O'Donnell Brain Institute Researcher Says Findings May Lead to A Simple Screening Test for Early Detection of Cognitive Impairment

New technologies that can capture subtle changes in a patient's voice may help physicians diagnose cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease before symptoms begin to show, according to a UT Southwestern Medical Center researcher who led a study published in the Alzheimer's Association publication Diagnosis, Assessment & Disease Monitoring.

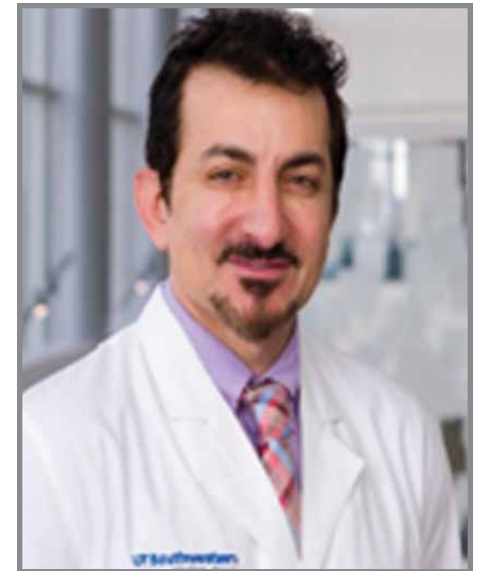
"Our focus was on identifying subtle language and audio changes that are present in the very early stages of Alzheimer's disease but not easily recognizable by family members or an individual's primary care physician," said Ihab Hajjar, M.D., Professor of Neurology at UT Southwestern's Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute.

Researchers used advanced machine learning and natural language processing (NLP) tools to assess speech patterns in 206 people – 114 who met the criteria for mild cognitive decline and 92 who were unimpaired. The team then mapped those findings to commonly used biomarkers to determine their efficacy in measuring impairment.

Study participants, who were enrolled in a research program at Emory University in Atlanta, were given several standard cognitive assessments before being asked to record a spontaneous 1- to 2-minute description of artwork.

"The recorded descriptions of the picture provided us with an approximation of conversational abilities that we could study via artificial intelligence to determine speech motor control, idea density, grammatical complexity, and other speech features," Dr. Hajjar said.

The research team compared the participants' speech analytics to their cerebral spinal fluid samples and MRI scans to determine how accurately the digital voice biomarkers detected both mild cognitive impairment



Dr. Ihab Hajjar holds the Pogue Family Distinguished University Chair in Alzheimer's Disease Clinical Research and Care, in Memory of Maurine and David Weigers McMullan.

and Alzheimer's disease status and progression.

"Prior to the development of machine learning and NLP, the detailed study of speech patterns in patients was extremely labor intensive and often not successful because the changes in the early stages are frequently undetectable to the human ear," Dr. Hajjar said. "This novel method of testing performed well in detecting those with mild cognitive impairment and more specifically in identifying patients with evidence of Alzheimer's disease – even when it cannot be easily detected using standard cognitive assessments."

During the study, researchers spent fewer than 10 minutes capturing a patient's voice recording. Traditional neuropsychological tests typically take several hours to administer.

"If confirmed with larger studies, the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to study vocal recordings could provide primary care providers with an easy-to-perform screening tool for at-risk individuals," Dr. Hajjar said. "Earlier diagnoses

see Alzheimer ...page 13

The Framework

Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital Expansion Well Underway

Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital's \$167 million expansion is progressing on schedule and today hospital officials ceremonially broke ground on several associated projects, including a third medical plaza, a parking garage and the expansion of the Emergency Center and OR. Jerry Ashworth, CEO of Memorial Hermann Katy, also announced that a new 40-bed medical/surgical acute care unit will open to patients later this week, bringing the hospital's total bed count to 254.

"Today we recognize many months of planning and countless hours of preparation that have gone into this expansion and celebrate the tremendous opportunity to continue to grow alongside our flourishing community," said Ashworth. "Our top priorities throughout this process have been to add ample physical space to accommodate more patients, and equally as important, to significantly grow our capabilities and specialty services to ensure our neighbors can

access routine and complex healthcare needs close to home."

"As a result of this growth, we are also increasing our workforce and are actively filling a number of new positions here at the hospital" Ashworth added.

Updates provided today included:

Parking Garage and Medical Plaza III

Upon completion, the parking garage will add more than 600 parking spaces on the west side of the campus, while Medical Plaza III will provide additional clinical office space for affiliated physicians. The projects are expected to be complete in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

Emergency Center and Operating Room (OR) Expansion

In Phase I, the Emergency Center, which serves as the Katy area's only Level III trauma center, will double in size to 40,000 square feet and add additional treatment rooms, including two state-of-the-art trauma rooms, space for more CT scanners, upgraded



equipment and more. Additionally, the project will add two operating rooms, with shell space to add up to four more. Phase II will include renovations to the existing Emergency Center. The estimated date of completion for both phases is the end of 2025.

6 East Opens on April 5

A new 40-bed medical/surgical acute care unit located on the sixth floor of the East Tower opens on April 5. 6 East will serve a variety of patients, including those who are recovering from surgery or have an acute illness.

"This new unit could not have come soon enough. Our community has grown exponentially and 6 East

will add patient capacity where we need it most," said Vivien Bond, chief operating officer at Memorial Hermann Katy. "Every detail, from a new nursing care model focused on personalized care to the thoughtful design of the unit, was developed with our patients and their families in mind."

5 East to add 40 more beds

Construction also is underway on a 40-bed immediate care unit (IMU) on the fifth floor of the East Tower. An IMU is a step down from intensive care but provides more advanced care than

see [The Framework...page 13](#)



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Healthy Heart

A Heart-Healthy Life Begins with Good Prenatal Care

The American Heart Association Says Healthy Hearts Are A Key To Healthy Pregnancies.

By Megan Jameson
The American Heart Association

Poor heart health puts both mothers-to-be and their children at risk. Heart disease is the leading cause of pregnancy-related death causing more than 1 in 4 pregnancy-related deaths (26.5%), according to the American Heart Association Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2022 Update. A study published in 2022 in the Association's flagship journal, *Circulation*, found that only about 40% of women in the U.S. who give birth have good heart health prior to their pregnancy with excess weight being the major driver of poor pre-pregnancy health.

According to Michelle A. Albert, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, volunteer president of the American Heart Association, even if a woman isn't at her healthiest before becoming

pregnant, it's never too late to work on getting healthier for her baby and herself.

"Pregnancy is often a pivotal time in a woman's life from both short and long term perspectives. For some, it may be their first experience with a major medical condition, for most, it's a natural time to be more forward-thinking about their own health, as well as that of their baby," said Albert. "Getting regular prenatal care as well as post-pregnancy cardiovascular risk factor management if appropriate along with making healthy lifestyle changes can improve the pregnancy and birth experience."

What's good for mom is also good for baby. The study found that children are more likely to have good cardiovascular health during adolescence and beyond if their mothers had good heart health during



pregnancy.

"The role of a healthy lifestyle during pregnancy cannot be emphasized enough," Albert said. "Healthy diet, moderate exercise including walking, smoking cessation and other healthy behaviors are important tools for a healthy pregnancy for both mother and child."

Women who have heart disease or who experience cardiovascular complications during pregnancy should work closely with their health care clinician to monitor their health and take medications as prescribed to treat

and reduce cardiovascular risk factors that could follow them through life.

"There is still much to learn about the special risks of maternal and infant health related to cardiovascular health. This is an area the American Heart Association continues to follow closely, devoting research dollars and other resources to ensuring the healthiest outcomes for parents and babies throughout their lifetime," Albert said.

Learn more about having a healthy pregnancy at heart.org. ♦



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Financial Forecast

Financial Planning for Couples

Things To Consider When There Are Two... And Then Just One



By **Grace S. Yung, CFP**
Midtown Financial Group, LLC

If you're in a committed relationship, you probably rely on one another to work as a team – and if you're combining income and savings, it is possible to reach your financial goals faster. But just like other things in life, there are no guarantees...and because unexpected illnesses and accidents can happen, it is necessary to plan ahead “just in case.” This can help to secure a financial safety net for the surviving individual, as well as provide a better idea about what to do going forward.

- Are savings enough for your surviving partner to have a secure retirement?
- How much, if any, can your spouse collect in Social Security survivor's benefits?

No one can predict what can happen and when. That is why we need to hope for the best, but plan for the worst. Otherwise, you could find yourself or your surviving partner/spouse spending down your nest egg and incurring debt just to get by. This can be particularly true early in retirement – it has the potential to cause substantial financial difficulty for the survivor, both in terms of income and expenses.

While some of the planning scenarios can remain the same regardless of when a spouse or partner



Preparing Financially for Life's “What If” Scenarios

If you are running a financial plan together as a couple, it's important to consider the potential “what ifs.” For instance, everything being equal, if you both work hard, save money, spend, and invest wisely, live to age 95, and die at the same time, the financial plan would have a high probability of success.

But the reality is, things don't always go as we hope, and unfortunately, as difficult as it is to imagine, it's important to anticipate what would happen if one of you passes away prematurely and whether this happens before or after retirement.

There are many potential issues you could face if one of you dies before retirement, such as:

- What happens with a minor child(ren)?

passes away, there are other areas that could require different strategies if the individual's passing occurs after retiring.

For example, for an unmarried couple, the decedent's Social Security income stops, which can cause a sizeable “gap” in incoming cash flow going forward for the survivor. If a couple is married, the surviving spouse is allowed to keep the bigger of the two Social Security checks, but not both. So, in either case, income will be reduced.

Unfortunately, though, many of the household expenses like the mortgage, utilities, and insurance will remain the same. This is also true if home repairs, such as a leaky roof or a new furnace, if needed.

see Financial Forecast ...page 13

PLAN WISELY. YOU WON'T GET A DO-OVER.

A successful retirement in the future can often depend on having a solid plan now. If your money isn't working as hard as you are, it may be time to act—there are no do-overs in retirement planning. Now is the time to consider developing a strategy that can help you work toward your financial goals. I specialize in providing comprehensive, personalized financial guidance with the goal of maximizing every remaining moment of the retirement countdown.

Call today to learn more
or to schedule a consultation.



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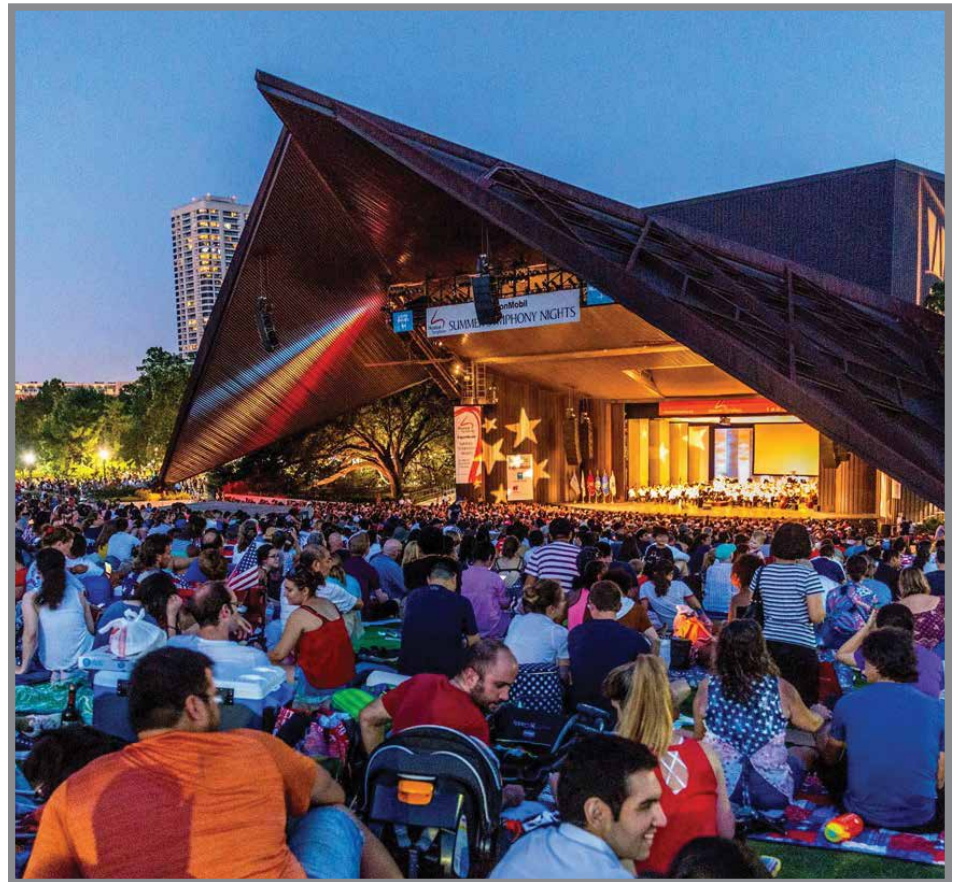
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FRAME YOUR FUTURE

A Jewel of A Birthday Celebration At Miller Outdoor Theatre

Miller Outdoor Theatre celebrates its official 100th Anniversary Birthday on Friday, May 12, 2023, at 7 p.m. with a colossal birthday cake! Indulge in luscious slices of delicious cake by El Bolillo Bakery served during intermission at the concession stand and of course, snap a photo of yourself, family, and friends “popping” out of the larger-than-life 7-foot “art” cake nestled in the greenery of the Miller Plaza. Plus enjoy “Life is a Dance,” a mural created by artist Mark DeLeon as part of the Poetry, Drama and Oratory” on May 12, 1923. Its debut performance “Springtime of Our Nation,” was a pageant with 2,500 performers. “We’ve come a long way since 1923,” remarked Managing Director Cissy Segall Davis. “With eight months of programming Houstonians and visitors alike will enjoy 130 incredibly diverse performances this year. And, while Miller Outdoor Theatre is always free to enjoy for the public, maintaining this cultural gem takes more than love,”



season-long celebration which will be on display at Miller that evening. All capped off with the Houston Ballet’s sparkling production of Jewels, George Balanchine’s three-act ballet, beginning at 8 p.m. For FREE tickets in the covered seating area and details on the entire 2023 performance and event calendar visit milleroutdoortheatre.com. Please note that most evening performances are livestreamed and available free at the Miller Dream Stream link on the website at milleroutdoortheatre.com.

Miller Outdoor Theatre was dedicated “To the Arts of Music, Davis added. The Miller Theatre Advisory Board has embarked on a capital campaign to raise \$12.5 million dollars to improve the visitor experience for future generations of Miller visitors. Renovations and improvements include the theatre’s fixed and hillside seating, installation of screens and the creation of a signature entryway to the theatre. “Every gift goes a long way in achieving our masterplan and no gift is too small,” said Davis. Make a \$100 gift for Miller during #celebratemiller100 at <https://www.milleroutdoortheatre.com/donate/>◆

Brain Injury

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Researchers in the laboratory of Ashok K. Shetty, PhD, professor and associate director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine and professor in the Department of Cell Biology and Genetics at the Texas A&M School of Medicine, capitalized on research into the field of extracellular vesicles (EVs) as a means of solving the question of how to prevent the cycle of neuroinflammation from the beginning.

Shetty said using stem cell-derived EVs to combat neuroinflammation after TBI stems from their potent anti-inflammatory effects noted in cell culture assays and other disease models. EVs are nanosized vesicles, essentially a means of transporting cellular cargo, such as proteins, lipids, microRNAs (miRNAs), and DNA, to targeted cells. To understand the capabilities of EVs, Shetty's group used small RNA sequencing on EVs shed from MSCs. The findings from the sequencing showed at least eight miRNAs capable of specifically inhibiting the inflammatory processes that have neuroprotective or

brain repair capabilities. These miRNA molecules within EVs are released when they come in contact with target cells.

"Remarkably, EVs shed by MSCs are naturally enriched with miRNAs capable of inhibiting the various processes that lead to chronic neuroinflammation after TBI," said Maheedhar Kodali, research scientist at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine and the first author of the research article. Their work was published in the February 2023 issue of the journal *Brain Behavior and Immunity*.

Developing a single-dose nasal spray for TBI patients

Using an animal model of moderate TBI to explore the therapeutic relevance of the miRNA component of the EVs in the acute phase of injury, the laboratory non-invasively administered the EVs by choosing the intranasal route. Within six hours of delivery, the EVs had already been incorporated within neurons and microglia throughout the entirety of the brain. Of particular note is that the various components of the microglial cell's inflammasome—a multi-protein complex formation facilitating robust inflammatory response—were

significantly reduced by treatment. As Shetty describes, "Inflammasomes are the mediators of neuroinflammation, and their persistence leads to chronic neuroinflammation through unrelenting hyperactivation of p38/MAPK signaling."

A major component of moderate TBI, however, is the chronic and ongoing symptoms that follow the injury itself. Using a similar animal model, the group used behavioral analyses to study animal models 63 days after brain injury. They observed that the activity of the inflammasome was linked to higher levels of anxious and depressive-like behavior, as well as more difficulty in cognitive processes such as discerning minor changes in the environment required for encoding location memory, and pattern separation, a process by which a region of the brain called the hippocampus transforms similar inputs into distinct patterns or representations for encoding memories. Yet, treating TBI animal models with intranasal EVs prevented chronic activation of the inflammatory response that occurs through the p38/MAPK system.

"Notably, such EV treatment in the acute phase of TBI maintained

better long-term cognitive function and alleviated anhedonia, a depressive condition in which individuals with TBI find it difficult to experience pleasure from activities that were pleasurable before suffering from TBI," Shetty said.

As most clinical trials testing the efficacy of anti-inflammatory drugs have shown either no or limited effectiveness in preventing long-lasting cognitive and mood problems after mild to moderate TBI, an intranasal spray of stem cell-derived EVs could provide a new avenue for treating TBI in the near future, Shetty said.

The scientific strategy employed in this work highlighted the importance of not only preventing acute inflammation, but also stopping chronic inflammatory cascades. The single-dosage treatments may indeed point the TBI research field in an exciting new direction. Shetty envisions a future where civilian and military personnel who incur a mild to moderate TBI due to contact sports, motor vehicle accidents, and combat get a nasal spray of stem cell derived EVs as soon as they are taken to the emergency room. ♦

Alzheimer

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would give patients and families more time to plan for the future and give clinicians greater flexibility in recommending promising lifestyle

interventions."

Dr. Hajjar collaborated on this study with a team of researchers at Emory, where he previously served as Director of the Clinical Trial Unit of the Goizueta Alzheimer's Disease Research Center before joining UTSW in

2022. He is continuing to collect voice recordings in Dallas as part of a follow-up study at UTSW being funded with a National Institutes of Health grant.

This study's research was supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health/

National Institute on Aging (AG051633, AG057470-01, AG042127) and the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation (20150603). ♦

The Framework

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the medical/surgical acute care unit. 5 East is projected to open later this year and will increase the hospital's

bed count to nearly 300.

Other projects in the works or expected to commence soon include a major overhaul of Women's Services, including relocating the nursery, doubling the number of

obstetrical emergency rooms and adding labor and delivery rooms, a cesarean section suite and four neonatal intensive care unit rooms. Additionally, expansion is planned for the cardiac catheterization

lab, food services spaces, the Rockets Sports Medicine Institute at Memorial Hermann Sports Park-Katy and the Memorial Hermann Breast Care Center. ♦

Financial Forecast

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There can also be scenarios where a surviving spouse ends up paying more, such as with Medicare Parts B and D, compared to when they were married. So, this can be added to their financial hardship if there isn't a

plan in place.

How to Protect Yourself and Each Other

There are many "moving parts" involved in financial and retirement planning for couples. Old school

"financial consultants" oftentimes only focus on the investment side of the equation. But ONLY focusing on accumulation without protection or planning for real life untoward scenarios can leave you with significant "gaps."

Conversely, a Certified Financial Planner practitioner looks at the entire picture and is considered a life planner.

So, your financial strategies can be positioned to facilitate how you want to live your life, and what to do if life doesn't go the way you had planned. money. ♦

Data Risk

Continued from page 1

breach of the ISA? The vendor's liability for breaches must be higher or uncapped for regulated businesses.

IV. The vendor management process

A. Prework.

1. Establish written criteria that define when vendors will be required to sign an ISA (i.e., when the vendor will have access to your data, infrastructure or network).
2. Work with the legal and information security teams to draft a form ISA.
3. Establish written parameters for tolerance on vendor-requested changes to the ISA.

B. Internal rollout.

1. Educate internal stakeholders about the ISA, its purpose and its effectiveness.
2. Modify the company's internal process so that an ISA is now provided to any new vendor that meets the established criteria.
3. Establish who has authority within the organization to approve vendor-requested deviations to the ISA.

C. External rollout.

1. Send the ISA to vendors with clear messaging that explains the ISA's purpose and relationship to other legal documents.
2. Create a process for the receipt of vendor changes and establish who

will negotiate with the vendor.

3. Establish a repository of ISAs that can be called on easily when there is an issue with the vendor.

V. Conclusion

Facing a regulatory body or your customers after you experience a data breach will be less painful when you can point to a comprehensive, all-encompassing vendor management process. And the process will be even less painful when you can get relief from the vendor that is responsible for the breach instead of paying out of your own pocket.◆

Oncology Research

Continued from page 4

is recommended to consult with a physician before starting an exercise program during or after cancer treatment.

Gardening is another great activity to enjoy outside. Not only does it add beauty to one's surroundings, but it enables people to commune with nature, work out frustrations, and grow fresh food to nourish their bodies. Gardening improves mood and increases self-esteem, and when people spend time in a garden, anxiety levels can drop and feelings of depression lessen.

Protecting your skin from the sun

As spring turns to summer and

people venture outside more, it is important to protect your skin from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, which is the number one cause of skin cancer. Also, many treatments for cancer can increase the sensitivity of skin to sunburn. The American Cancer Society suggests the following tips to stay "sun safe":

- Stay in the shade and limit your direct exposure to the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wear protective clothing, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat to cover as much skin as possible.

Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, reapplying at least every two hours

Being outdoors can make cancer patients and caregivers feel freer, more grounded, and connected to nature. Taking the time to spend just a few moments outside each day with a thoughtful presence helps the body refuel and diminish stress, bringing a sense of calm to a whirlwind of emotions and feelings while navigating cancer. ◆

St. Luke's

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Center services in the same building where Baylor College of Medicine and St. Luke's can advance our history of groundbreaking cancer research and treatment."

HKS Architects designed the project and Harvey-Cleary is the general contractor.

The O'Quinn Medical Tower represents a \$426 million investment

by CommonSpirit Health, St. Luke's parent ministry. In total, the McNair Campus comprises a 1.2 million square foot, \$1.3 billion project.

The Hospital Tower at McNair will retain orthopedic services and clinical office space for Baylor College of Medicine physicians. St. Luke's is also investing in significant upgrades to the existing Baylor St. Luke's Medical

Center campus, located in the heart of the Texas Medical Center.◆

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All the permits are ready by April 2023



ABOUT THE PROPERTY

1. This Building is located right off State Hwy-6, one of the primary arteries of the Houston area.
2. Location is right at the entrance to 'Sienna Plantation', a 10,000 acre Master Plan development rated as one of the nation's best-selling residential communities. 10,000 families including 65,000 residents. Total surrounding families number almost 30,000 to 40,000
3. 'Sienna' is the password to a quality life-style. The best retail options are a walk away. Average annual Household income -143-153
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check: www.bestplaces.net/city/texas/sienna_plantation for more information.

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