UC San Diego Health Physician Directory

Our physicians are recognized leaders in their professional societies, heading national organizations and committees dedicated to improving care and advancing knowledge about disease. They are prominently listed in publications such as America’s Top Doctors and U.S. News & World Report’s rankings of outstanding physicians and clinical programs.

Patient Access

Request an Appointment
Whether you’re looking for a primary care physician (PCP), need a specialist for treatment or are seeking a second opinion, you can make an appointment by following the steps below:

→ New Patients (who have never seen a UC San Diego Health provider)
   To register as a new patient and schedule an appointment, call 800-926-8273, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

→ Current Patients
   Contact your physician’s office directly to schedule an appointment or call the main switchboard number, 858-657-7000, and ask to be transferred to your physician’s office.

→ Find a Doctor
   To use our physician search website to find a physician by name or to search for a specialist, visit: doctors.ucsd.edu.

Referring Physician Access

Transfer a Patient
For hospital-to-hospital transfers, call 619-543-5709 (24-hour service) for instructions or to speak to a transfer coordinator.

Consultations
If you need to talk with one of our physicians about a case or if you have any problems or concerns, please contact us at 855-543-0555 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We want to hear from you.

Refer Your Patient
Call Physician Access at 855-543-0555 or fax 888-539-8781 and our team will register and schedule your referred patient. You will receive follow-up communication (consultation notes, discharges, etc.), as well as access to our electronic medical record system, UCSD Link.
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Endocrinology

Endocrinology is the medical specialty focused on diseases of the endocrine system, including diabetes, thyroid and pituitary disorders. Learn more about endocrinology and diabetes at UC San Diego Health System.

Schafer Boeder, MD
Endocrinologist

Specialty: Endocrinology
Hillcrest - Medical Offices South
Jacobs Medical Center
Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line - Hillcrest: (619) 543-6303

Bio:
Schafer Boeder, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist who diagnoses and treats people with a variety of endocrine conditions. He has a particular interest in diabetes and is a member of the inpatient glycemic control team, where he works with patients to monitor glucose levels, adjust insulin dosages, and maintain long-term glucose control at home.

Steven Victor Edelman, MD
Clinical Professor of Medicine

Specialty: Endocrinology
Add'l Languages: German, Spanish
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Please note that Dr. Edelman is not a Primary Care Physician

Charles H. Choe, MD
Clinical Service Chief - Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism
Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine

Specialty: Endocrinology
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Charlie Choe, MD, is a board certified endocrinologist. He also holds an active Endocrine Certification in Neck Ultrasound from the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists for performing ultrasound and ultrasound-guided biopsies for patients with thyroid nodules and cancer.

Vala Hamidi, MD
Endocrinologist

Specialty: Endocrinology
Add'l Language: Farsi
Hillcrest - Medical Offices South
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line - Hillcrest: (619) 543-6303
Direct Clinic Line - La Jolla: (858) 657-8440

Bio:
Vala Hamidi, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist who treats people with diabetes, disorders of calcium and skeletal metabolism, osteoporosis, pituitary and adrenal disease, thyroid cancer and thyroid disorders. She also provides care in general endocrinology.
Endocrinology (cont.)

Heather L. Hofflich, DO
Endocrinologist
Professor of Medicine

Specialties:
Endocrinology, Internal Medicine, Primary Care

La Jolla - 8939 Villa La Jolla Drive
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-8000
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Heather L. Hofflich, DO, is a board-certified endocrinologist and internist. She provides endocrinology and primary care for adults, including preventive care and diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic diseases. Dr. Hofflich is consistently named a “Top Doc” in San Diego Magazine’s “Physicians of Exceptional Excellence” annual survey performed in collaboration with the San Diego County Medical Society.

Christopher J. Hupfeld, MD
Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine

Specialty:
Endocrinology

Encinitas - Garden View

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (760) 479-5370

Karl Y. Hostetler, MD

Specialty:
Endocrinology

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273

Bio:
Patricia Juang, MD, is an endocrinologist who sees patients with a variety of endocrine conditions. She has a particular interest in the care of diabetic patients in the inpatient hospital setting.
Endocrinology (cont.)

Deborah Kado, MD
Bone Health Specialist
Professor of Family Medicine and Public Health

Specialties:
Endocrinology, Senior Medicine
Add'l Language:
Spanish

La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Deborah Kado, MD, is a board-certified internal medicine doctor who specializes in caring for the elderly. Specifically, Dr. Kado's expertise is in evaluating and treating osteoporosis. She directs the osteoporosis program at UC San Diego Health and sees patients in the Endocrinology outpatient clinic in La Jolla.

Karen McCowen, MD
Endocrinologist

Specialty:
Endocrinology

La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Karen McCowen, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist. She has a special interest in the management of diabetes in pregnancy, technologies for managing type 1 diabetes, thyroid biopsy and thyroid cancer, and pituitary and adrenal diseases.

Kristen Kulasa, MD
Endocrinologist
Associate Professor of Medicine

Specialty:
Endocrinology

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center
Jacobs Medical Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Kristen Kulasa, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist who specializes in diabetes. Dr. Kulasa serves as director of inpatient glycemic control - working to ensure that people who are in the hospital have optimal blood sugar levels during their stay. She oversees the clinical diabetes nurse educators on staff.

Jeremy Pettus, MD
Endocrinologist
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Specialty:
Endocrinology

La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Jeremy Pettus, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist who specializes in treating diabetes. He works with individuals who have type 1 or type 2 diabetes to develop personalized treatment plans which may include healthy eating, exercise, diabetes medication or insulin therapy and blood sugar monitoring.
Endocrinology (cont.)

Tricia Santos Cavaiola, MD
Endocrinologist
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Specialty:
Endocrinology

Contact:
Hillcrest - Medical Offices South
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Tricia Santos Cavaiola, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist. She specializes in treating patients with many types of endocrine disorders, including diabetes and thyroid, parathyroid, adrenal and pituitary diseases.

Gina N. Woods, MD
Endocrinologist and Bone Health Specialist
Associate Professor of Endocrinology and Metabolism

Specialty:
Endocrinology

Contact:
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (858) 657-1636

Bio:
Gina Woods, MD, is a board-certified endocrinologist who treats people with osteoporosis and other metabolic bone diseases. She works with individuals to preserve bone health, prevent fractures, and manage osteoporosis care with treatments that may include diet modification, exercise and medication.

Neurosurgery

Neurosurgery specializes in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders which affect the nervous system. Learn more about [neurosurgery](#) at UC San Diego Health System.

David Barba, MD, FAANS
Neurosurgeon
Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery
Add'l Language:
Spanish

La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5316

Bio:
David Barba, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon focusing on surgical treatment of people with epilepsy and movement disorders.

Michael Levy, MD, PhD
Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery
Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273

Bio:
Michael L. Levy, MD, PhD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon at UC San Diego Health and chief of pediatric neurosurgery at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego. Dr. Levy's primary surgical interests are in pediatric and vascular neurosurgery.
Neurosurgery (cont.)

Hal Meltzer, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273

Bio:
Dr. Meltzer is a board-certified neurosurgeon who specializes in pediatric neurosurgery and performs the majority of his procedures at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego. His clinical interests span all of pediatric neurosurgery and include endoscopic treatment of craniosynostoses.

J. Scott Pannell, MD
Neurointerventional Radiologist

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Radiology, Stroke Care

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center
Jacobs Medical Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
J. Scott Pannell, MD, is a neurointerventional radiologist who specializes in endovascular neurosurgery and neuroradiology. Dr. Pannell focuses on the catheter-based treatment of ischemic stroke, cerebral aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations, carotid stenosis, vascular tumors, and interventional management of pain associated with disorders of the spine.

Hoi Sang U, MD
Neurosurgeon
Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery

Hillcrest - Medical Offices South
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 471-0798
Fax: (619) 471-3931

Bio:
Hoi Sang U, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who is an internationally recognized specialist in the treatment of vascular anomalies known as AVMs. Patients have traveled to UCSD from as far away as Australia, Hong Kong, the Sultanate of Brunei, Africa and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to take advantage of his expertise.
Neurosurgery - Complex Cranial Surgery

Sunil Jeswani, MD
Neurosurgeon

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery

Subspecialties:
Complex Cranial Surgery, Minimally Invasive Surgery, Neurological Oncology, Spine

Add'l Language:
Spanish

Jacobs Medical Center
Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Sunil Jeswani, MD, is a neurosurgeon who treats people with cranial and spinal problems. He performs surgery for brain tumors, pituitary tumors, skull base tumors, stereotactic radiosurgery, hydrocephalus, and trigeminal neuralgia. He also does minimally invasive spinal surgery and treats spinal conditions such as degenerative disease, tumors, scoliosis and spinal trauma.

Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, FAANS
Director of Neurovascular Surgery
Chair of Neurosurgery
Associate Professor of Surgery and Neurosciences

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Stroke Care, Cancer

Subspecialties:
Neurological Oncology, Endovascular Neurosurgery, Complex Cranial Surgery, Neurological Oncology

Add'l Languages:
Farsi, Spanish

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center
Jacobs Medical Center
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who specializes in cranial and endovascular surgery. He is chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and director of endovascular neurosurgery. He provides both open surgical and catheter-based approaches to complex neurosurgical problems, including brain tumors, aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations (AVM) and carotid disease. His vascular training informs his surgical approach to complex tumors in the brain. He is a fellow of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (FAANS), American Heart Association Stroke Council (FAHA), and senior member of the Society of Neurointerventional Surgery (SNIS).
Neurosurgery - Complex Cranial Surgery (cont.)

Marc S. Schwartz, MD
Neurosurgeon

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Cancer

Subspecialties:
Complex Cranial Surgery, Neurological Oncology, Neurological Oncology

Moores Cancer Center
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line - Executive Dr.: (619) 543-5540
Direct Clinic Line - Perlman Medical Offices: (858) 657-8590
Direct Clinic Line - Moores Cancer Center: (858) 822-6100

Bio:
Marc Schwartz, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who is an internationally renowned expert on the treatment of patients with acoustic neuromas, skull base tumors, and neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2). He is also the recognized neurosurgical leader in the field of auditory brainstem implants. In addition, Dr. Schwartz treats complex cranial problems, meningiomas, brain tumors, pituitary tumors, cranial nerve disorders, and intradural spine tumors.
Neurosurgery - Endovascular Neurosurgery

Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, FAANS
Director of Neurovascular Surgery
Chair of Neurosurgery
Associate Professor of Surgery and Neurosciences

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Stroke Care, Cancer

Subspecialties:
Neurological Oncology, Endovascular Neurosurgery, Complex Cranial Surgery, Neurological Oncology

Add'l Languages:
Farsi, Spanish

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center
Jacobs Medical Center
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who specializes in cranial and endovascular surgery. He is chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and director of endovascular neurosurgery. He provides both open surgical and catheter-based approaches to complex neurosurgical problems, including brain tumors, aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations (AVM) and carotid disease. His vascular training informs his surgical approach to complex tumors in the brain. He is a fellow of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (FAANS), American Heart Association Stroke Council (FAHA), and senior member of the Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery (SNIS).

Scott E. Olson, MD
Vascular Neurologist and Endovascular Neurosurgeon
Associate Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Neurology, Stroke Care

Subspecialties:
Endovascular Neurosurgery, Stroke

La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Scott E. Olson, MD, is a board-certified vascular neurologist with additional fellowship training in interventional neuroradiology/endovascular neurosurgery. He specializes in evaluating and treating disorders of the blood vessels of the brain and spinal cord, which can lead to ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke. His expertise includes both medical and endovascular care for individuals with extra and intracranial stenoses, brain aneurysms and vascular malformations, whether congenital or acquired.
Neurosurgery - Neurological Oncology

**John Alksne, MD**
**Professor of Surgery**

**Specialties:**
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Cancer

**Subspecialties:**
Neurological Oncology, Neurological Oncology

**La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive**
**Hillcrest - Medical Offices North**

**Contact:**
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**
John F. Alksne, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who focuses on the care of patients with neurological conditions such as trigeminal neuralgia (tic doloreux/facial pain), facial tic, glossopharyngeal neuralgia, and acoustic neuroma.

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**Sunil Jeswani, MD**
**Neurosurgeon**

**Specialties:**
Neurosurgery, Surgery

**Subspecialties:**
Complex Cranial Surgery, Minimally Invasive Surgery, Neurological Oncology, Spine

**Jacobs Medical Center**
**Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center**

**Contact:**
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**
Sunil Jeswani, MD, is a neurosurgeon who treats people with cranial and spinal problems. He performs surgery for brain tumors, pituitary tumors, skull base tumors, stereotactic radiosurgery, hydrocephalus, and trigeminal neuralgia. He also does minimally invasive spinal surgery and treats spinal conditions such as degenerative disease, tumors, scoliosis and spinal trauma.

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**Joseph D Ciacci, MD**
**Neurosurgeon**
**Professor of Surgery**

**Specialties:**
Neurosurgery, Surgery

**Subspecialties:**
Neurological Oncology, Neurological Oncology

**Jacobs Medical Center**
**Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center**

**Contact:**
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**
Joseph Ciacci, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon with extensive experience in neuro-oncology of the spine and brain. Dr. Ciacci's primary interests are tumors of the spine and brain, complex spinal reconstruction, and stereotactic radiosurgery, a form of radiation therapy that focuses high-power energy on a small area of the body.
Neurosurgery - Neurological Oncology (cont.)

Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, FAANS
Director of Neurovascular Surgery
Chair of Neurosurgery
Associate Professor of Surgery and Neurosciences

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Stroke Care, Cancer

Subspecialties:
Neurological Oncology, Endovascular Neurosurgery, Complex Cranial Surgery, Neurological Oncology

Add'l Languages:
Farsi, Spanish

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center
Jacobs Medical Center
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who specializes in cranial and endovascular surgery. He is chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and director of endovascular neurosurgery. He provides both open surgical and catheter-based approaches to complex neurosurgical problems, including brain tumors, aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations (AVM) and carotid disease. His vascular training informs his surgical approach to complex tumors in the brain. He is a fellow of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (FAANS), American Heart Association Stroke Council (FAHA), and senior member of the Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery (SNIS).

Marc S. Schwartz, MD
Neurosurgeon

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery, Cancer

Subspecialties:
Complex Cranial Surgery, Neurological Oncology, Neurological Oncology

Moores Cancer Center
La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive
La Jolla - Perlman Medical Offices

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line - Executive Dr.: (619) 543-5540
Direct Clinic Line - Perlman Medical Offices: (858) 657-8590
Direct Clinic Line - Moores Cancer Center: (858) 822-6100

Bio:
Marc Schwartz, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon who is an internationally renowned expert on the treatment of patients with acoustic neuromas, skull base tumors, and neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2). He is also the recognized neurosurgical leader in the field of auditory brainstem implants. In addition, Dr. Schwartz treats complex cranial problems, meningiomas, brain tumors, pituitary tumors, cranial nerve disorders, and intradural spine tumors.
Neurosurgery - Spine

**Sharona Ben-Haim, MD**  
Neurosurgeon  
Assistant Professor of Surgery

**Specialties:**  
Neurosurgery, Surgery  
**Subspecialty:**  
Spine  
**Add'l Languages:**  
Hebrew, Spanish

**La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive**

**Contact:**  
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273  
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**  
Sharona Ben-Haim, MD, is a neurosurgeon who specializes in caring for people with treatment-resistant epilepsy, chronic pain including facial pain and trigeminal neuralgia, spasticity, and movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease, dystonia and essential tremor. She performs deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgeries, including "awake" microelectrode-guided DBS and "asleep" MRI- and CT-guided DBS.

**Sunil Jeswani, MD**  
Neurosurgeon

**Specialties:**  
Neurosurgery, Surgery  
**Subspecialties:**  
Complex Cranial Surgery, Minimally Invasive Surgery, Neurological Oncology, Spine  
**Add'l Language:**  
Spanish

**Jacobs Medical Center**  
Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center

**Contact:**  
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273  
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**  
Sunil Jeswani, MD, is a neurosurgeon who treats people with cranial and spinal problems. He performs surgery for brain tumors, pituitary tumors, skull base tumors, stereotactic radiosurgery, hydrocephalus, and trigeminal neuralgia. He also does minimally invasive spinal surgery and treats spinal conditions such as degenerative disease, tumors, scoliosis and spinal trauma.

**Lawrence Marshall, MD**  
Professor of Surgery

**Specialties:**  
Neurosurgery, Surgery  
**Subspecialty:**  
Spine

**La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive**  
Hillcrest - Medical Offices North

**Contact:**  
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273  
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

**Bio:**  
Lawrence Marshall, MD, is a board-certified neurosurgeon and an internationally renowned expert in traumatic head injury. Dr. Marshall's surgical interests cover all of neurosurgery but especially diseases of the spine and spinal cord, brain tumors, and peripheral nerves.
Andrew Nguyen, MD, PhD
Neurosurgeon
Assistant Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery
Subspecialty:
Spine
Add'l Language:
Vietnamese

Hillcrest - UC San Diego Medical Center

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
Andrew Nguyen, MD, PhD, is a neurosurgeon who specializes in endovascular treatments for neurovascular diseases and minimally invasive spine surgery.

William Taylor, MD
Neurosurgeon
Professor of Surgery

Specialties:
Neurosurgery, Surgery
Subspecialties:
Minimally Invasive Surgery, Spine

La Jolla - 4510 Executive Drive

Contact:
New Patient Registration: (800) 926-8273
Direct Clinic Line: (619) 543-5540

Bio:
William Taylor, MD, is a board-certified neurological surgeon. His practice focuses on the neurosurgical evaluation and treatment of spinal disorders. He is also dedicated to further developing and refining minimally invasive surgical procedures used to treat spinal conditions and diseases.
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