



PRESS RELEASE

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Pheo Para Alliance Recognizes UCLA as Center of Excellence for Rare Endocrine Illness

Pheo Para Alliance, a patient advocacy organization dedicated to supporting those with pheochromocytoma (pheo) and paraganglioma (para), a rare neuroendocrine tumor, has designated the UCLA Endocrine Center as a Center of Excellence, the first designation made on the west coast. The [Center of Excellence Program](#) recognizes institutions worldwide for providing cutting-edge, quality, multi-disciplinary care and participating in pheo and para and related research. UCLA's announcement brings the total list of Clinical Centers and Centers of Excellence to seven, with more announcements slated throughout 2021.

Drs. Masha Livhits and Michael Yeh serve as the Pheo Para Center of Excellence Program Co-Directors. Dr. Livhits, Assistant Professor of Surgery, who oversees pheochromocytoma and paraganglioma patients during all phases of care, states, "We understand that a diagnosis of a rare but serious disease like pheochromocytoma is scary. Our team is here to guide patients throughout their entire care cycle, from initial diagnosis and surgery to long-term surveillance and dealing with complications or recurrence. Since our anesthesiologists and surgeons take care of so many patients with pheochromocytoma and paraganglioma, we can reduce the risks and make the operations much more routine." Dr. Yeh, Professor of Surgery, adds "Our mission is to bring together expertise in endocrine surgery, medical endocrinology, oncology, pathology, ultrasound, nuclear medicine, and genetics to offer the highest level of patient care and research available."

About UCLA Endocrine Center

UCLA is the #1 ranked hospital in California and top 3 in the nation. The UCLA Endocrine Center is a multidisciplinary integrated practice unit where physicians with diverse areas of expertise come together to provide world-class care to each patient. We have multiple satellite locations throughout Southern California with endocrinologists and endocrine surgeons working together to provide comprehensive patient care. We have embraced telemedicine even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and this service is particularly helpful to coordinate care for patients with complex medical issues like pheochromocytoma or paraganglioma who live at a distance from our UCLA campus.

About Pheo Para Alliance

Founded in 2007, the Pheo Para Alliance, a 501c3 organization, is the longest standing internationally recognized leader in advocacy for, and awareness of, pheochromocytoma and paraganglioma. Since its inception, the Pheo Para Alliance has dedicated more than \$2 million to fulfill its mission to empower patients with pheo or para, their families and medical professionals through advocacy, education and a global community of support, while helping to advance research that accelerates treatments and cures. For more information go to www.pheopara.org.

About Pheo Para

Pheo and para are rare slow-growing neuroendocrine tumors. Approximately 1 in 3,500 will develop a pheo or para in their life. Pheos develop in cells in the center of the adrenal gland just above the kidneys. Paras develop most commonly, in the head, neck, chest, abdomen, or pelvis. Both can produce an excess amount of hormones called catecholamines. This leads to symptoms such as high blood pressure, severe anxiety, sweating, headaches, and even stroke and heart attack. If left untreated, metastasis can occur, ultimately leading to death. But, if detected early, pheo and para can be successfully treated in the vast majority of cases. Approximately 35% of all pheos and paras diagnosed are the result of a genetic mutation that leads to a greater risk of developing the illness and can be passed down through children.

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