

HEALTH CAREER



Eye cancer specialist brings expertise to UCI Health



Photo by Jared Novakovich

Kapil Mishra, MD, an expert in rare eye cancers, was the missing puzzle piece. When the ophthalmologist joined UCI Health to create an ocular oncology program, his was the last specialty needed to complete the UCI Health Gavin Herbert Eye Institute.

Eye cancer may be quite rare — with about five U.S. cases per million people reported annually — but Mishra is one of the few ocular oncologists serving Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which means that hundreds of patients from across the region may need his services.

Joining UCI Health and the eye institute is a kind of homecoming for Mishra, who completed an internal medicine internship at the UC Irvine School of Medicine. Growing up in the Inland Empire, he saw UCI Health as a beacon of healthcare excellence.

“Anytime anyone needed complex or high-level coordination for a disease, they’d be referred to UCI Health,” he recalls. “I saw it as a leading-edge institution offering high-acuity care that was valued by the community, not only in Orange County but beyond.”

Mishra, who earned his medical degree at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, completed a residency in ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins University’s Wilmer Eye Institute, then a fellowship in ocular oncology and vitreoretinal surgery at Stanford University School of Medicine.

This training makes him uniquely equipped to help patients with a variety of retinal diseases and ocular cancers, including uveal melanoma. He is one of the first in the region to treat the condition with brachytherapy, which involves implanting a radioactive plaque

on the eye to target the tumor for several days before it is removed. He also treats patients whose cancer has spread from other parts of the body. Such metastatic cancers can harm vision in a variety of ways, with treatment options ranging from lasers to radioactive plaques.

Eyesight may also be affected by radiation and chemotherapy used to combat other types of cancer. Mishra collaborates with UCI Health cancer specialists to determine whether a patient’s vision changes indicate a treatment’s toxicity or an inflammatory reaction, then he helps manage their visual side effects.

He also treats benign hemangiomas and other non-malignant growths in the eye. Ruling out potentially life-threatening eye cancer and providing an accurate diagnosis and proper treatment is his top priority for these patients.

Mishra works closely with other institute faculty members who treat eye tumors. They include cornea specialist Dr. Olivia Lee, who operates on eye surface tumors, as well as oculoplastics specialists Dr. Jeremiah Tao, Dr. Lilangi Ediriwickrema and Dr. Seanna Grob, who treat tumors on the eye’s bony outer structure.

“Ocular cancer patients are often understandably anxious and many have been referred multiple times before I see them,” says Mishra. “I have the privilege of developing a significant relationship with them as we address what can be a very complex disease pathology, involving all parts of the eye.”

Learn more at ucihealth.org/eye

UCI Health
Gavin Herbert Eye Institute

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UCI Health

City of Hope Orange County Leads Innovations in CAR T Cell Therapy for Cancer



City of Hope, one of the largest cancer and treatment organizations in the United States and ranked Top 5 in the nation for cancer care by *U.S. News & World Report*, continues to be at the forefront of leading-edge cancer treatments and technologies.

Among them is chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cell therapy, utilized by City of Hope's renowned physician-scientists in active pre-clinical and clinical programs across a range of blood cancers — including leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma — and solid tumor types.

In CAR T cell therapy, immune cells are taken from a patient's bloodstream, reprogrammed to recognize and attack a specific protein found in cancer cells, then reintroduced into the patient's system, where they get to work destroying targeted tumor cells.

"Indications for CAR T cell therapy are expanding across different types of cancer, making this lifesaving treatment more accessible to larger populations of patients," says Tanya Siddiqi, M.D., the medical director of lymphoma at City of Hope Orange County and the director of the chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) program at City of Hope's Toni Stephenson Lymphoma Center.

A renowned hematologist-oncologist who specializes in diagnosing and treating blood cancers, Dr. Siddiqi practices at City of Hope Orange County Lennar Foundation Cancer Center in Irvine — the most advanced comprehensive cancer center in Orange County. In addition to her clinical

practice, Dr. Siddiqi is also principal investigator on numerous clinical trials evaluating the role of targeted therapies, including CAR T cell therapy.



Tanya Siddiqi, M.D.,
medical director of lymphoma,
City of Hope Orange County

As scientific advancements and clinical use cases for CAR T cell therapies grow, City of Hope Orange County has brought CAR T to the day hospital in the Irvine cancer center for patients with lymphoma and myeloma. Although CAR T therapy has typically been administered in an inpatient setting, outpatient models can provide the full benefits of CAR T therapy for cancer while enabling patients to return home in between treatments.

"City of Hope has exceptional expertise in outpatient delivery of cellular therapy, and we are excited to be able to combine the depth and breadth of our experience to offer this to our patients in Orange County," says Dr. Siddiqi.

City of Hope is at the forefront of CAR T cell therapy with one of the largest cell therapy programs in the United States, offered across the organization's national network. Additionally, City of Hope is also one of the few institutions in the nation to advance CAR T cell therapy through its own research and clinical trials.

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Tanya Siddiqi, M.D.
Medical Director, Lymphoma,
City of Hope Orange County

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Sports Injury Affecting Your Movement? Hoag Orthopedic Institute Sports Medicine Doctors Will Help Get You Back in the Game Faster

Sports Medicine: A Holistic Path to Recovery and Rehabilitation

When you're dealing with a musculoskeletal injury that keeps you from doing what you love, every day counts. Orthopedic sports medicine doesn't just treat your injury – it treats you. Whether you're a weekend warrior, a working parent, or a competitive athlete, sports medicine focuses on restoring the full scope of your movement, not just healing the immediate damage from an injury.

That's why Hoag Orthopedic Institute (HOI) Sports Medicine is often the best place to start. With a comprehensive, in-house team, you can receive a quicker diagnosis, enjoy less time waiting for referrals, and be empowered with a care plan that goes beyond healing the injury, getting you back to doing what matters most.

That means personalized treatment plans built around your goals, not just your X-rays. A specialized sports medicine doctor looks at how your body moves, what your activity demands are, and determines how to get you back to them safely and efficiently, and can easily refer to a surgeon practice partner within minutes not weeks. You're not just recovering – you're returning to performance, moving the way you want to again.

Choosing the Right Sports Medicine Provider

With expert orthopedic sports medicine doctors – like those at Hoag Orthopedic Institute – you're not just getting injury treatment, you're gaining access to a full team focused on helping you recover so you can resume your active lifestyle.

There are three types of sports medicine doctors:

1. Some non-operative physicians see patients exclusively in a primary care setting and function as primary care physicians. While they are fellowship trained in sports medicine, these physicians treat only a small number of sports injuries compared to non-operative physicians who practice in an orthopedic setting and exclusively see sports medicine injuries day in and day out.
2. Non-operative orthopedic sports medicine physicians focus on the diagnosis and treatment of musculoskeletal injuries without surgery in the orthopedics setting. They are board-certified in specialties such as primary care or physical medicine and rehabilitation and fellowship trained in sports medicine.
3. Orthopedic sports medicine surgeons have a rigorous training pathway, including medical school, a five-year orthopedics residency program and a one-or two-year fellowship in sports medicine. They have advanced training focused on musculoskeletal injuries. While they perform surgery, sports medicine orthopedic surgeons also emphasize non-surgical approaches, managing a patient's care throughout their journey.

HOI sports medicine physicians are solely focused on treating sports medicine injuries and conditions, streamlining the patient experience and ensuring a timely and coordinated approach.

Why Seek Care from an Orthopedic Sports Medicine Doctor at HOI?



David Gazzaniga, MD

“The bottom line is, you want to do it right the first time. Our sports medicine doctors are specially trained in treating musculoskeletal injuries and have specific expertise in caring for injuries that affect how your body moves,” said fellowship trained HOI sports medicine surgeon and Division Chief of Sports Medicine, David Gazzaniga, MD.

Orthopedic sports medicine doctors do not just treat the injury – they will help diagnose any underlying issues and causes to help you get back to doing what you love. At HOI, our physicians are wholly dedicated to restoring function so the patient can resume the activities they most cherish, whether that's pitching, performing a piano concerto, working in construction, or playing pickleball.

When to See a Sports Medicine Doctor First

Is sports medicine primary care? Not exactly. But it should be your first choice for injuries involving muscles, joints, tendons, and ligaments. Primary care doctors will treat basic injuries but often refer out to orthopedic sports medicine doctors for more involved injuries, which can delay care.



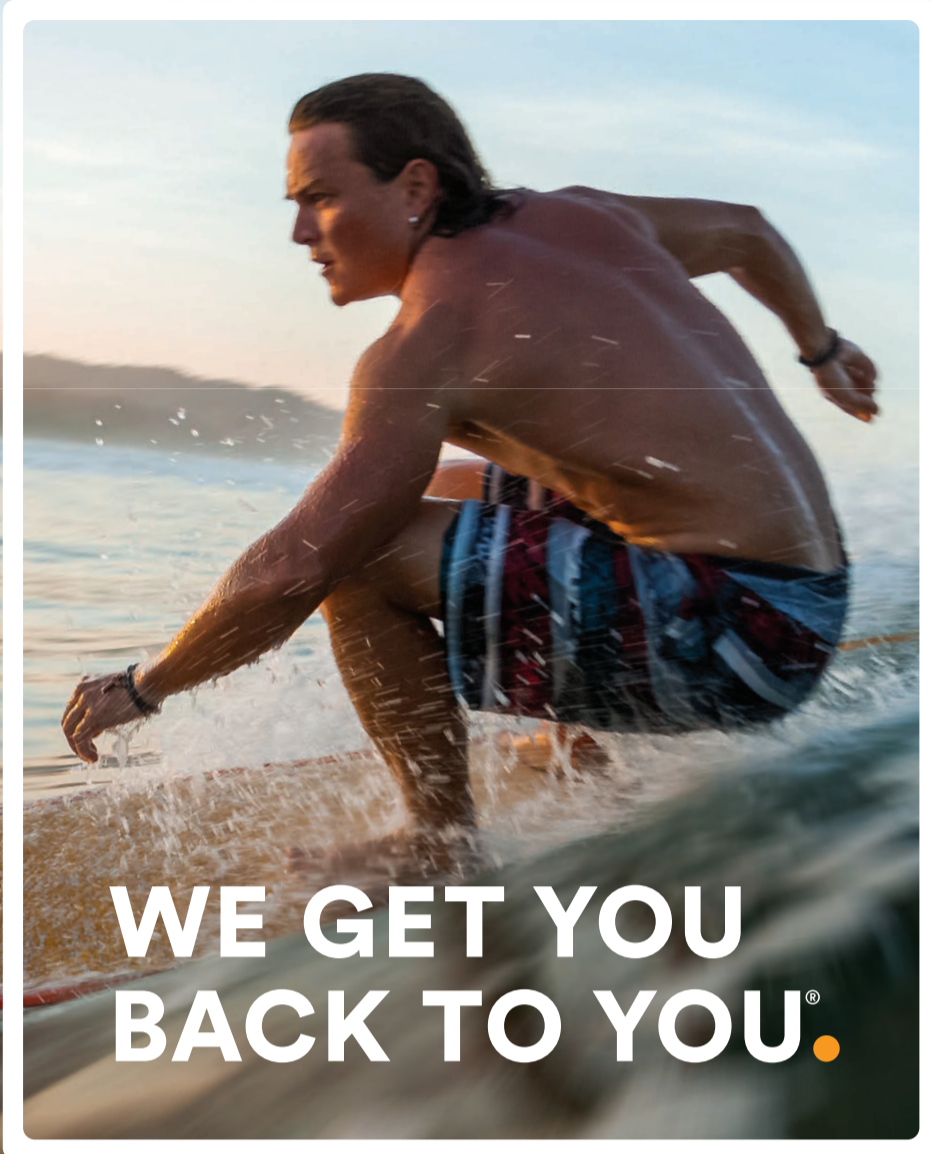
Robert Grumet, MD

“It's important for patients to evaluate their individual situation. If the injury occurred during physical activity such as a workout, a game, or sudden movement, then seeking care from an orthopedic sports medicine specialist – like those on our fellowship trained team at HOI – is likely the best first step,” shares HOI sports medicine surgeon Robert Grumet, MD.

“If there is swelling, bruising, or visible deformity, those are signs of structural damage so it's important to seek immediate care from an orthopedic sports medicine specialist to help restore performance, not just function.”

To learn more about HOI Sports Medicine or to receive a physician referral, visit [HOIexperts.com](https://www.hoagexperts.com) or call 949-705-6493.

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Christina Hong, MD
Physician Director, Women and
Children's Health Services
Kaiser Permanente Orange County

Welcoming a new baby is a special time – and you deserve the best possible birth experience. As a Kaiser Permanente member, you can count on coordinated, compassionate care and support through every step of your journey to parenthood.


Connected care makes your life easier

Our Kaiser Permanente doctors, specialists, and nurses work together to provide seamless care and personalized, empowering experiences. Your whole team is connected through your electronic health record, so they can review your health history and keep it up to date as your care evolves.

We care for the whole you

- Along with talking about your baby's development during prenatal visits, we'll also check in with you about your emotional health. And if you ever need support, you'll have access to a broad range of care and resources.
- If you decide to breastfeed, we'll connect you with a lactation consultant before you deliver and after you give birth. This one-on-one guidance can help you gain confidence and bond with your baby.
- After giving birth, you'll meet with a pediatrician or neonatologist who specializes in caring for newborns. They'll make sure your baby has a smooth transition into pediatric care.

We're here to give you the care and support you need for a happy, healthy pregnancy and birth.



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**Kaiser Permanente Anaheim
and Irvine Medical Centers**
have been named Best
Hospitals for Maternity Care
by U.S. News & World Report
in 2025.



IVC Grad Kristine Chai Makes a Real World Impact

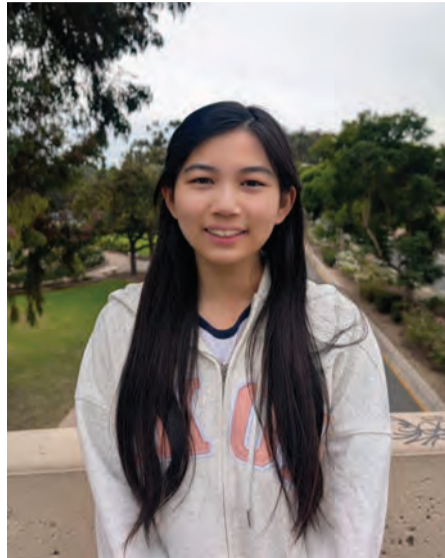
Recent Irvine Valley College (IVC) honors graduate Kristine Chai is already making a mark in the rapidly advancing field of biotechnology.

Following high school graduation, Chai was certain she wanted to study science, so IVC's well regarded biotechnology program was a natural choice. Now, she has graduated with top honors and been accepted to her three first choice schools—UC Los Angeles, UC Berkeley and UC Irvine (UCI)—and is leaning towards UCI.

A standout student in IVC's biotechnology program, Chai excelled in her coursework and served as a microbiology lab assistant mentoring peers. Through IVC's cooperative work experience program, she secured a competitive internship at Irvine-based Invitrx Therapeutics, where she contributed to pioneering research on engineered exosomes—tiny, membrane-bound vesicles that facilitate cellular communication—for anti-aging therapies. Her work culminated in a presentation at the Honors Transfer Council of California Research Conference.

According to Victor Pham, an associate professor of biotechnology at IVC, Chai's curiosity and dedication make her exceptional in her field. "Kristine is a highly motivated and dedicated student with a strong desire to learn and grow," he says. "She consistently seeks out opportunities to improve and demonstrates a profound commitment to scientific research."

Chai is equally enthusiastic about her experiences at IVC, which she says were an integral part of her educational journey. "IVC has a community of hard working, motivated students and is the top transfer school in California," she says. "IVC's honors program and biotech curriculum fit my needs perfectly and provided a solid technical foundation – helping me build core skills and determine my research interests."



These experiences provided the springboard to the prestigious internship at Invitrx Therapeutics, a leader in regenerative medicine, where she will continue to work through the summer. Also this summer, Chai is deepening her real-world experience through a research program in UC Irvine's renowned biomedical engineering department. Under Dr. Wendy Liu, she is studying the mechanosensitive protein Piezo1, which helps cells detect physical forces, to explore how the body responds to foreign materials like medical implants.

This is a tremendous opportunity to do trail blazing work, she says. "I am so excited to work on such cutting-edge research with a leading researcher."

Biotechnology has captured her interest for multiple reasons. "It's an interdisciplinary field, she

says, with "many different entry points, so you can identify areas specific to your interest. And ultimately, you can make a big difference in humanity through groundbreaking innovations."

While she is not yet quite certain which trajectory the fast-paced field of biotechnology will lead her on, one thing is clear—with her drive and intellect, Chai is well poised to make a vital impact in a profession rich with innovation and opportunity.

For more information go to www.ivc.edu/ewd

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Searching for that next successful addition to your team? Then Irvine Valley College (IVC) is the right place to look. Well-poised for a strong future, our students are highly motivated and focused on excelling in their chosen fields.



Meet Kristine Chai

A recent IVC honors grad and a standout in its biotechnology program, Kristine is making a real-world impact on a cutting-edge field. She landed a competitive internship, contributing to pioneering research on anti-aging therapies and is set to transfer to UCI, where she is now participating in a research program in the university's biomedical engineering department.



Learn more at ivc.edu/ewd

