

KIDNEY CARE

South County Kidney & Endocrine Center provides comprehensive healthcare

BY WENDY ALLEN

SPECIALTIES AT SOUTH COUNTY KIDNEY & ENDOCRINE CENTER

Nephrology

- + Chronic kidney disease
- + Anemia
- + Electrolytes disorders
- + Kidney stones
- + Hypertension
- + Kidney transplant
- + Dialysis

Endocrinology

- + Diabetes
- + Thyroid disorder
- + Cholesterol disorders
- + Osteoporosis
- + Hormone disorders

Additional services

- + Preventive care
- + Weight loss program available
- + Chronic kidney disease diet
- + Diabetes diet
- + Ultrasounds
- + Bone density screenings
- + Echocardiogram testing
- + Laboratory testing

Kidney and endocrine disorders affect countless Americans each year. According to the Centers for Disease Control, over 1.6 million people in the U.S. were hospitalized for kidney-related illnesses in 2005. Acute renal failure, which is the sudden loss of kidney function, accounted for the majority of these cases. Chronic kidney disease (CKD), which progresses slowly over a period of months or years, afflicts over 20 million Americans.

Endocrine disorders have also become widespread in the United States. According to the American Diabetes Association, more than 23 million American children and adults are afflicted with diabetes, which is one of the most common endocrine disorders.

Endocrinology is the field of medicine that focuses on the disorders of the endocrine glands. This is an integrated system of organs that involve the release of hormones, which regulate tissue function, development and puberty, and metabolism. Nephrology is the branch of internal medicine and pediatrics that studies the function and diseases of the kidney.

LEADERS IN THE FIELD

South Coast Medical Center has some of the leading kidney and endocrine specialists on staff,



R. Keone Ah San, MMSc; Brian E. Chavez, M.D.; Ken Kazenelson, M.D.; Raymond Chang, M.D.; Lillian Tran, M.D.; and Sam Pourbabak, M.D., bring full-service healthcare to South County residents.



with the expertise of Raymond K.J. Chang, M.D., Brian E. Chavez, M.D. and Sam Pourbabak, M.D. Dr. Chang, Dr. Chavez and Dr. Pourbabak and their team at South County Kidney & Endocrine Center (SCKE) have been a part of South Coast Medical Center's medical staff for more than a year. The team diagnoses and treats a multitude of disorders, including chronic kidney disease, thyroid disorders, and diabetes.

"We provide first-rate medical care to patients with kidney disease," says Dr. Chang, who has been practicing medicine for over 15 years. "SCKE is Orange County's first and only all-inclusive kidney and endocrine center."

The kidneys maintain the balance of bodily fluids. After the body takes what it needs from food, the waste is broken down and sent to the blood. Every day, the kidneys process approximately 200 quarts of blood and sift out about two quarts of waste products and extra water. This waste and water become urine, which is stored in the bladder. In people with kidney disease, the kidneys are unable to remove these wastes and it builds up in the blood and damages the body.

Symptoms of CKD may include fatigue, nausea, headaches, numbness in the feet or hands, and the need to urinate frequently. Seniors are one of the groups most at risk for developing CKD, along with people who have diabetes or hypertension.

The physicians at South County Kidney & Endocrine Center use a comprehensive approach with CKD, including controlling their patients' blood pressure; managing their dietary intakes,

being sure they receive the correct amounts of sodium, fluids and protein; and seeing to it that their patients avoid harmful substances such as tobacco and certain over-the-counter medications.

THYROID DISEASE

The thyroid, one of the body's largest endocrine glands, plays an important part of the body's metabolism and helps to maintain normal body temperature and heart rate. Approximately 13 million Americans—mostly women—are affected by thyroid disease.

Hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism are among the most common types of thyroid disease. *Hyperthyroidism*, which means the body has an overactive thyroid, drastically accelerates the body's metabolism, causing sweating, a rapid or irregular heartbeat, sudden weight loss and nervousness. "We use anti-thyroid medications to slow the production of thyroid hormones," says Dr. Pourbabak, who has been practicing medicine for over 13 years.

Hypothyroidism, on the other hand, is a condition in which the body has an underactive thyroid. This thyroid disorder causes fatigue, depression, weight gain and an intolerance to cold. Says Dr. Pourbabak, "For our patients with an underactive thyroid, we treat this condition by replacing the missing hormone, to help the body maintain normal thyroid function."

DIABETES

Diabetes is a complex disorder. In some cases, the pancreas no longer produces enough insulin. In other cases, the cells stop responding to the insulin that is produced. Insulin is a hormone that causes most of the body's cells to take up glucose from the blood. In a person with diabetes, the glucose in the blood cannot be absorbed into the cells of the body.

There are two main forms of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1, sometimes called juvenile diabetes, typically begins in childhood or adolescence. This form of diabetes usually comes on suddenly and the body produces little or no insulin, so daily injections of insulin are needed.

Type 2, which is sometimes referred to as adult-onset diabetes, typically occurs in people who are overweight and don't exercise. Type 2 is considered a milder form of diabetes because the onset of it is slow, in some cases developing over the course of several years. In addition, it can usually be controlled with diet and oral medication.

There is a third form of this disease: Gestational Diabetes, a condition in which women

DOCTOR SPOTLIGHT

The endocrinologists at South County Kidney & Endocrine Center

Dr. Raymond K.J. Chang is the medical director of SCKE. Dr. Chang is a Diplomate of the American College of Endocrinology, Nephrology, Internal Medicine, and Hospital Physicians. He completed medical school at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine; his internship and residency training were completed at the University of California, Irvine.

Dr. Brian E. Chavez is the director of SCKE's Diabetes Clinic. He is board-certified in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism as well as internal medicine. Dr. Chavez completed medical school at the Medical College of Wisconsin, and his internship and residency training were completed at the University of California, San Diego.

Dr. Sam Pourbabak specializes in endocrinology, metabolism and diabetes. He completed his internship at the University of New Mexico, at Albuquerque; his residency and fellowship were completed at UCLA.

South County Kidney & Endocrine Center

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- ▶ The walk-in clinic is open Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
- ▶ Most insurance plans accepted
- ▶ Languages spoken: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Farsi

without previously diagnosed diabetes exhibit high blood glucose levels during pregnancy.

"We work hard to treat our diabetic patients," said Dr. Chavez, who has been practicing medicine for more than seven years. "Depending on the type of diabetes they have, we use treatments that include insulin, dietary management and controlling blood pressure and cholesterol."

TOP-QUALITY CARE

In addition to the outstanding level of healthcare that SCKE gives to its patients, there is another reason this medical group is so dynamic: its recent merger with South County Family Care. The primary care physicians of South County Family Care—Lilian Tran, M.D., and Ken Kazenelson, M.D.—recently joined the SCKE medical group and together, this new multi-specialty medical team is providing full-service healthcare for the entire family.

"We give our patients the best in medical attention," Dr. Kazenelson says. "We are known to give our patients the Mayo Clinic-level of healthcare because of how thorough we are." Dr. Tran agrees.

"Our patients benefit from the convenience of having an all-encompassing practice," she says. "A patient may come in for a routine checkup and we may find that follow-up tests are needed. Because we have an in-house lab, testing is done right on the spot and the patient usually finds the results in about 15 minutes."

By joining forces with South County Kidney & Endocrine Centers, South County Family Care brings important healthcare services to patients, including men's and women's health; pediatric, geriatric and preventive care; immunizations; illness and injury treatment; and 24-hour call service. Jointly, this medical team sees over 100 patients per day. "We treat everyone: from pediatric to geriatric," Dr. Chang says. "We often see generations of one family in our offices and we take pride in being family doctors."

Thousands of people have already discovered the benefit of this well-rounded medical practice. So, the next time you need the services of such a dynamic team, do what so many satisfied patients have done and call their offices today. ✱



Dr. Raymond
K.J. Chang



Dr. Brian E.
Chavez



Dr. Sam
Pourbabak