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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***U.S. Department of Defense awards UC \$2.3 million  
to study traumatic brain injury and PTSD***

***Mayfield Clinic's Raj Narayan, M.D., to head study site***

CINCINNATI—The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has awarded the University of Cincinnati (UC) departments of neurosurgery and psychiatry more than \$2.3 million over five years to study traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The UC researchers will join investigators at nine other centers around the country designated by the DOD as PTSD/TBI Clinical Consortium Study Sites.

UC's Clinical Consortium Study Site Award, which will be effective September 2008, provides funds for infrastructure and personnel. The DOD will provide additional funds for each individual study undertaken by the Consortium. Raj Narayan, M.D., Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and a neurosurgeon with the Mayfield Clinic, is principal investigator of the UC Clinical Consortium Site.

Research into traumatic brain injury will be overseen by Narayan and Lori Shutter, M.D., Director of Neurocritical Care at The Neuroscience Institute at UC and University Hospital. The PTSD research will be overseen by Thomas Geraciotti, M.D., UC Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Mental Health Research at the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, and Kate Chard, Ph.D., Director of the PTSD program at the VA.

“We are delighted to have been chosen from among over 30 applicants for this consortium,” Dr. Narayan says. “The DOD recognized the excellence of both our TBI and PTSD teams in selecting Cincinnati for this award. Finding better treatments for these complex disorders is not going to be easy, but we can now bring some of the best minds in the country to focus on them.”

Dr. Geraciotti describes TBI and PTSD as “difficult-to-treat problems that are the scourges of our combat troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.” He expects that “concrete therapeutic advances will be achieved as a result of this funding.”

Dr. Narayan predicts the research will make new inroads in the areas of mild to moderate traumatic brain injury.

“In the past, neurosurgeons have focused most of their research efforts on severe TBI, which is more likely to kill people,” Narayan says. “This grant will help us and our colleagues in psychiatry to expand our studies into the mild and moderate TBI end of the spectrum, which, although less fatal, is far more common.”

Dr. Narayan adds that the terms “mild and moderate” are deceptive. “These patients can be substantially affected in many ways, and for life. The overlap between TBI and PTSD is only beginning to be studied and understood.”

Dr. Narayan has done extensive research on TBI, has published the major textbook on the subject and serves as chair of the American Brain Injury Consortium. He says Cincinnati was selected as a site because of its many strengths, including:

- the clinical and basic research programs in traumatic brain injury at the Neuroscience Institute and in PTSD at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center.
- University Hospital’s status as the only Level 1 trauma center in a populous region, and its experience with about 200 moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries each year.
- the neurosurgical expertise of the department of neurosurgery and Mayfield Clinic, whose 22 neurosurgeons and 18 residents and fellows surgically treat 110 moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries each year.
- the state-of-the-art, 20-bed neuroscience intensive care unit (NSICU) at University Hospital -- one of the largest and most advanced such units in the country.
- the Cincinnati VA Medical Center’s clinic for combat veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, which has enrolled more than 1,700 individuals.
- the Cincinnati VA Medical Center’s comprehensive and innovative treatment (both inpatient and outpatient) of veterans suffering from PTSD.
- the Cincinnati VA’s Substance Abuse and Dual Diagnosis Program, which is one of only three designated national centers of excellence in this field.

Other members selected by the DOD for the Clinical Consortium include Duke University, the University of Washington in Seattle, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (Harvard University), University of California at San Diego, Dartmouth College, Geneva Foundation, South Carolina Research Authority and the University of Maryland’s Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore.

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The Neuroscience Institute, a regional center of excellence, is dedicated to patient care, research, education, and the development of new treatments for stroke, brain and spinal tumors, epilepsy, traumatic brain and spinal injury, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, disorders of the senses (swallowing, voice, hearing, pain, taste and smell), and psychiatric conditions (bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and depression).