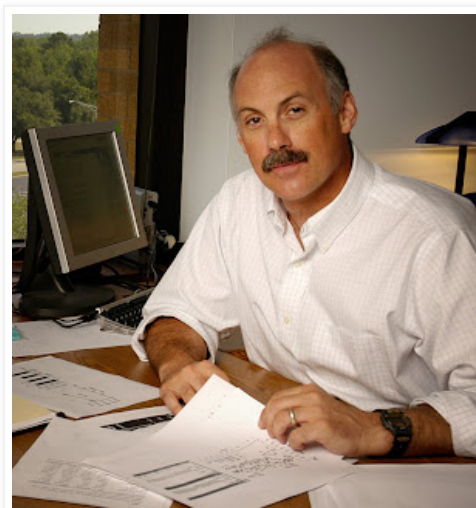


Med School Watercooler

NEWS FROM FREDERICK P. WHIDDON COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Friday, September 24, 2010

Dr. Brian Fouty in Second Year of Research Funded by American Heart Association Grant



Dr. Brian Fouty, associate professor of internal medicine and pharmacology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, is currently in his second year of research funded by an American Heart Association grant. The two-year grant, which was originally awarded in July 2009, totals \$165,000.

Dr. Fouty's project is titled "Glucose 1 Transporter in Pulmonary Vascular Repair." His research examines the mechanism through which high glucose – or blood sugar -- injures cells in the lung and whether blocking glucose entry can prevent this injury and speed recovery.

"Many patients who become critically ill develop an elevated glucose level in their blood, which is likely a reaction to the stress of illness," Dr. Fouty said. "This occurs even in people who do not have diabetes."

Dr. Fouty said studies show that well over 50 percent of critically ill patients have elevated glucose. He said previous studies suggest that this elevation in glucose is harmful to patients, increasing mortality and delaying recovery. "Clearly, increased blood glucose can delay recovery from lung injury," Dr. Fouty said. "Currently, insulin is used to decrease glucose levels in critically ill patients, but this therapy has some adverse effects such as hypoglycemia – a condition that occurs when your blood sugar is too low."

In this research project, Dr. Fouty is studying whether blocking glucose entry into cells – particularly, the endothelial cells that line the blood vessels in the lung – can prevent injury and ultimately improve outcomes for patients.

"We hope that by identifying the route of glucose uptake into these lung cells," he said, "we can design better therapeutic strategies than insulin to block glucose entry and improve the chances of recovery in critically ill patients."

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Since 1949, the American Heart Association has spent more than \$3.2 billion on research to increase knowledge about cardiovascular disease and stroke. AHA supports the development of beginning investigators and offers innovative funding mechanisms to stimulate research in promising areas of cardiovascular science. AHA currently funds about 2,500 scientists throughout the United States.

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Can a Bee Gees Tune Help Save a Life?



Dr. Frank S. Pettyjohn, professor and chair of emergency medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, says the way you respond to someone with an unexpected injury is important in ensuring that person's health and survival - in fact, it can mean the difference between life or death.

If you are assisting a person - an adult or child - who is unconscious, this is a true emergency. "If you are alone, call 911 immediately, and give your name and address," Dr. Pettyjohn said. "Also give a quick identifier of your location, such as 'the house with the light on' or 'the house at the end of the street with a green mailbox' so first responders can find you easily."

After calling 911, Dr. Pettyjohn said you should return to the unconscious patient and perform CPR. "The ABCs of CPR support is airway, breathing and circulation," he said. "If others are with you, begin CPR and send someone else to call 911."

Dr. Pettyjohn said to perform CPR to the beat of the popular Bee Gees tune "Stayin' Alive." The song is easy to remember, and it has about 100 beats per minute - a perfect number to maintain the best rhythm for performing CPR.

For patients who are conscious with symptoms of a stroke - weakness, inability to speak, or difficulty moving arms or legs - time is critical to prevent permanent damage to the brain. "It is important to call 911 and provide support to the patient until the paramedics arrive," Dr. Pettyjohn said.

"If the patient is conscious and has symptoms of a heart attack - such as chest pain, with pain in the jaw or arms - time is also critical," Dr. Pettyjohn said. "It is important to get the patient to the hospital to prevent loss of heart muscle. Aspirin may be given."

"For significant injuries such as fractures, large cuts and falls with injuries, you have a bit more time, but calling 911 is still the key to getting the help the patient needs," Dr. Pettyjohn said. "For those injuries with bleeding, the old standard of first aid is to put pressure on the wound to slow the bleeding. As always, maintain care for the patient until the paramedics arrive."

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Next Week's DSS - Dr. Matthew B. Grisham



entist Seminar at the USA College of Medicine will be
3. Grisham, Boyd Professor in the department of
iology and associate director of research for the
ce at LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, La.

sed Immunotherapy for the Treatment of Chronic
asy," will take place Sept. 30, 2010, at 4 p.m. in the
uditorium.

ises on intestinal mucosal immunology and regulation

1. His research has been continuously funded for the
has been awarded several research grants from the

1. He has published more than 250 peer-reviewed

journal articles and book chapters. In addition, he has edited two books and
written one book on the mechanisms of acute and chronic inflammation.

Dr. Grisham received his Ph.D. in biochemistry from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and completed his post-doctoral training at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In 1984, he moved to the department of biochemistry at the USA College of Medicine where he assumed the position of assistant professor until his relocation to LSU Health Sciences Center in 1987.

Dr. Grisham is an active member of the Grants Review Committee for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA) and for the National Institute of Digestive Diseases and Kidney. He has served as president of the Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine and served as councilor for the Immunology, Microbiology and Inflammatory Bowel Disease section of the American Gastroenterological Association.

Dr. Grisham recently completed his term as chair of the Gastrointestinal and Liver Section of the American Physiological Society. In addition, he is an associate editor of the American Journal of Physiology and Free Radical Biology and Medicine. He has served or is currently serving on the editorial boards of the following journals: Inflammatory Bowel Disease, the Journal of Immunology and American Journal of Physiology.

For more information on Dr. Grisham's research, visit
http://www.shreveportphysiology.com/fac_matthew_grisham

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September Med School Café - "A Parent's Guide to Safety on the Internet"



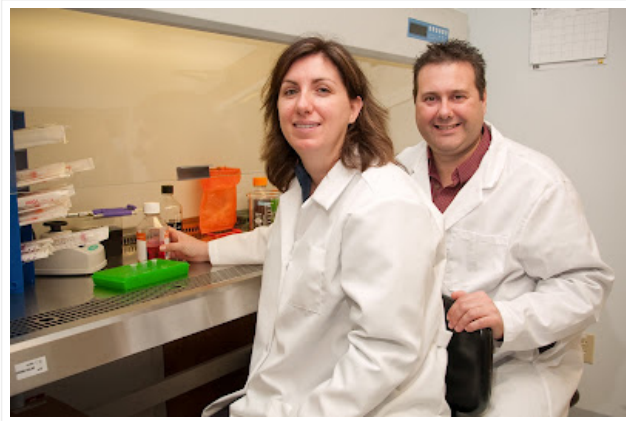
Today's Med School Café lecture, "A Parent's Guide to Safety on the Internet," was given by Dr. Thomas Martinko, associate professor of pediatrics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

Video from this lecture will be posted online next week. To read more about the lecture, [click here](#).

The next Med School Café lecture will be held on Oct. 13, 2010, and will feature Dr. Nicole Brooks, assistant professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology. If you are interested in attending, email kebarnes@usouthal.edu for details.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [3:15 PM](#) No comments:

Husband and Wife Research Collaborators at USA Awarded NIH Grant



Drs. Paul Brett and Mary Burtnick, a husband and wife research duo in the department of microbiology and immunology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, were recently awarded a federally funded research grant by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) totaling \$395,717. On this project, Dr. Brett will serve as the principal investigator and his wife, Dr. Burtnick, will serve as co-investigator.

Collaborating for close to a decade, they both contribute their successes to their overlapping interests, long-term collaboration and deep appreciation for each other's work.

The couple met in graduate school at the University of Calgary, Alberta, and worked together for the National Institutes of Health at Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Hamilton, Mont., before joining the USA faculty in 2008.

"The work experience is advantageous for both of us," Dr. Burtnick said. "We can relate to each other. Because scientists work on very focused areas within the grand scheme of life, it's nice to be with someone who can really appreciate why what we are exploring is so important."

Drs. Brett and Burtnick, both assistant professors at USA, agree that working together strengthens their relationship, "When we are at work and we have several deadlines to meet, there are two of us that can work as a team to get things done," Dr. Burtnick said. "At the same time, it can be a challenge to be around the same person 24/7. And I think that is true for every couple who works together."

Research in Drs. Brett and Burtnick's lab is focused on understanding the molecular mechanisms used by bacterial pathogens to cause disease in both humans and animals. In particular, they are interested in identifying cell surface components expressed by pathogenic Burkholderia species that enable these organisms to avoid detection by the immune system.

"Once identified, the long term goal of our research is to use these components to develop safe and effective vaccines to immunize against the diseases caused by the bacteria," Dr. Brett said.

Drs. Brett and Burtnick said infections caused by pathogenic Burkholderia are often difficult to diagnose and treatment is complicated due to the organism's high level of resistance to antibiotics. Presently, there are no licensed Burkholderia vaccines available for use in either humans or animals.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the nation's medical research agency -- making important medical discoveries that improve health and save lives. NIH is the largest source of funding for medical research in the world.

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