

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, May 26, 2011

June Med School Café - "The Gift of Life: Reasons to Give If You Are Asked"

The June Med School Café lecture will feature nephrologist Dr. Gregory W. Rutecki, professor of internal medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

His lecture, titled "The Gift of Life: Reasons to Give If You Are Asked," will take place June 16, 2011, at the Via! Health, Fitness & Enrichment Center in Mobile. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation begins at noon.

During the talk, he will discuss the value of organ transplantation in the treatment of many health conditions, including heart, kidney, lung and liver diseases.


Dr. Rutecki joined the USA College of Medicine faculty in 2009. His medical career has included 12 years of nephrology private practice, followed by educational roles at Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, the Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University, and the Ohio State University.

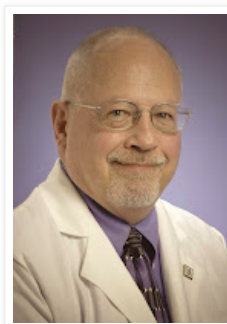
Dr. Rutecki earned his medical degree from the University of Illinois. He completed graduate training in internal medicine and nephrology at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, and completed his renal fellowship at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minn.

The Via! Health, Fitness & Enrichment Center is located at 1717 Dauphin St. in Mobile. To view a map, visit <http://bit.ly/hZoFgl>.

The Med School Café lecture and lunch are provided free of charge, but reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations, please call Kim Partridge at (251) 460-7770 or e-mail kebarnes@usouthal.edu.

Med School Café is a free community lecture series sponsored by the USA Physicians Group. Each month, faculty from the USA College of Medicine share their expertise on a specific medical condition, providing insight on the latest treatment available.

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Dr. Ballard Continues Cystic Fibrosis Research



Dr. Steve Ballard, professor of physiology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, continues to search for ways to improve the care for patients living with cystic fibrosis. His efforts are funded through a research grant by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. This is the fourth consecutive year that he has received the award, with \$108,000 being awarded each year.


Dr. Ballard belongs to a consortium of researchers – the Mucociliary Clearance Consortium – organized by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to study the mechanisms by which the lung clears mucus and inhaled pathogens from the airways of the lung.

"This research is intended to identify critical steps in this clearance process that are adversely affected in the airways of cystic fibrosis patients, who have an abnormally high susceptibility to chronic airway infections," Dr. Ballard said.

Cystic fibrosis, an inherited chronic disease, is caused by a defective gene that causes the body to produce abnormally thick mucus. This mucus builds up in the airways of the lung and in the pancreas, the organ that helps to break down and absorb food. The collection of mucus can result in life-threatening lung infections and digestion problems.

Dr. Ballard said cystic fibrosis patients suffer from chronic lung infections that cause progressive loss of pulmonary function. "By better understanding the physiological basis for this obstructive process, it is hoped that more effective treatments for cystic fibrosis patients can be developed."

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation was established in 1955 to assure the development of the means to cure and control cystic fibrosis and to improve the quality of life for those with the disease.

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Blood Drive To Be Held in Honor of USA Medical Student

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Donate blood in honor of
Jason Fletcher *

Jason is a fourth-year medical school student at the University of South Alabama. Jason was recently in a car accident and received 26 units of red blood cells, 26 units of plasma and 3 units of platelets. Thank you to local blood donors for making this possible.



Tuesday, May 31
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
at LifeSouth Community Blood Centers
967 Hillcrest Drive in Mobile


All donors will receive a recognition item and complimentary cholesterol screening. Donors must be 17 or older (16 with written parental consent), weigh 110 pounds or more, and show photo I.D. For more information, call 888-795-2707 or visit www.lifesouth.org.



Click on image to view larger

LifeSouth will host a blood drive on May 31, 2011, in honor of Jason Fletcher, a medical student at the University of South Alabama who was injured in a car accident.

The blood drive will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at LifeSouth Community Blood Centers at 967 Hillcrest Drive in Mobile. For more information, call 888-795-2707 or visit <http://www.lifesouth.org/>.

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USA Pain Clinic Opens in Newly Renovated Mastin Professional Building



Drs. Brad Steffler (right) and Lewis Coumanis, both interventional radiologists at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, say low back pain is the most common complaint they hear from their patients.

With this in mind, USA Physicians Group has recently established the USA Pain Clinic in the newly renovated Mastin Professional Building.

In the office, patient care is provided by two interventional radiologists, Drs. Steffler and Coumanis, who have expertise in performing minimally invasive procedures using image guidance. Dr. Steffler said the technology they use is rapidly advancing and he sees this approach as a highly effective tool in helping patients with pain, including back pain.


Dr. Coumanis said there are several options for treating low back pain, such as therapy, injections or in some cases surgery. "Low back pain is such a common condition, and injections are a less invasive option that we provide for our

patients," said Dr. Coumanis, who is an assistant professor of radiology at USA. "We are able to provide quick relief and patients find this to be a great option, especially for someone who doesn't want to go through surgery and recovery. Our patients can usually go back to work the next day."

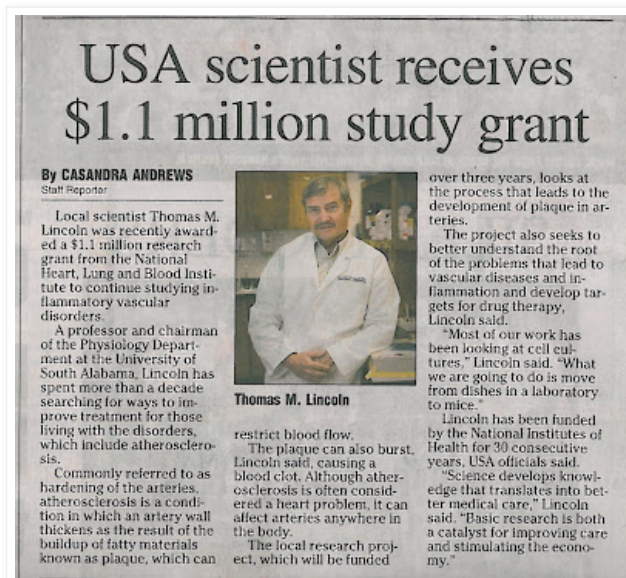
"For back pain, we typically schedule a series of visits in a four to five week period," said Dr. Steffler, who is an associate professor of radiology at USA. "Usually, after the first visit, patients experience a large reduction in pain."

If you'd like to schedule a visit at the USA Pain Clinic, talk with your primary care provider about a referral.

The USA Pain Clinic can be reached at (251) 471-7157.


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Dr. Thomas Lincoln Featured in Press-Register



Dr. Thomas Lincoln, professor and chair of physiology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, continues to search for ways to improve the care for patients living with inflammatory vascular disorders. His efforts were recently funded through a three-year research grant by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) totaling \$1,113,750.


Dr. Lincoln's award was featured in the May 19th issue of the Press-Register. To learn more about the research grant, [click here](#).

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A Look Back on the Career of Retired Radiology Professor

Dr. Jesse T. Littleton III, a radiologist who taught at the University of South Alabama, died Sunday at his home in Theodore after battling cancer. He was 94.

Read more about Dr. Littleton [here](#).

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