

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, August 18, 2011

August Med School Café - "Concussion Awareness in Young Athletes: An Overview of Alabama's New Concussion Law"



The August Med School Café lecture will feature University of South Alabama team physicians and USA physicians. USA Head Football Coach Joey Jones will introduce the speakers and underscore the importance of this educational opportunity for coaches, athletes and parents.

The interactive panel discussion will take place Aug. 25, 2011, at the Mobile Museum of Art in Mobile. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation begins at noon.

Dr. Anthony Martino, interim chair and associate professor of neurosurgery at the USA College of Medicine, along with USA team physicians Dr. Albert Pearsall, professor of orthopaedic surgery, Dr. R. Brian Bettencourt, assistant professor of family medicine, and Dr. Michael Linder, associate professor of family medicine, will provide an overview of concussion injuries as it relates to athletes, as well as the importance of recognizing symptoms and taking appropriate steps when a concussion is suspected.

According to Dr. Martino, an estimated 30-40 concussions occur each year during student sports activities in our area.

The panel will also review in detail a new state law that took effect in June that forbids young student athletes from playing if a concussion is suspected, until being cleared by a physician. The new law, which is now in effect in 20 states, requires coaches and trainers to learn about the dangers of concussions and the effects sport injuries have on the brain.

The lecture will also cover the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT), a tool used by trainers and coaches in the field to quickly assess whether an athlete has had a concussion.

During the talk, the physicians will also discuss the ways athletes can protect themselves from injuries, as well as the many ways coaches can recognize a head injury in an athlete and the appropriate steps they should take when an injury occurs.

The Mobile Museum of Art is located at 4850 Museum Drive in Mobile. To view a map, visit <http://bit.ly/q1Rg13>.

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 kepartridge@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

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their expertise on a specific medical condition, providing insight on the latest treatment available.

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USA Physicians Group Employees Featured on Special Courses Cover



University of South Alabama Physicians Group employees are featured on the cover of the latest USA Center for Continuing Education's Special Courses catalog. *From left to right:* Jeremy Kohn, charge audit specialist with HSF Reimbursement and Compliance; Barbara Cochrane, retired from USA Children's & Women's Hospital; Rita Mantell-Clanahan, charge audit specialist with HSF Reimbursement and Compliance; and Kim Cannon, assistant director of HSF Reimbursement and Compliance.

The group teaches medical billing and coding courses through USA's Center for Continuing Education.


According to Cannon, a medical billing and coding certificate is available through Special Courses for those interested in the medical records field. Cannon, who has been teaching special courses since 2000, said all of the classes are geared toward helping students become certified coders.

The medical billing and coding classes began as a result of an increase in demand for something that wasn't readily available. Employees within HSF Reimbursement and Compliance were responsible for bringing the curriculum to Mobile and starting the local chapter. Since then, the course has grown from one class to multiple classes that are split up by different types of coding.

"The classes not only develop your career, but they also expand the range of possibilities within the field," Cannon said. "My advice is to take the first class and see how you like it. You will know after the first class if it is something you want to explore further."

Cannon said that it is more important than ever to be a certified coder. "Learning to code properly is becoming more and more necessary, and there is much more demand for coders," she said. "The field has blossomed."

To view the entire schedule of courses, [click here](#).

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Free Community Lecture on Weight
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How to Get Optimal Cancer Care

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USA College of Medicine Welcomes Dr. Crisostomo Baliog



Dr. Crisostomo Baliog Jr. was recently appointed assistant professor of internal medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. He is a rheumatologist and will serve in the USA division of rheumatology.

Dr. Baliog earned his medical degree from the University of the Philippines. He completed his residency training in internal medicine at Boston University School of Medicine – Roger Williams Hospital in Providence, R.I., and completed his rheumatology fellowship at Boston University School of Medicine – Roger Williams Hospital and Brown University Warren Alpert Medical School – Rhode Island Hospital, both in Providence, R.I.

Dr. Baliog is a member of the American College of Rheumatology.

He is accepting new patients. For appointments, call (251) 660-5787.

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Free Community Lecture on Weight Loss

My friend Julie is my inspiration.

With her encouragement, together we've lost more than 200 pounds.

At first, I was apprehensive of weight loss surgery, but when I saw that Julie's surgery was so successful, I knew what I had to do.

I went to Julie for advice and ended up having bypass surgery last February. Within nine months I had lost 122 pounds, and I'm still losing.

Today, I'm focused on building strength and getting healthy. My diet has changed completely, and I've joined the gym. Prior to the surgery I had hypertension. Since the surgery, my blood pressure is down, and I'm taking fewer medications. I feel great and have tons of energy.

Having the surgery was definitely the best thing I've ever done.

— Tiffanie Bruckner, Daphne, Alabama

To find out if weight loss surgery options are right for you, call Valerie Heintz.

(251) 471-7413

USA University of South Alabama Physicians Group
www.usahhealthsystem.com

Julie the inspiring neighbor
Tiffanie Bruckner


Dr. William O. Richards, professor and chair of surgery at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, will present a free community lecture, titled "Bariatric Surgery for Morbid Obesity," on August 18, 2011, at 6 p.m.

The lecture, open to anyone interested in learning more about bariatric surgery for weight loss, will take place in the Mastin Professional Building Room 203 at

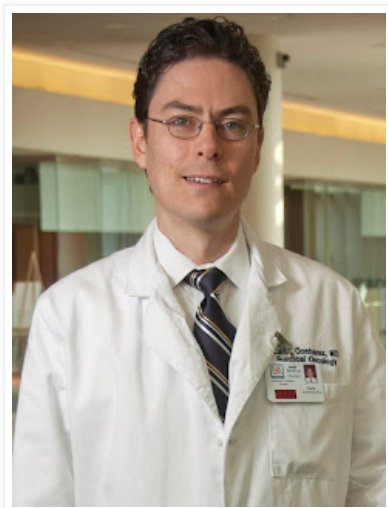
2451 Fillingim St. in Mobile.

Dr. Richards's clinical interests focus on surgical treatment for Type 2 diabetes and treating motility disorders of the gastrointestinal tract using minimally invasive surgical procedures. He has performed thousands of laparoscopic procedures since 1990, including numerous laparoscopic bariatric procedures.

For more information on the lecture, call (251) 471-7413 or e-mail vheinl@southal.edu.

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How to Get Optimal Cancer Care



Dr. Carlo M. Contreras, a surgical oncologist with the department of surgery at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, believes that collaboration is the key to optimal cancer care.

"A multidisciplinary approach to cancer care means that a whole team of health care providers are collaborating to help each individual patient," Dr. Contreras said. "The entire treatment team realizes that we're not just fighting cancer. Instead, we are helping a person who happens to be fighting cancer."

Dr. Contreras, who specializes in liver and pancreatic cancer, is affiliated with the Mitchell Cancer Institute and sees patients there. He also treats patients with a variety of skin and gastrointestinal cancers including stomach tumors, neuroendocrine tumors, melanoma and sarcoma.

According to Dr. Contreras, having all the necessary cancer specialists and health care providers under one roof at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute provides many benefits for patients.

"When the patient is able to meet with all the specialists on the same day, the patient knows that just about all of their questions have been answered," Dr. Contreras said. "Ultimately, this also means that patients start their cancer therapy earlier than if all the doctors' visits were spaced out over a longer period of time."

Dr. Contreras said another major benefit of having all the cancer specialists work together is the close communication and coordination of care.


"Often, particularly challenging cases are discussed at a weekly conference attended by physicians of many different specialties - radiology, pathology, radiation oncology, surgery, gastroenterology, and medical oncology," he said. "The purpose of this type of conference is to make sure that our patients are getting the most effective care possible."

Dr. Contreras said multidisciplinary care goes beyond just involving the right doctors. "It means that we involve a nutritionist to address dietary concerns,

physical therapists when necessary, a pain specialist, a case worker, and even specialists that can help patients deal with emotions like anxiety or depression. We also provide the opportunity for patients to join patient-led support groups."

"A multidisciplinary approach to cancer care is a thoughtful effort to treat all aspects of cancer and how the disease impacts that patient's life," he added. "Each patient is so unique and so our evaluation and care is really individualized. Patients love it because they know they are getting the best cancer therapy available."

To make an appointment with Dr. Contreras, call (251) 445-8405.

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