

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, December 8, 2011

USA College of Medicine Welcomes Dr. Jarrod Fortwendel



Dr. Jarrod Fortwendel was recently appointed assistant professor of microbiology and immunology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

Dr. Fortwendel is a member of the American Society of Microbiology in addition to having a medical technology certification with the American Society of Clinical Pathologists.

Prior to his appointment at USA, Dr. Fortwendel completed his postdoctoral fellowship at Duke University in the Molecular Mycology and Pathogenesis Training Program (MMPTP).

Dr. Fortwendel completed his undergraduate degree in Clinical Laboratory Science at Indiana State University and went on to receive his doctorate from the University of Cincinnati. As a scientist, he has received numerous grants and awards to support his research efforts.

Notably, he received a K22 Research Scholarship Development Award, the MMPTP grant, and was named an Advances Against Aspergillosis Scholar at their international conference in Rome, Italy.

With more than 20 academic publications recognized internationally, Dr. Fortwendel is a strong addition to the academic research body in the department of microbiology and immunology.

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Support for Grieving Loved Ones During the Holidays



Dr. Ronald Franks, vice president for health sciences and interim chair of psychiatry at the University of South Alabama, said the holidays can be a stressful time, especially for families who have recently suffered a loss.

"The holidays are a time when families get together," Dr. Franks said. "If there is an empty place at the table, it evokes grief and a sense of loss."

Because people are more vulnerable to feeling losses at this time of year, it is important that family members know how they can help lessen the reawakened grief in others.

According to Dr. Franks, one of the best treatments for grieving is to talk as a family.

"Acknowledging the loss and sharing your feelings eases stress and allows everyone to share positive memories," he said. "It's a normal response that helps the mind heal."

Dr. Franks said the most common signs of grieving include feelings of sadness and preoccupation with lost loved ones. He said frightening experiences such as dreams and hallucinations may also be evident.

One of the worst things to do is to let the family member who has lost a loved one become isolated.

"This puts them in danger of having their feelings escalate," Dr. Franks said. "The best thing to do is to keep their memory alive by sharing stories. It can be a painful process, but it is necessary for healing."

For those who are not ready to deal with a loss or who are reluctant to talk with family members, Dr. Franks said it is important to determine how well they are functioning.

"The majority of people do better talking about the lost loved one," he said. "However, everyone copes differently."

"For those who aren't comfortable talking, just keep an eye on how they're doing," he added. "If they aren't taking care of themselves and not going to work, they might need outside help – whether it is a counselor, psychologist, social worker, or physician."

Dr. Franks said that on average, a person who has lost a loved one should be functioning at a normal rate at around the six-month mark.

He emphasized that grieving is not a linear process. "Some days are better and some days are not," he said. "After an extended period of time, however, you will get better."

To make an appointment with any USA physician, call (251) 434-3711.

Tips to Help Someone Cope with a Loss:

- Be a good listener
- Invite the person to your home for holiday meals and celebrations
- Invite them to exercise with you
- Help them find professional help if needed
- Let them know they are loved
- Offer help with tangible tasks such as holiday shopping
- Give person space and time to recover from loss
- Don't try to minimize the loss

Suggestions from the American Hospice Foundation on What Not to Say:

"I know how you feel." One can never know how another may feel. You could, instead, ask your friend to tell you how he or she feels.

"It's part of a divine plan." This phrase can make people angry and they often

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respond with, "What plan? Nobody told me about any plan."

"Look at what you have to be thankful for." They know they have things to be thankful for, but right now they are not important.

"He's in a better place now." The bereaved may or may not believe this. Keep your beliefs to yourself unless asked.

"This is behind you now; it's time to get on with your life." Sometimes the bereaved are resistant to getting on with because they feel this means "forgetting" their loved one. In addition, moving on is easier said than done. Grief has a mind of its own and works at its own pace.

Statements that begin with "You should" or "You will." These statements are too directive. Instead you could begin your comments with: "Have you thought about. . ." or "You might. . ."

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USAMC Cookbook Proceeds To Benefit Patients



From left to right: Tessie Johnson, assistant technical director of radiology; Emma Green, volunteer services secretary; Donna Donaldson, director of respiratory therapy; and Anita Shirah, human resource manager

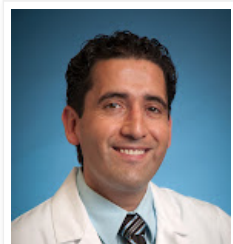
Employees at the University of South Alabama Medical Center compiled their favorite family recipes to be included in the Medical Center's cookbook, "Southern Comfort."

Copies of the cookbook are available for \$15 at the USA Medical Center gift shop. Proceeds from this sale are donated to patients in need at the USA Medical Center.

Limited quantities available. For more information, contact Emma Green at (251) 471-7265.

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Reminder: December Med School Café



The December Med School Café lecture will feature interventional neurologist Dr. Steve Cordina, assistant professor of neurology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and medical director for the USA Stroke Center.

His lecture, titled "Get Smart with Stroke," will take place Dec. 15, 2011, at the Mobile Museum of Art in



erved at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation begins at noon.


the first interventional neurologist to be based in the Mobile region, will discuss new treatments and interventions available for stroke victims, as well as prevention strategies.

Dr. Cordina earned his medical degree from the University of Malta in Msida, Malta. He completed his residency training in neurology at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Department of Neurology and Neurosciences in Newark, N.J. This was followed by a vascular neurology fellowship at the University of Minnesota.

The Mobile Museum of Art is located at 4850 Museum Drive in Mobile.

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

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Holiday Toy Drive A Success



The University of South Alabama Medical Center assisted the Dumas Wesley Community Center this year with donations for the Community Center's Christmas Toy Store.


Toys were collected in each department at the USA Medical Center for transport to the Dumas Wesley Community Center.

Donated toys are sold to pre-qualified Crichton residents at greatly reduced prices. The money generated from the toy sales goes to help other distressed community members with emergency needs.

The USA Medical Center began working with the Dumas Wesley Community Center on the Christmas Toy Store close to six years ago and has made the store an annual project in providing toys, books, and accessories.

Last year, donations from USA enabled the center to assist more than 100 families.



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