USA Health to Offer Free Skin Cancer Screenings

USA Health will offer free skin cancer screenings for all USA Health and Dental Plan members on Monday, May 1, 2017, as part of Melanoma Monday, a national event held annually on the first Monday of May.

Appointments will be available from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at University Physicians Group, located at the University Commons.

According to Dr. Marcus Tan, assistant professor of surgery at the USA College of Medicine and a surgical oncologist with the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute, the incidence of melanoma in the United States is rising more rapidly than for any other cancer. "In fact, one in every 40 individuals will develop melanoma," he said. "However, if caught early, it is curable in 90 percent of cases."

There are several risk factors to consider in a melanoma diagnosis including family history of melanoma, prior melanoma, multiple pigmented skin lesions and some rare genetic syndromes. In addition, a history of extensive or severe sun exposure or severe sunburns may also contribute to the development of this potentially fatal cancer.

To schedule your free skin cancer screening, call 660-5787. USA Commons is located at 75 University Blvd. at the intersection of University Boulevard and Old Shell Road.
The Graduate Medical Education Committee at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine will host the inaugural Resident and Fellow Exposition on May 23, 2017, from 2-4 p.m. at the Strada Patient Care Center Conference Room on the first floor.

The exposition is an opportunity for residents and fellows to display their scholarly activities from research projects, improvement projects and patient safety and advocacy projects. Projects will be presented in poster form in those three categories, with a winner from each category being announced at the end of the exposition at 4 p.m. that day.

"The residents and fellows work hard on important projects that advance medical and surgical sciences, improve patient care and impact patient health outcomes," said Dr. McQuiston, assistant dean of graduate medical education and associate professor of radiology. "It is important for USA health care providers to learn what the residents and fellows have learned through these projects."

Submissions must be entered by April 27, 2017. A final draft of the poster in PowerPoint format must be received by the GME Office by May 10, 2017.

For more information, as well as guidelines about presenting at the exposition, visit http://www.usahealthsystem.com/expo.

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**Anatomy Outreach Provides Interactive Experience for High School Students**

Several high schools across the region recently participated in the University of South Alabama College of Medicine’s Anatomy Outreach program, learning about the anatomy, physiology and pathology of normal and abnormal organ systems.

This year, Anatomy Outreach hosted five high schools in the Medical Sciences Building located on USA’s main campus. The program is led entirely by second-year medical students at USA.

According to Dr. Masheika James, a second-year student at the USA College of Medicine and chair of Anatomy Outreach, medical students arrange and organize the event dates, teach the stations, share their educational paths and provide insight into medical school through question-and-answer sessions with the high school students.

Visiting students rotate through seven stations — the brain, lungs, heart, gastrointestinal, bones, infectious disease and nutrition. "The stations are
designed to expose students not only to human anatomy, but to also have students consider the consequences of smoking and unhealthy lifestyles,” Dr. James said.

“They always say that teaching is the best way to learn,” said Kasey Stoutin, a second-year student at the USA College of Medicine and Anatomy Outreach committee member. “Though we try to keep the organ-system material on an approachable but still intriguing level for high school students, it still puts a fire under you to make sure you know your material.”

Natalie Carlisle, a second-year student at the USA College of Medicine and an Anatomy Outreach volunteer, said Anatomy Outreach provides second-year medical students the opportunity to teach others the information they learned thus far. “The high school students are always engaged and ask questions,” she said.

Several high school students at St. Luke’s Episcopal School in Mobile, Ala., said attending Anatomy Outreach provided them with relevant information that they could apply in the classroom. “We learned so much about the human body and the process it takes to get through medical school,” said Kate, a student at St. Luke’s Episcopal School. “The hands-on experience made the lessons all the more memorable.”

“It really is pretty cool when a kid you didn't think was paying attention answers a question correctly,” said Matthew Robson, a second-year student at the USA College of Medicine and Anatomy Outreach committee member. “It is like a switch turns on, and he or she is immediately drawn in, eager to learn more.”

Anatomy Outreach recently hosted the final high school for this school year. “Next year, the goal will be to schedule more local public high schools in order to reach students who have limited anatomy exposure and insight into medical school,” Dr. James said.

Learn more about Anatomy Outreach here.

Dr. William Gerthoffer Receives Joseph R. Rodarte Award for Scientific Distinction

Dr. William Gerthoffer, professor and chair of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, recently received the Joseph R. Rodarte Award for Scientific Distinction from the Assembly on Respiratory Structure and Function of the American Thoracic Society (ATS).

Dr. Gerthoffer will be recognized in May at the 2017 ATS international conference.
in Washington D.C. "I was surprised and honored by this unexpected award from my scientific peers," he said. "This award is given by my peers who have all made important discoveries that describe how the lung functions. We are all interested in defining normal lung structure and function and how diseases such as asthma and COPD change the lung."

Dr. Gerthoffer said receiving this award is a great honor because it is given to researchers who have made important contributions to respiratory physiology and medicine.

During his post-doctoral training at the University of Virginia, he reported the first measurements of myosin light chain phosphorylation in airway smooth muscle correlated with muscle shortening velocity. "Murphy's 'latch model' of smooth muscle contractile system regulation was described in 1982 and I tested the generality of this model in airway, vascular and GI smooth muscle over the next ten years," he said. "We and others found a number of cases that the model could not explain and I proposed that contraction might also depend on phosphorylation of actin-binding proteins, calponin and caldesmon."

According to Dr. Gerthoffer, his lab was the first to measure these phosphoproteins in airway smooth muscle and to show the phosphorylation events influenced actin sliding velocity in vitro. They were also the first to describe the function of MAP kinases in airway smooth muscles, which are important enzymes that control expression of inflammatory proteins in many organs, including the airways. "As part of that work, we pioneered the study of airway smooth cell migration, which is thought to occur during lung development and in inflammatory lung diseases," he said. "To facilitate these studies we developed the first immortalized airway smooth muscles cell lines used by us and others in the field."

Dr. Gerthoffer said the USA Center for Lung Biology has been an excellent environment to conduct his work in respiratory cell and molecular biology. "The USA College of Medicine and the University as a whole deserve credit for continuing to support the influential work that goes on in labs supported by the center," he said. "All of the work in my lab was performed over the years by a wonderful group of graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, visiting scientists and skilled technicians. Their dedication and skilled efforts are really the basis of everything that is being recognized by the Rodarte award."

In 1974, Dr. Gerthoffer earned his Ph.D. in pharmacology from West Virginia University in Morgantown, W.Va. He completed post-doctoral training in cardiovascular sciences at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, and post-doctoral training in cardiovascular physiology at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Va. He has been a member of the ATS since 1997.

The Joseph R. Rodarte Award for Scientific Distinction is in honor of the late Dr. Joe Rodarte, a distinguished member of the American Thoracic Society and the Assembly on Respiratory Structure and Function. Learn more about this award here.

To learn more about Dr. Gerthoffer's research, click here.
in the growth of hospitals in America.

The event is open to faculty, staff and students at USA. A light breakfast, coffee and beverages will be provided. For additional information, contact Katie Catlin at kncatlin@health.southalabama.edu.