Honoring the career of Dr. Dave Alberts

Throughout Dr. Alberts career of over 40 years, both his laboratory and clinical research have focused on the prevention and treatment of prevalent and potentially deadly cancers such as those of the breast, colon, ovaries, and skin.

Dr. Alberts became interested in skin cancer prevention early in his career, and in the late 1980s, he and his colleagues earned a National Cancer Institute (NCI) Program Project Grant focusing on Prevention of Skin Cancer. This grant has been continuously funded by the NCI for the past 36 years!

Dr. Alberts saw the impact that skin cancer had on individuals and communities, and envisioned a center that would bring together clinicians, scientists, researchers, and educators to address and tackle the increasing incidence of skin cancer. His dream, with the efforts of other Arizona faculty, led to the founding of the Skin Cancer Institute (SCI) in 2006.

As he retires, it is Dave’s wish to guarantee the longevity of the Skin Cancer Institute with an endowment. As we celebrate his dedication to cancer research and treatment, the University of Arizona Cancer Center has launched a campaign in honor of David S. Alberts, MD to endow the SCI’s statewide research and education programs. This campaign will ensure the future of the SCI, and allow for more research, education, patient care, and ultimately, skin cancer prevention!

Call us today to learn more about how you can contribute to this endowment.

1-888-724-2749

Our 3rd annual SPF (Skin cancer Prevention Friends) luncheon was a wonderful afternoon of good food and great conversation! Over 50 supporters of the SCI came to the luncheon this year. Our new melanoma oncologist, Dr. Monte Shaheen, presented on new advances in melanoma treatment. We also had our first silent auction this year thanks to some generous donations. Canyon Ranch donated a spa day for two, Hacienda del Sol donated a 1 night stay, and Wild Stallion Ranch donated a 2 night stay. Thanks to everyone for your continued support!
Sunscreen in schools is now legal!

Believe it or not, before April 26th of this year, the use of sunscreen on school grounds without a doctor’s permission was against the law! Arizona legislators passed Bill 2134, legalizing the use of sunscreen in Arizona schools. This means that all schools can now make sunscreen available to their students, support its use in the schools, and even help students put it on.

This is wonderful news for kids and parents! So much of the damage we do to our skin happens in childhood. Practicing sun safe behaviors like covering up and wearing sunscreen in childhood years greatly reduces the risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

The bill in a nutshell:

Kids can use sunscreen products while on school property or at a school sponsored event without a note or prescription if the product is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA). A school district or charter school governing body may adopt policies to allow employees and volunteers to help students apply sunscreen if the parent provides written consent.

For more information on the bill, visit: http://www.azleg.gov/

Research News

Innovative New Ways to Detect Skin Cancer

Massage therapists have a unique opportunity to examine their clients’ skin while doing their primary job of easing tight muscles. What if they could identify possible skin cancers, and alert their clients to get a skin exam? This is the question that Dr. Lois Loescher aims to address. She was awarded $750,000 from the Arizona Biomedical Research Commission (ABRC) to train massage therapists to identify suspicious skin lesions, and provide resources to their clients on how to follow up on the lesions with their primary healthcare providers. They will also be trained to teach strategies in sun safety.

Currently, massage therapists have little or no formal training in skin cancer detection. Dr. Loescher’s new study, “Massage Therapists Skin Health Awareness, Referral, and Education (MTsSHARE) to Reduce Skin Cancer Risk in Arizonans,” seeks to address, expand and evaluate the effectiveness of skin surveillance through an on-line learning program.

Dr. Loescher wants to enable massage therapists to help their clients detect and even prevent skin cancer. Dr. Loescher states “Not only would a creative, expert online training program be an affordable way to impart knowledge, but it would have the capacity to be widely disseminated across the nation”.

This study is only the beginning to expanding who can be trained in skin cancer detection. Hair stylists, aestheticians, and even tattoo artists around the country have the opportunity to play an active role in the fight against skin cancer.

It’s a brave new world in skin cancer awareness and detection…Well done Dr. Loescher!