



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Teresa Hagan, Office Manager

On staff at the South Georgia Center for Cancer Care for 20 years, office manager Teresa Hagan says, “we are like a family at the center, having all worked here together for ages.” This long-time Statesboro resident loves her job, saying SGCCC has the best patients in the world. “We not only feel that we can make a difference in their lives, but know they make a difference in ours.” Married to her high school sweetheart, Teresa has two grown, married children and two grandchildren, with two more on the way. In addition to spending lots of time with her grandchildren, she also loves working in the yard with her flowers.

INTERVENE EARLY FOR BETTER OUTCOMES: WHY CANCER SCREENINGS ARE IMPORTANT

To raise awareness about skin cancer and empower Georgians to take charge of their health, SGCCC is hosting a community-wide cancer screening event in July. (See event details below.) Dr. David F. Weems, SGCCC Radiation Oncologist and Clinical Director, shares some of his thoughts about the importance of annual skin examinations:

Skin cancer screening exams are important to allow cancers to be found early and decrease their chances of spreading. When found early, skin cancer treatment is easier and more successful. It is particularly important for people who work outside or who have a family history of skin cancer to participate in annual skin cancer examinations.

In most cases, skin cancer is a very curable disease and can be treated easily, especially when detected early. For more aggressive skin cancers such as melanomas (which can be particularly devastating once they have begun to spread), early detection is paramount and can significantly increase cure rates. Unfortunately, I’ve seen skin cancers caught late take both younger and older patients’ lives.

Limiting exposure and protecting yourself from the sun with the right clothing and sunscreen helps reduce the risk for skin cancer, but monthly skin self-examinations are quite important, too. These are best when conducted in a well-lit room with a full-length mirror, as well as a hand mirror to examine areas difficult to see. Most attention should be paid to areas that get the most sun exposure: face, neck and arms. Look for lesions or bumps that don’t heal or improve after a few weeks. Basal cell cancers tend to be flat, firm and smooth, as well as red or pink and raised. Squamous cell cancers tend to be rougher and scallier with crusted or ulcerated surfaces. Melanomas tend to be dark spots on the skin which change in shape, color or size. For melanomas, follow the ABCD rule and see your doctor if you notice moles or spots that are *asymmetrical*, have irregular, notched or blurred *borders*, have changed *color*, or are colored different shades of brown and black, or are a *diameter* larger than a quarter inch and changing.

FREE CANCER SCREENING EVENT

Mark your calendars for *August 18th* and join us for a cancer screening event at SGCCC. From 3 - 6 PM, Dr. Weems will be conducting physical examinations to check for skin cancer and prostate cancer. SGCCC's licensed massage therapist, Christy Loftin, will also be on hand to provide ten-minute massages to participants while they wait. This event is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is encouraged. To register, call the center at 1 (800) 868-5236.

ASK THE DOC:

Q: As a cancer patient being treated for melanoma, I worry that every mole and freckle on my children is going to be cancerous, too. When do family members need to be seen? What do we need to look for when doing skin checks at home?

-Statesboro resident and cancer survivor, Beverly

A: A common concern for many cancer patients is that their children are at risk. While there is a small genetic role in some melanomas, the vast majority of skin cancers are caused from prolonged exposure to the ionizing effects of radiation. Educating your children starts at an early age, and teaching them that sunscreen is a must prior to any activity outside, even on a cloudy day, is important. This also holds true for sunglasses, because while we talk a lot about the harmful effects of the sun on our skin, the same can also be said for the effects on our eyes.

I encourage any person with a skin change that they are worried about to seek the opinion of their physician, but common signs to look for at home include a change in the size or color of a mole, a new growth, scaliness, oozing, bleeding, a change in the appearance of a bump or nodule, the spread of pigmentation of a mole or skin area beyond its border, or a change in the sensation of skin in a particular area, such as itchiness, tenderness, or pain.

Healthy Connections is a publication of South Georgia Center for Cancer Care and is published for the general public to disseminate health-related information. This information is not to be used for diagnosing or prescribing. Please consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment, diet plan or exercise regimen implied in this publication.

JULY 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 MASSAGE THERAPY AVAILABLE 9AM - 3PM	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 MASSAGE THERAPY AVAILABLE 9AM - 3PM	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

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