Biologics: New class of drugs studied for safety

A new class of medicines known as biologics is promising relief to patients suffering from painful autoimmune diseases, but the short- and long-term health consequences and appropriate use of these medicines are concerns that have yet to be fully defined.

The Center for Education and Research on Therapeutics (CERTs) recently was awarded a $2.5 million grant from the Agency for Healthcare and Quality (AHRQ) to study the risks and benefits of biologics to provide patients and their doctors more definitive information on the benefits and risks of the medications.

“The government is very eager under the new administration to better understand the comparative effectiveness of drugs, devices and biologics and ultimately to use that information to help rein in some of the large costs that are associated with drug use in the United States,” said Kenneth Saag, director of the Center for Education and Research on Therapeutics (CERTs). Saag is studying the risks and benefits of a new class of medicines known as biologics, which have shown promising relief to patients suffering from painful autoimmune diseases.

Not getting a good night’s rest? Sleep/Wake Center can help

D o you ever wonder what it must feel like to operate on eight hours of sleep each day?
If you're functioning on a full night's rest today, give yourself a pat on the back. You're one of the few.

Almost 74 percent of Americans do not get enough sleep each night, according to the National Sleep Foundation, and more people are suffering from sleep deprivation each year.

"Our society is just not sleeping an adequate amount of time," says Susan Harding, M.D., director of UAB's Sleep/Wake Disorders Center. "Most people require eight hours, but very few actually get it."

For some, the lack of sleep comes from their lifestyle habits. But for many, day-time sleepiness is due to a sleep disorder. UAB's Sleep/Wake Disorders Center has been a leader in sleep medicine for more than 20 years, aiding patients suffering from painful autoimmune diseases.

The center recently moved to the seventh floor of UAB Highlands, where Harding and her staff provide clinical evaluations, diagnostic procedures, treatment and management for more than 90 sleep-related disorders.

Other doctors on staff include Jeffrey Hawkins, M.D., clinical assistant professor of medicine; David Calhoun, M.D., Division of Cardiology and professor of medicine; and Jennifer DeWolfe, D.O., assistant professor of neurology.

There are many reasons we are not sleeping, according to Harding. Among them:
• Lifestyle habits (Not allowing enough time for sleep)
• Anything that causes insomnia or poor quality sleep
• Sleep disorders
• Excessive worry, depression
• Medication side effects
• Working odd hours
• Medical illness causing pain, difficulty breathing, etc.

One common culprit robbing us of proper rest is sleep apnea, it's also the most common sleep disorder diagnosed at the Sleep/Wake Disorders Center.

Sleep apnea essentially is a cessation of airflow during sleep and can come in three different forms: obstructive, central and mixed. Obstructive is the most common type of the three. Despite the difference in the root cause of each type, people with untreated sleep apnea stop breathing repeatedly during their sleep in all three cases.

Those suffering from severe cases of sleep apnea could stop breathing hundreds of times during the night and often for a minute or longer. Following each apnea, a patient awakens momentarily before returning to sleep. Most patients are not aware of or remember those brief awakenings, called arousals.

Patients who have hundreds of arousals each night become sleep-deprived, which shows up as excessive daytime sleepiness despite what seemed like adequate sleep at the time.

Sleep apnea is very common; it affects more than 12 million Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health. If left untreated it can cause numerous health-related problems or make existing ones — such as hypertension and heart disease — worse.

"Untreated sleep apnea is associated with high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke and daytime sleepiness," Harding says.

"It may impact cognitive skills as well."

Common signs, treatment

How do you know if you or a loved one may have sleep apnea? There are several common signs and symptoms:
• Excessive daytime sleepiness

If you or someone you know has symptoms of sleep apnea, you should make an appointment with the Sleep/Wake Center.
Ethics filing deadline is April 30; online option now available

UAB employees who meet a certain salary threshold, or whose job includes management of state funds in certain capacities, are required to file their annual Statement of Economic Interests form with the Alabama Ethics Commission by April 30.

This year, the commission offers a new online filing option; visit their Web site at www.ethics.alabama.gov to take advantage of it. While you still can choose to print a copy of the form, complete it and return it directly to the Ethics Commission just like in previous years, UAB faculty and staff who must file are encouraged to take advantage of the new quick and cost-effective online option.

When you do, you will receive an e-mail from the Ethics Commission (the e-mail address will contain @ethics.alabama.gov) providing you with a code that confirms your form has been filed. Keep this confirmation code on file, as it’s required for any subsequent requests or questions.

Employees who meet the filing criteria are receiving formal notice of this requirement in an e-mail sent to their UAB e-mail address. The letter instructs employees to log on to BlazerNET to download and print the form if they do not choose to file online. Once in BlazerNET (blzernet.uab.edu), employees should click on the Employee Resources tab and click on the link in the Human Resource Management channel.

Once the form is completed, employees should return it to the State of Alabama Ethics Commission, PO. Box 302320, Montgomery AL 36130-2320. The filing is mandated by the Code of Alabama, 1975 Section 36-25-14. Summarized, the requirements as they apply to UAB state that:

• Persons whose base rate of pay at any time during calendar year 2008 was greater than $50,000 or greater are required to file, even if employment during the year was for a period as short as one day.

• Persons under that salary threshold whose job includes authority for procurement or investments are required to file.

• The Ethics Commission has exempted persons whose pay and benefits come primarily from UAB Hospital from the filing requirement.

UAB prepares for environmental audit

UAB is participating in a new cooperative program with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that allows participating schools in the Southeast to inspect each other using trained auditors, self-report any violations found and submit a plan to correct the problems to the EPA.

UAB’s first in-depth peer-review inspection in spring 2009 will include campus laboratories, maintenance areas and equipment, art departments and any areas in which regulated waste is generated, managed or stored. The meeting is scheduled for April 28 at noon in the Human Resource Management channel.

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UAB Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) is offering training programs and distributing a toolkit of information to help affected departments prepare for the inspection and maintain ongoing compliance with EPA regulations. If you have questions visit the OH&S Web site www.healthsafe.uab.edu or call 205/934-2487.

Distribution under way of new UAB Directory

Copies of the 2009 edition of the UAB Directory are being distributed across the campus and the UAB Health System.

Please review your personal listing in Section D and your departmental listings in Section E, then follow the procedures to correct any inaccurate information. Learn more about the UAB Directory online at www.uab.edu/directoryinfo.

Seeking nominations for Ingalls/NAS award

Nominations for the 2009 Ellen Gregg Ingalls/ UAB National Alumni Society Award for Lifetime Achievement in Teaching are being accepted until April 6. To be eligible, the faculty member must be a full-time regular employee, be a past recipient of the President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching and have served UAB for 20 or more years at the time nominations are submitted for the award. A nomination form and a list of eligible faculty e-mail scjcrump@uab.edu.

Use rubrics, learning styles, case studies in new online courses

The Teaching with Technology meetings for spring 2009 will cover the use of rubrics, learning styles and case studies to improve online courses. Bring your assignments and discuss with other UAB faculty how to use these effectively. The meetings are held from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Hill University Center Board Room, and lunch is provided.

The schedule includes rubrics on Feb. 26, learning styles March 26 and case studies April 16. Visit the Faculty Development site at www.uab.edu/facultydevelopment to learn more.

Hands-on IT session for faculty Feb. 11

UAB instructional technologists will host a one-hour, hands-on session on creating custom assignments for groups and individuals in online environments in Heritage Hall Room 432 at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11. Register online at www.eventbrite.com/ event/24781324.

Seminar to examine patient outcomes in surgical centers

The Lister Hill Center for Health Policy Seminar Series will present “Structure, Process and Patient Outcomes in Ambulatory Surgery Centers” by Askar Chukmatoor, M.D., Ph.D., of the Florida State University College of Medicine on Wednesday, Feb. 11 from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. in Royal Public Health Building Room 407. Contact lee@uab.edu for more information.

UAB Magazine winter edition now online

Visit www.uab.edu/uabmagazine to learn the secrets of sugar, the mysteries of chronic pain and the many uses of duct tape in backcountry medicine. Also included is an interview with the director of UAB’s Gospel Choir and a look at the present and future faces of the Campus Green.

Winter edition of UAB Business now online

Read about new Business Dean David Klock, Ph.D., and his vision for the school in the winter edition of UAB Business online at www.uab.edu/business.
Special geriatric unit opens in UAB Highlands hospital

A new specialized unit for geriatric patients in UAB Highlands hospital is part of a comprehensive plan to anticipate the health-care needs of Americans age 65 and older, a group expected to be 20 percent of the total population by 2030.

The new Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit occupies 20 beds at UAB Highlands hospital, and it reflects a growing trend in geriatric care across the country. Nursing and care staff have received advanced training in care for the frail, older adult and special enrichment opportunities for patients are available in the unit.

The unit’s centerpiece is an interdisciplinary team approach that enables increased recognition and management of geriatric issues that may go unaddressed during a hospitalization. Health-care professionals from every field that may have a role in treatment are represented, including physical and occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, social workers, care managers, educators and volunteers.

The ACE unit is home to the SPOONS program as well, utilizing volunteers at meal times to assist patients with eating, or to simply provide companionship, since many seniors have difficulty eating alone.

Treating an older adult who requires hospitalization presents complications and challenges not seen in a younger population,” said Kelle Flood, M.D., assistant professor in the Division of Gerontology, Geriatrics and Palliative Care at UAB and the attending physician for the ACE Program. Geriatric patients admitted for an acute illness often have co-existing conditions such as memory loss, functional decline and depression. They may be on multiple medications. These can adversely impact their hospitalization if not recognized and addressed. The daily team meetings help to increase recognition, while providing ongoing education for the staff.

“The interdisciplinary team gives the attending physician access to health-care professionals experienced and trained in recognizing the often subtle signs and symptoms associated with elder patients,” Flood says.

The unit also offers cognitive enrichment opportunities. Pet therapy from Hand-in-Paw is available, and music and art therapy training will take place after construction is completed. Sharpe says the city, state and Alabama Department of Public Health should complete final inspections of the facility later this year.

“Logistically, it’s going to be a very complex operation to move the number of neonates and babies and move them safely, but the staff in Hospital Planning are crafting their plan with the close cooperation of the clinical and support groups,” says Sharpe. The 640,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art building will house all departments of the Women and Infants Center and replace the 33-year-old radiation facility — now located in the Lurleen B. Wallace Tumor Institute — upon its completion.

Those walking or driving by the construction located at the corner of Seventh Avenue and 16th Street likely will notice the progress of the exterior construction. The skin of the building is complete except for the area where the material hoists are located.

The pre-cast patching and sealing that surrounds the rotunda and capstone also are almost finished. Window and glass installations are under way, and the building canopies will be installed between February and June. The sidewalks, curbs and pavers have been installed from Fifth Avenue to 18th Street. Sidewalks on Sixth Avenue are being poured.

Work also has begun on the fountain and the Limbaugh Family Park of Hope on the Southeast portion of the site.

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Recovery program returns patients to productive lives

When a patient makes a decision to recover, it’s often to feel normal. They’re not getting high anymore. 

“By the time they come here, they’ve stopped having fun,” says Woodward, program director of the Addiction Recovery Program. “Now they have to use drugs just to feel normal. They’re not getting high anymore.”

The Addiction Recovery Program unites renowned specialists, innovative treatments, advanced research and state-of-the-art medical resources to create a strong network of support for each patient.

The program can help anyone with a chemical dependency and other addictive disorders, including sexual addiction, gambling compulsion and shopping compulsion.

“Our patients have access to more than 700 expert physicians in more than 30 medical fields, including psychology and psychiatry, should they need it,” says Lane, medical director of the Addiction Recovery Program. “Our staff is a true multidisciplinary team, and members blend expertise and experience in a multitude of areas—from spirituality, social work and relationships to pain management, sexual abuse, grief and trauma.”

Pete Lane, medical director of the Addiction Recovery Program, and Hazel Woodward, program director, are part of a multidisciplinary team that treats those enrolling in the program. Its goal is to restore patients and their loved ones to productive lives and help them abstain from all mood-altering chemicals.

Tobacco smoke, alcohol harm liver worse taken together

Exposure to secondhand smoke and alcohol significantly raises the risk of liver disease, according to new research from UAB published in the journal Free Radical Biology & Medicine.

The finding adds to mounting evidence that tobacco smoke and alcohol are worse for health as a combination, beyond the individual exposure risks, said Shannon Bailey, Ph.D., an associate professor in the UAB Department of Environmental Health Sciences and a co-lead author on the study.

“This new data is a significant finding considering the combined effect of alcohol and cigarette smoke exposures, and the implications for public health,” Bailey said.

The researchers reported on mice exposed to smoke, air in a laboratory enclosure and fed a liquid diet containing ethanol, the intoxicating ingredient in alcohol drinks. Mice exposed to second-hand smoke and who drank ethanol had 110 percent more liver fibrosis proteins than mice who breathed filtered air. Additionally, the twice-exposed mice had 65 percent more liver fibrosis proteins than mice who breathed smoky air but did not drink ethanol.

Fibrosis is scar-like tissue in the liver that can lead to cirrhosis.

Damage implications

A study from the same UAB researchers in 2007 found that the combination of second-hand smoke and ethanol increased the biological signs of heart disease in mice.

The new study highlights the need to further probe negative biological impacts from single or multiple risky behaviors and the compounding effect of environmental hazards such as secondhand smoke, said Scott Ballinger, Ph.D., an associate professor in the UAB Department of Pathology and a co-lead author on the study.
UAHSF awards more than $1.2 million to faculty projects

Tissue type and shape helps keep them strong. The clinic seeks to provide integrated care for patients with anomalies in these functions. More that 400 disorders impact the structure and function of connective tissue or bone structure. Some, like Achondroplasia or Ehlers Danlos, have a known genetic cause. In other disorders, like osteopenia or lupus, there may be genetic factors that predispose to their development. Still other disorders of collagen may be the result of infection or injuries or have no known cause. These disorders may involve hormonal, metabolic, structural and other abnormalities that are often difficult to determine as well as to treat.

Descartes is hoping to create a centralized location to care for patients with these disorders that considers many variables in diagnostics, intervention and research. “Patients with connective tissue disorders require quite a lot of specialized medical care,” Descartes says. “What we have encountered in many of the children we see is that they go to a rheumatologist, an immunologist and others, and they still don’t have a defined diagnosis. I think this clinic will help this. It will provide them with specialists from a variety of disciplines in one area and enable us to treat as many aspects of their condition as we can in an integrated multidisciplinary fashion.”

A virtual resource

Because of the significant costs in time and resources involved in maintaining microscopes and glass-slide collections, many schools have switched to virtual microscopy for teaching histology and histopathology — important components of a well-rounded medical curriculum, says Anderson.

Anderson envisions that the virtual microscopy project with a database of digitized slides for histology and pathology teaching can be easily integrated into the new School of Medicine curriculum across multiple disciplines.”

The goal of our new integrated medical curriculum is to foster student-centered, lifelong learning. This virtual microscopy technology will help us as educators to achieve this goal,” said Anderson.

“Collaborators, Laura Cotlin, in Cell Biology, and Kristina Panizzi Woodley, senior instructional design specialist in Pathology, will work with me to accomplish this project. And telling of the faculty interest and investment in this project is the fact that all of the module directors for the first two years of the new medical curriculum wrote letters of support for this grant. This is definitely a tool that will facilitate integration in our curriculum.”

GEF faculty research and patient care grants were created in 1994 to enhance research and attract eminent scholars. The awarding of the grants is a highly competitive process.

School of Medicine Art Show features faculty, students

The ninth annual UAB School of Medicine’s Art Show continues to examine and showcase the link between art and medicine with 66 submissions from UAB faculty, residents and medical students.

The art show is presented by the Alabama chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha, the national honor society for medical school students, and the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences. The show runs through May 22 in the museum on the third floor of the Lister Hill Library.

An awards ceremony and reception will be held at the museum at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, featuring remarks by John I. Kennedy, Jr., M.D., professor of medicine at the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care at UAB.

The show features works including paintings, drawings, photography and sculpture. It was judged by a panel of UAB faculty, staff and students. The top three winners receive cash prizes, and all entries are on display in the museum. “The opportunity for physicians and medical students to express themselves through art enhances their ability to interact with patients and families,” said Stephen R. Smith, Ph.D., director of student life for the medical school and a contest judge. “The art show provides another means to creatively explore and express their own humanity, reinforcing a pathway to help them connect with all people on a basic human level.”

The winning student entry is entitled “Woman Combing Her Hair, After Degas,” a pastel on paper by medical student Leslie Perry. First place in the Resident competition was won by Alicia Vogt, M.D., in Obstetrics and Gynecology, for an untitled pencil drawing. The winning faculty entry is “Drieho Man,” a glass sculpture by Karen Dixon, Ph.D., assistant professor of Neurobiology.

In addition to Smith, the art submissions were judged by Brett Levine, director of the UAB Visual Arts Gallery; Stefanie Bookis, curator of the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences; and Virginia Radcliff, a fourth-year medical student and vice-president of Alpha Omega Alpha.

Peter Anderson recently received a $97,740 grant from the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation’s General Endowment Fund for a virtual microscopy project that will feature a database of digitized slides for histology and pathology teaching. He says they can be integrated easily into the new School of Medicine curriculum across multiple disciplines.}

A new bone dysplasia and connective tissue disorder clinic for adults and children and a virtual microscopy, medical education initiative were among nine grants funded by the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation (UAHSF) at its recent General Endowment Fund (GEF) committee meeting.

The GEF awarded a total of $1,250,000 for 2009 to the nine grant recipients across four categories: clinical care initiatives, medical education initiatives, laboratory research initiatives and patient-research initiatives. The awards support universitywide projects benefiting UAHSF and the School of Medicine.

The grant recipients are:

• Maria Descartes, M.D., genetics, “Bone Dysplasia and Connective Tissue Disorder Clinic for Adults and Children,” $120,000

• Kim Hoover, M.D., OB/GYN, “Development of a Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology Clinic,” $121,600

• Marjorie Lee White, M.D., pediatrics, “Integration of Simulation-Based Education into First Year Medical Student Curriculum,” $96,075

• Andrea Cherrington, M.D., internal medicine, “Motivational Interviewing for Obesity,” $90,075

• Peter Anderson, D.V.M., Ph.D., pathology, “Virtual Microscopy for the New Integrated Medical Curriculum,” $97,740

• Steven Pogwizd, M.D., medicine, physiology and bioengineering, “Cardiovascular Tissue and Cell Core,” $272,433


• T. Michael Harrington, M.D., family and community medicine, “The Primary Care Research Collaborative,” $200,000

• Weei-Chin Lin, M.D., Ph.D., medicine, “Leukemia Translational Research Tissue Bank,” $49,786

A clinical benefit

Connective tissues are the structural portions of our body that essentially hold the cells of the body together. These tissues develop a framework, or matrix, for the cells of the body to form a cellular glue that gives them shape and helps keep them strong. The clinic seeks to provide integrated care for patients with anomalies in these functions.

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Special Lectures

Monday, Feb. 9
3:30 pm UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center: Nolet Hall with near-infrared fluorescence imaging and tomography, Dr Eva Suvina (Professor & Culen Chair in Molecular Medicine, Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine, Director, Center for Molecular Imaging, Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine – Houston); North Pavilion 2532.

Wednesday, Feb. 11
11:30 am Alys Stephens Center for Health Policy Seminar Series, Structure, process and patient outcomes in ambulatory sur- gery centers, Dr Askar Chukmaitov (Florida State University, Advanced Center for Molecular Imaging, Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine; Director, Center for Molecular Imaging, Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine – Houston); North Pavilion 2532.

Thursday, Feb. 12
9 am Noon Dialogues: The discovery of insulin, Dr Michael Bliss (Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto); Children’s Harbor-4th fl.

Friday, Feb. 13
3 pm Comprehensive Neurosciences Seminar, Phyroplasias of post-traumatic epilepsy, Waiting by translation, Dr David Prince (Edward F. & Ines Theis Prince Professor, Neurology & Neurosciences, Stanford University School of Medicine); Finley Kaul Conference Center.

Tuesday, Feb. 17
11:30 am Sigma Xi Luncheon Seminar. Everything you wanted to know about the flu but were afraid to ask, Dr Randall Salekin (Edward F. & Irene Thiele Pimley Professor, Neurology & Neurosciences, Stanford University School of Medicine); Finley Kaul Conference Center.

Wednesday, Feb. 18
9 am Noon Women’s & Infants’ Services/Cardiology Let’s Do Lunch: How might exercise affect female breast cancer, Dr. Doug Perry (Harvard Medical School & Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary); Worrall Conference Center-1st fl.

Thursday, Feb. 17
11:30 am Sigma Xi Luncheon Seminar. Everything you wanted to know about the flu but were afraid to ask, Dr Randall Salekin (Edward F. & Irene Thiele Pimley Professor, Neurology & Neurosciences, Stanford University School of Medicine); Finley Kaul Conference Center.

Wednesday, Feb. 19
11:30 am Discussion Book Dialogue. Potential effects of chronic stress on infant brain development, Dr Lawrence Davenport (Professor Biological & Environmental Sciences; Director of Vulcan Materials Center for Environmental Stewardship & Education, Samford University); Lister Hill Library Ireland Room.

Friday, Feb. 20
11:45 am Haddad Humanities Forum, Liberty versus equality:

- The Marquis de La Fayette and France, Assoc Prof Serényi (History Foreign Languages & Literatures), Bosnian: “La philosophie le plus cher à Mme le Marquis de La Lafayette qui adorées l’Amérique pendant son séjour pour l’indépendance.” Free, Call 4-2290 for more info, Lister Library Henley Rm.

Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 10
9 am Chinese Conversation Table; Humanities Building-3rd fl.

Friday, Feb. 13
1 pm Office of Development Involvement. The family that prey, a 2008 Taycer film. Free and open to the public. Call 205-934-8255 for details. HUC Alumni Auditorium.

Tuesday, Feb. 17
6 pm UAB Foreign Film Series. Guellвара, a drama/com- edy, Pierre Henri Thionou a political activist, and pillar of the local Christian community mysteriously. To the horror of his fellow Christians, they discover that Guellвара’s body was misidentiﬁed. The service of the dead in a Muslim cem- etery, English subtitles. Hulse Alumni Room.

Special events

Tuesday, Feb. 10
7 pm Alys Stephens Center. Cowboy Junkies on stage with The Band. Tickets for Cowboy Junkies at the ASC are $34 on stage and $28 for balcony, general admission for each area. A complimentary wine tasting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Singer Margo Timmins will meet fans after the show. Call 205-934-8255.

7 pm Music. Faculty Recital featuring Paul Mosteller, bar- tine, Kristine Hurst, soprano and Yao Kamlan, pianist. Reynolds-Kirschbaum Recital Hall. Free. 5-2787.

Wed.-Thurs., Feb. 11-12
7-4 pm UAB Hospital Auxiliary. Email. Outstanding values on fine jewelry, home fashions, wine, watches, fashion & designer jewelry and much more. You can also exchange your own jewelry, or unwanted white or yellow gold jewelry for cash. West Pavilion Atkun.

Wednesday, Feb. 11
10 am Conversional English Classes levels 1 – 3, offered free to those interested in enhancing their English conversational skills. Smolian International House. 4-1205/ carola@uab.edu.

Thursday, Feb. 12
3 pm conversional English Classes levels 1 – 3, offered free to those interested in enhancing their English conversational skills. Smolian International House. 4-1205/ carola@uab.edu.

Friday, Feb. 13
3 pm Alys Stephens Center. Mavis Staples. This soul and gospel legend possesses one of the most recognizable and feared voices in contemporary music, she is an inspira- tional force in modern gospel music. Enjoy a 7 p.m. pre-show party with Valentine chocolates. Tickets are $45, $35 and $25, student tickets are $20. Call 5-2787 or visit www.AlysStephens.org.

Saturday, Feb. 17
7 pm UAB Piano Series. Misha Lugansky is widely considered one of the world’s great interpreters of Schubert, he will perform a program of piano repertoire. Reynolds-Kirschbaum Recital Hall. Tickets are $15 for adults, $5 for students. Call 5-2787 for ticket information.

Thursday, Feb. 18
6 pm UAB Zeta Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society. Wine tasting fundraiser, Money raised at the event will benefit the Chi Sigma Iota-Zeta Chapter’s Glenn Elliott Endowed Scholarship used for students in the UAB School of Education’s Counselor Education Program. Village Wine Market in English Village, 2020 Cahaba Road. For more details, contact Beth Smith, 996-9739.

Friday, Feb. 19-20
9-3 pm UAB Pediatric Primary Care Clerkship. Rush out and read program: The book encourages parent to read aloud to their children. Child age 6 months-5 years receive a take-home book during the visit. The book is used to assess the child’s developmental skills and to model reading behavior for the parent during the visit. Children’s Harbor 2nd Floor lobby.

Saturday, Feb. 21
9-12 pm Alys Stephens Center. Make Your Groove Happen, a one-day interactive, workshop with legendary bassist Jerry Jefferit. This event is for muscians 15 years and older. Jennem's music one-day workshop will give you the tools to encourage and unleash the inner musician in everyone. The cost is $59 and includes Jennem’s book, “The Music in Everyone” Space is limited. Make reservations by calling 4-0982 or visit www.AlysStephens.org for more information.

Sunday, Feb. 22
3 pm Music. UAB Wind Symphony, conducted by Sue Samuels. Jemison Concert Hall. Free. Call 4-2290 for more info, Lister Library Henley Rm.

Films

Monday, Feb. 9
10 pm Office of Development Involvement. The family that prey, a 2008 Taycer film. Free and open to the public. Call 205-934-8255 for details. HUC Alumni Auditorium.

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6 pm UAB Foreign Film Series. Guellвара, a drama/com- edy, Pierre Henri Thionou a political activist, and pillar of the local Christian community mysteriously. To the horror of his fellow Christians, they discover that Guellвара’s body was misidentiﬁed. The service of the dead in a Muslim cem- etery, English subtitles. Hulse Alumni Room.

Thursday, Feb. 17
5 pm UAB Foreign Film Series. Guellвара, a drama/com- edy, Pierre Henri Thionou a political activist, and pillar of the local Christian community mysteriously. To the horror of his fellow Christians, they discover that Guellвара’s body was misidentiﬁed. The service of the dead in a Muslim cem- etery, English subtitles. Hulse Alumni Room.

Friday, Feb. 20
6 pm UAB Foreign Film Series. Guellвара, a drama/com- edy, Pierre Henri Thionou a political activist, and pillar of the local Christian community mysteriously. To the horror of his fellow Christians, they discover that Guellвара’s body was misidentiﬁed. The service of the dead in a Muslim cem- etery, English subtitles. Hulse Alumni Room.

Saturday, Feb. 21
9-12 pm Alys Stephens Center. Make Your Groove Happen, a one-day interactive, workshop with legendary bassist Jerry Jefferit. This event is for muscians 15 years and older. Jennem's music one-day workshop will give you the tools to encourage and unleash the inner musician in everyone. The cost is $59 and includes Jennem’s book, “The Music in Everyone” Space is limited. Make reservations by calling 4-0982 or visit www.AlysStephens.org for more information.

Sunday, Feb. 22
3 pm Music. UAB Wind Symphony, conducted by Sue Samuels. Jemison Concert Hall. Free. Call 4-2290 for more info, Lister Library Henley Rm.

Defenses

For a complete list of defenses and other Graduation School events, see the listing of Events located in the Students section of the Graduate School Web site www.uab.edu/ graduate.
Music & Film Superstar Headlines This Season’s Gala Event!

The VIVA HEALTH Starlight Gala starring Queen Latifah benefits the programming and educational initiatives of the Alys Stephens Center. Ticket packages are now available:

- **The Queen’s Table for Eight**
  and sponsorship packages are also available.

- **The Royalty Package**
  Includes an elegant pre-show cocktail reception, premium performance seating, and post-performance dinner & dancing.

- **The Superstar Package**
  Includes an elegant pre-show cocktail reception, premium performance seating, and a post-performance party featuring live music, champagne, and dessert.

- **The Hollywood Package**
  Includes an elegant pre-show cocktail reception and performance seating.

Call for more information and reserve your seats today. Seating is limited.

(205) 975-ARTS
www.AlysStephens.org
Five honored with UAB President’s Award for Diversity

Five individuals received the UAB President’s Awards for Diversity during a ceremony Jan. 29 in the HUC Great Hall. The annual awards recognize the importance of institutional diversity and honor those who nurture diversity of thought, culture, gender and ethnicity on the UAB campus and elsewhere. Recipients include Assistant Professor Lamia Zayzafoon, Ph.D., Safe Zone program Coordinator Debora Morgette, dental student Cimarin P. Witz II, materials engineering student Andrew Uehlin and junior biology student Amanda Azoroh.

Zayzafoon, winner of the President’s Diversity Faculty Award, is credited for achieving an “impressive publication record on topics within the domain of cultural diversity,” including articles on race, gender and Islam and on topics such as the Algerian Civil War and the postcolonial aftermath and women and Islam in North Africa. Zayzafoon, who teaches in the UAB Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures, has taught Arabic language courses, classes on the Shoah in North Africa and seminars on human rights in the Muslim world. In addition, she led the first UAB Study Away program to her native country of Tunisia. Morgette, who received the President’s Diversity Staff Award, is a coordinator of the Safe Zone program at UAB, which provides support to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals at UAB. Morgette also is a group facilitator for the Tun of Oppression, a program that teaches about the different types of oppression due to racial and ethnic differences, sexual orientation and poverty, and she facilitates a Diversity Awareness Education program through the UAB Office of Equity and Diversity.

Witz II is the winner of the President’s Diversity Professional Student Award. He has been credited with playing an important role in the mentoring and recruitment of under-represented minorities to the School of Dentistry. Witz has been a member of the School of Dentistry’s Minority Recruitment Task Force, and he presented a proposal for a UAB Summer Pre-Dental Enrichment Program at the annual American Dental Association meeting in San Francisco in 2007. Also that year, he was a student representative at the National Dental Association’s annual “Day on Capitol Hill” in Washington D.C., where he met with congressional staff members to discuss the challenges of recruiting minority students to health careers and pending legislation affecting dental education.

Uehlin, a doctoral student, received the President’s Diversity Graduate Student Award. He was honored for his activities with the UAB chapter of Engineers Without Borders, of which he is president. He has worked on a project in the Amazon Basin of Peru, assisting with water delivery and health education in several villages. He also designed a collapsible, all-terrain crutch for a man with post-polio muscular atrophy, whom he met during one of his visits to Peru. Azoroh won the 2009 President’s Undergraduate Student Diversity Award. Azoroh was honored for successfully organizing a lecture and book signing at UAB for the authors of “The Pact.” Three Young Men, Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream.” The book tells the story of three African-American teens who made a pact to attend college and become doctors. Azoroh was inspired to invite them to share their story with children and college students in Birmingham after reading the book. The authors, Sampson Davis, Rameck Hunt and George Jenkins, spoke at the Alys Stephens Center in 2008.

**BIOLOGICS**

CONTINUED from page 1

says Kenneth Saag, M.D., director of CERTs and a professor in the Division of Clinical Immunology & Rheumatology.

“These medicines have been remarkably efficacious and clinically effective in improving conditions like rheumatoid arthritis. It has been shown that disease inflammation and severity can be lessened with the use of these agents,” Saag says. “But when do we use them? When it is appropriate to consider medicines that in some cases cost more than $1,000 a month and may have undesirable short- and long-term health and safety concerns? That’s what we want to find out.”

What are biologics?

Biologics are genetically engineered therapies that target immune processes that contribute to inflammation present in rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, psoriasis and other autoimmune conditions in which the body is reacting abnormally to itself.

An estimated 46 million adults in the United States have been diagnosed with some form of arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus or fibromyalgia, according to the National Center of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. The National Institutes of Health estimates between 5.8 and 7.5 million Americans suffer from rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus or fibromyalgia, according to the National Center of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

The initial grant phase is 18 months, and writing another proposal to extend the funding is already underway. The researchers, including Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Kaiser Permanente’s Division of Research in California, Oregon Health and Science University in Portland, the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and Vanderbilt University.

“These teams of researchers have a great deal of experience in conducting collaborative research on the safety of drugs,” Saag says.

Gathering the information

Researchers will be gathering information for the study through national databases, including the Medicare and Medicaid data as well as data from the Kaiser System in California, which is part of the HMO research network. It captures data using an electronic medical record, which provides what Saag calls “a richness of information” on medication exposures and various outcomes and conditions that may develop as a result of taking certain medications.

“We’re not working directly with patients in ways that you might if you were testing a new medicine in a clinic,” Saag says.

“We’re looking at data that has been provided by the patients as part of their encounters with doctors in the health-care system,” he says.

The ability to gather this information will give Saag and other researchers and extensive look at the medical histories of patients from varied backgrounds.

“It’s a really wonderful opportunity to work with data that represents the spectrum of people in our country,” Saag says. “The data includes a full spectrum of ages, races, genders, ethnicities and socio-economic status.”

The initial grant phase is 18 months, and writing another grant to secure additional resources already has begun. Saag is optimistic that additional funding for this study—already one of the largest to establish the safety of these medicines in the United States—will be available.

**SLEEP/WAKE CENTER**

CONTINUED from page 1

• Loud, disruptive snoring, often followed by snoring sounds
• Irregular breathing during sleep, including gasping, long pauses, and/or shallow breathing
• Restless sleep
• Difficulty concentrating
• Depression or irritability
• Morning headaches
• High blood pressure

CPAP therapy is the Sleep/Wake Center’s primary treatment for sleep apnea, and it is the most widely accepted treatment in the field.

A bedside device gently delivers pressurized air through a nasal mask or pillows system. This pressure acts like an air splint to keep the upper airway open. CPAP treatment in the field.

“Many patients require an overnight sleep study to properly diagnose apnea,” Harding says. “Sleep apnea can develop slowly over years, so symptoms associated with sleep apnea may not be appreciated until the patient is treated. Once patients are properly treated for sleep apnea, they typically say, ‘Wow, I was really in trouble.’” Physicians may refer patients to the Sleep/Wake Disorders Center at UAB Highlands by calling 930-7114.
**Are you a postmenopausal woman at increased risk for breast cancer? You may qualify to participate in a breast cancer prevention study.**

Do you want to earn up to $300 and be part of a national study to identify new ways to test for the prevention of breast cancer development using the DRAWDI study? Women age 15-35. Join 4-2320.

**Women with interstitial cystitis need for research study.** If you have any age 14-45 and have regular menstrual cycles you are asked to be a part of a research study that will provide a medication for angi (sheet discomfort). To enroll in this study, you need to have chest discomfort two or more times each night to urinate? If so, you may qualify to participate in the NIH study. Women age 19 & older. Services provided at no cost. Compensation. 4-1776.

**Are you a female age 19 or older with chronic chest discomfort, cardiovascular diseases?** If yes, you are eligible for a study that will provide a medication for angina (sheet discomfort). To enroll in this study, you need to have chest discomfort two or more times each night to urinate? If so, you may qualify to participate in the NIH study. Women age 19 & older. Services provided at no cost. Compensation. 4-1776.

**Are you a woman age 40 or older who may be eligible for a breast cancer prevention study.**

**Are you of African-American female under-graduates who may be eligible to participate in a walking study.**

**Are you a family age 19 or older with chronic chest discomfort, cardiovascular diseases?**

**Are you a male pregnancy or breast cancer? You may qualify to participate in a breast cancer prevention study.**

**Are you a woman age 60 or older with high blood pressure? You may qualify to participate in a community clinical trial conducted at UAB to help treat these conditions.**

**Right-handed healthy volunteers and persons with impaired hand function.** You may qualify to participate in a research study to map brain activity while doing finger tapping and handwriting. Participants receive an overnight stay at UAB as well as a cash payment. Compensation. 996-9813.

**Healthy adults age 00-65 needed for a study to examine the effects of medications on muscle function and mobility.** Subjects will exercise in a lab to examine the effects of medications on muscle function and mobility. Compensation. 888-0190.

**Risk behavior study: seeking participants age 25 and under who are engaged in or abstained from risk behaviors such as smoking, alcohol, and/or drug use.** You may qualify to participate in the ABLE UAB study on risk behaviors. Subjects receive compensation. 996-6545.

**Do you need dental fillings?** A 24-month research study is being conducted at the UAB School of Dentistry to examine the effects of systemic evaluation of tooth-related dental fillings. Participants age 15-60 with oral disease in the front teeth are likely candidates. The fillings are free and are no charge is offered if you select another dental plan. Compensation. 1-888-547-3465.

**Do you have diabetes?** The Division of Endocrinology is conducting research studies in treatments for diabetes and diabetic complications. All study-related care is provided at no cost. Compensation. 4-6241/ www.physiology.uab.edu/ endo.

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**Are you of African-American female undergraduates who may be eligible to participate in a walking study.**

**Are you a pregnant woman or breast cancer? You may qualify to participate in a breast cancer prevention study.**

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**Are you of African-American female under-graduates who may be eligible to participate in a walking study.**

**Are you an overweight BMI (>30) woman 19-50? If so, you may be eligible for a brain imaging (MRI) study of decision-making.**

**Are you a woman age 60 or older with high blood pressure? You may qualify to participate in a community clinical trial conducted at UAB to help treat these conditions.**

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housecleaner? Call Hannah, 871-0824 or 492-2674.

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case? Call Zane at 986-9065 or zplace2@uab.edu.

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tions, additions, remodeling, doors, windows, masonry, painting, exterior, interior, flooring, decks, outside siding, roofing, etc. Nanny: experienced, educatee retina desires full-time or part-time. Light house-
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ments, background check okay. 835-4665.

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UAB vs. MARSHALL
February 20 ★ 7PM ★ Bartow Arena

UAB Women’s Basketball is teaming up with the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center to take down cancer.

Join us for the PINK ZONE game to raise breast cancer awareness in the UAB and Birmingham communities.

FREE Pink UAB T-shirts and shakers for the first 1,000 fans!

Silent auction to benefit cancer research!

When you buy any Pepsi product in a special pink cup, the price of your purchase will be donated to cancer research.

Proceeds from this game will be donated to the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Breast cancer survivors will be honored and recognized.

Bring this ad for $1 admission!

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