

IT IS NOT ALL FUN IN THE SUN

Gina Marie Ackley, HT (ASCP)

I would like to take a few minutes and share something I find interesting. I started working for Dr. Michael O'Donnell 10 years ago. I always felt fortunate that in our Mohs practice, I am able to interact with patients. Over the years I found it interesting, yet at times sad, to find out where many people received much of their sun exposure.

I would like to talk about 4 different patients and how their exposure has impacted their lives. After years of listening to patients, it became clear to me how many male patients we have that served in WWII. At the time, these 18-20 year old men were serving on ships from the Atlantic to the South Pacific. These men are now history books of information and sun damaged skin. One gentleman that comes to mind came to us about 2 years ago. He is an 86 year old man with pale Irish skin and years of sun exposure. When he first came to us he had multiple recurrent cancers and untreated scabbed areas. After 2 years of having Mohs surgery every 2-3 months, this patient is doing much better. He still comes to have basal cell carcinomas removed every few months, 2 at a time.

Another gentleman patient has come to our office for 6 years. He is 73 years old and served in the military in the 1950's. He served in the Nevada desert where nuclear testing was being done. His exposure to radiation fallout has plagued him with multiple skin cancers. Every 4-6 weeks this man has 2 lesions removed at a time. The dermis on this patient is so thick from years of exposure and from trying to protect the cutaneous layer. When cutting his tissue, there is never any fat present and the dermal layer is very fibrotic. He is also doing much better, but does continue to have follow-up care and lesions removed 2 at a time.

Another group of patients that concerns me are the ones who had radiation treatments or sun lamp treatments for acne. As teens, what they thought was helping them was causing permanent skin damage. We have an 80 year old woman who was treated as a teen with radiation for her acne. She did tell me one day, "It helped the acne in trade for more than 30 basal and squamous cell cancers." Continuing care is important. She is seen every 6 months for body exams.

The most obvious high risk factors come from those that just like to bathe in the sun and tanning booths. It amazes me that with all of the facts and obvious damage, many people still get excessive exposure.

The fourth patient I'd like to tell you about is a 40 year old woman who got her first skin cancer 2 years ago on her back. She recently had another basal cell cancer removed. Both were more than 1.0 cm in size. She is very freckled and pale in color. She has a history of much sun exposure and a family history of skin cancer. She will also continue to have routine body exams and is encouraged to use sunscreens.

I'd like to wrap this up by saying that I hope others find this to be interesting and maybe helpful. We all get so busy in our labs and I think it is important for us to know where our patients come from and also to remember to practice healthy skin care for ourselves.



Dr. Michael O'Donnell
 HTMSU

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: BARBARA BECK, HT (ASCP)

Dear Colleagues:

Happy New Year! As we enter 2009, the ASMH has many upcoming events to announce.

The 15th Annual Meeting for ASMH is quickly approaching. This will be held Friday, April 24th – Saturday, April 25th in Austin, Texas. The Annual Meeting Planning Committee is excited to offer a comprehensive scientific program for this year's meeting. We have several guest speakers already confirmed along with our hands on workshops. There will be two sessions for the workshops; one will be for beginners who are fairly new to the Mohs procedure. The second one will be for techs that are having difficulty with cutting, embedding or mapping. Along with these workshops we will again be offering the Mart 1 immuno workshop. Our Preliminary Program was mailed in January along with a registration form for the meeting, so be sure to sign up for the workshop you wish to attend.

We need your participation! The ASMH is in the process of holding an election for Secretary, Treasurer and one Director to the Board of Directors. The Secretary and Treasurer serve two-year terms. Directors serve three-year terms. Ballots are being tabulated and the results will be announced at the Annual Meeting. If you have missed out running for Board of Directors or an officer this election term, PLEASE think about running for next time. We need your support and YOU need to get involved with the society.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact me or the ASMH Executive Office at any time.

All the best,



Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP),
ASMH President

ASMH EXECUTIVE OFFICE

American Society for Mohs
Histotechnology
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ASMH

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

-Kim Brock, HT (ASCP)

Greetings Colleagues,

It has been a very long winter in Michigan and I am glad to see the dirty white mountains of snow in the parking lots dwindling and the birds starting to show signs of their summer plumage. My cross country skis got their share of use this winter and I will be sad to put them away, but my thoughts are now turning to the fence that needs mending around my vegetable garden. A true sign of spring, and I am actually looking forward to it! I am also eagerly anticipating the ASMH Annual Meeting in Austin in April. I was not able to come to Vancouver and I really missed being there. I look forward to seeing you all again and pestering you for your willingness to write articles for the newsletter. Be thinking about it and instead of dodging me and running madly in the other direction, come find me and let me know that you'd like

to share a little snippet of your knowledge or daily routine. Your fellow techs can benefit from many little details of the way you do your job. There are a few techs who will be presenters at the meeting who are speaking on just that: daily routines. I hope you all benefit from their willingness to impart their knowledge and take the time to think about how you can give back to the ASMH membership. See you soon.

Sincerely yours,



Kim Brock

Advertise in the ASMH Newsletter!

The ASMH Newsletter is printed quarterly for distribution to Mohs histotechnicians and surgeons.

Each issue is also posted online as a PDF file at <http://www.mohscollege.org/ASMH.htm>

Go to this page or contact the **Katie Muellenbach** at **(414) 347-1103** for the advertising schedule and rates.

Join us and see how your career can shine.

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The Histology Technician will assist the physician during the grossing of specimens specifically for the MOHS procedures in the **Dermatology Department**. The Tech will process, embed, cut and stain tissue specimens so a quality microscopic slide can be produced for diagnosis by a physician/pathologist.

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MOHS SURGERY AND THE ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENT

Nana Smith, MD



The concept of organ transplantation has existed for centuries. With modern advances in immunosuppressive medications, patients who are recipients of solid organ transplants are living much longer than before. This also means that they are living long enough to manifest the adverse effects of such medications, such as cancer.

The repertoire of organs available for transplant has also expanded; some of the most common organs transplanted today are kidney, liver, pancreas, lung, heart and intestine and corneas. Medications used to suppress the recipient's own immune system from attacking the new organ are numerous. The precise 'cocktail' of medications (as often more than one is used) depends on the type of organ transplanted, when it was transplanted (acute immunosuppression vs. chronic immunosuppression), and various patient factors. One of the risks with all of these medications however is the development of skin cancer.

The risk of almost all types of skin cancer has been found to be elevated in transplant recipients. Actually, people who have had transplants have a higher risk of getting many different kinds of cancer, but skin cancer is the most common.¹ This includes melanoma, non-melanoma skin cancer (squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma), Merkel cell carcinoma, cutaneous sarcomas (such as Kaposi's sarcoma) and cutaneous lymphomas. The most common type of skin cancer that transplant recipients get is squamous cell carcinoma. This is in contrast to the normal non-transplant population where the most common type of skin cancer is basal cell carcinoma. In fact, the risk of developing squamous cell carcinoma among transplant recipients is about 100 times the normal risk! In general, squamous cell carcinomas arising on certain body areas such as the lower lip and ear have been shown to act more aggressively. In organ transplant recipients, the scalp probably should also be added to this list.² Other risk factors for 'high-risk' squamous cell cancers include a large size, recurrent cancers, those arising in the anogenital region, and those involving close by nerves.

The main risk factor for developing skin cancer among organ transplant recipients is sun exposure. To the extent that we can educate our patients about protecting themselves from the sun, even before they undergo transplantation, we can help prevent serious

skin cancers. This includes teaching them about always wearing broad-spectrum sunscreens all year round, staying out of the sun in general and also wearing protective clothing. This education is so important because these patients tend to have more serious skin cancers, and also the risk of skin cancer increases with each year that goes by since they had their transplant.³

Another interesting risk factor for the development of skin cancer is the presence of certain viruses. Transplant recipients are at a higher risk for getting infections, including viruses, because of their immunosuppressed state. This puts them at risk for the human papilloma virus and the polyomavirus which has recently been linked to Merkel cell carcinomas.⁴

Because these patients tend to get many more squamous cell carcinomas, which tend to act more aggressively, Mohs surgery is probably the most important intervention we can make besides education and prevention. Study after study has shown that Mohs surgery is the standard of care for 'high-risk' squamous cell carcinomas. These patients sometimes get so many cancers that other, quicker, treatments are looked into. This includes topical creams, cryosurgery, and ED&C (electrodessication and curettage). But when especially high-risk skin cancers occur in organ transplant recipients Mohs micrographic surgery can sometimes make the difference between life and death. We should all be proud of the role we play in trying to better the lives of these special patients.

(Endnotes)

1 Euvrard S, Kanitakis J, Claudy A. Skin Cancers after Organ Transplantation. *New England Journal of Medicine* 2003. Volume 348 (Number 17): 1681-1691

2 Special Concern About Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Scalp in Organ Transplant Recipients Jennifer Z. Cooper, MD; Marc D. Brown, MD *Arch Dermatol.* 2006;142:755-758.

3 F. Ismail, L. Mitchell, D. Casabonne, A. Gulati, R. Newton, C.M. Proby, and C.A. Harwood Specialist dermatology clinics for organ transplant recipients significantly improve compliance with photoprotection and levels of skin cancer awareness *Br J Dermatol.* 2006 November; 155(5): 916-925.

4 Ridd K, Yu S, Bastian BC. The Presence of Polyomavirus in Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer in Organ Transplant Recipients Is Rare *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* (2009) 129, 250-252;



ASMH 15th Annual Meeting

Save the Date

April 24-25, 2009

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CELEBRATE THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MOHS HISTOTECHNOLOGY'S
15TH YEAR!

15th ANNUAL MEETING SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

April 24 – 25, 2009

Thursday, April 23

- 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Visit Mohs Slide Library (MR 602 – 6th Floor)
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm Exhibit Set-up (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm Meeting Registration (Austin Pre-Function Area (Salon F/G) – 6th Floor)
5:00 pm – 7:30 pm Board of Directors' Meeting (MR 408 – 4th Floor)

Friday, April 24

- 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Visit Mohs Slide Library (MR 602 – 6th Floor)
7:30 am – 8:30 am Continental Breakfast in ASMH Exhibit Area (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)
7:30 am – 4:30 pm Meeting Registration/Information (Austin Pre-Function Area (Salon F/G) – 6th Floor)
7:30 am – 6:00 pm Visit ASMH Exhibits (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)

- 8:30 am – 10:00 am **General Session 1 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
8:30 am Opening Remarks/Welcome – *Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP), ASMH President*
8:45 am The Anatomy of the Face – *Paul Bowman, MD*
9:30 am 2009 Abstract Award Winner – *Title and Speaker to be Determined.*

- 9:45 am Break – ASMH Exhibit Area (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)
10:00 am – 2:15 pm Informal Training for Mohs Fellows and Surgeons in Exhibit Hall (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)

- 10:00 am – 11:45 am **General Session 2 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
10:00 am The Background of the Chemistry and Technique of Staining – *Mickie Johnson*
11:00 am A "Typical" Day in the Mohs Lab – *Speakers to be Determined.*

- 11:45 am – 1:00 pm Lunch on Your Own

- 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm **General Session 3 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
1:00 pm Dealing with Repetitive Motion Injuries – *Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP)*
1:30 pm ASMH Membership Meeting
2:00 pm Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer: A Review of Treatment Options and the Benefits of the Mohs Procedure – *Kurt Mueller, MD*

- 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm **Workshops**
- Beginner's Cryostat Workshop (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)
 - Intermediate Cryostat Workshop (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)
 - Slide Troubleshooting Workshop (MR 408 – 4th Floor)
 - MART 1 Immuno Staining Workshop (MR 410 – 4th Floor)

- 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm Networking Reception in ASMH Exhibit Hall (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)

- 6:00 pm Dinner on Your Own

15th ANNUAL MEETING SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

April 24 – 25, 2009

Saturday, April 25

7:00 am – 2:00 pm Visit Mohs Slide Library (MR 602 – 6th Floor)
8:00 am – 4:00 pm Meeting Registration/Information (Plaza Foyer – 2nd Floor)
8:30 am – 4:00 pm Visit ASMH Exhibits (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)
8:30 am – 9:00 am Continental Breakfast in ASMH Exhibit Area (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)

9:00 am – 10:30 am **General Session 4 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
9:00 am Opening Remarks – *Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP), ASMH President*
9:15 am A Not-so-Typical Day in the Mohs Lab – *Kristin Cox, HT*
9:45 am High Risk SCC – *Marc Brown, MD*

10:15 am Break – ASMH Exhibit Area (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)
10:30 am – 2:00 pm Informal Training for Mohs Fellows and Surgeons in Exhibit Hall (Austin Grand Salon G – 6th Floor)

10:30 am – 11:30 am **General Session 5 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
10:30 am Uncommon Tumors – *R. Stan Taylor, MD*
11:00 am Troubleshooting Open Forum – *Beth Uri, HT (ASCP)*

11:30 am – 12:45 pm Lunch on Your Own

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm **General Session 6 (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)**
12:45 pm CLIA Session – *Barbara Beck, HT (ASCP)*
1:15 pm Getting an Office Ready for AAAHC Inspections and CLIA Audits – *Pat Ferrigno*

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm **Workshops**

- Intermediate Cryostat Workshop (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)
- Advanced Cryostat Workshop (Austin Grand Salon F – 6th Floor)
- Slide Troubleshooting Workshop (MR 408 – 4th Floor)
- MART 1 Immuno Staining Workshop (MR 410 – 4th Floor)

4:00 pm Meeting Adjourned

Visit the ACMS Annual Meeting Exhibits Austin Grand Salon H

Thursday, April 23, 12:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Friday, April 24, 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Saturday, April 25, 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

CAREER CORNER

Guidelines for Complimentary Career Corner Postings

- Total ad length should be less than 50 words
- Contact the ASMH Executive Office at (414) 347-1103 to submit your ad
- The surgeon posting the position MUST be a member in good standing in the ACMS
- The ad must include information on where applicants are to send their resume
- Ad should also include the city and state of the available position
- Include any job requirements and brief details about the work environment

West Dundee, Illinois – Dermatology and Mohs Surgery clinic in the Chicagoland metropolitan area seeks experienced Histotech. Position requires preparation, processing, and/or staining of patient tissues, maintaining slide storage, documentation and attention for all equipment in lab. Additional duties include reviewing slides for orientation to determine further slide preparation. Please email resume to jhawkinson@dundeedermatology.com.

Boca Raton, Florida – Mohs histotech position for busy Mohs Surgery private practice. Licensed histotech preferred. Excellent pay. Part time or full time with great benefits (health insurance, paid vacation, 401K/profit sharing plan). Email resume to JMRUNNER@BELLSOUTH.NET or fax to (561) 368-0215.

ASMH ANNUAL MEETING WORKSHOPS

As in years past, the ASMH Annual Meeting will feature some hands-on workshops. Below you will find additional details about each workshop.

On Friday there will be two cryostat workshops:

Beginner's - This workshop will cover mapping, scoring, dye markings, and basic sectioning. We will also cover basic maintenance and troubleshooting on the cryostats.

Intermediate - This workshop is for more experienced techs and will cover machine maintenance, troubleshooting for sectioning, mucosa, fatty sections, and muscle, etc.

On Saturday there will be two cryostat workshops which will advance the knowledge gained in Friday's workshops:

Intermediate - This workshop will be for Friday's beginner's to move into. We will cover further sectioning and troubleshooting, helpful hints for fatty sections, how to handle thick and thin sections and shatter, etc.

Advanced - This workshop will be for Friday's intermediate techs to move into. We will be working with cartilage and wedges (ears, lips, eyelids, etc.).

Offered both Friday and Saturday:

Slide Troubleshooting - Techs should bring examples of some of their problem slides for review. There will also be slides coming from some of the ASMH Board members. Board members will discuss what happened to the slides and how to prevent it from happening to yours.

Mart 1 - This workshop will cover the 20 minute immuno stain.



American Society for Mohs Histotechnology 2009 Membership Application

12/07

Please print or type.

Name: _____
First MI Last

Choose preferred greeting: Mr. Ms. Mrs. Dr.

Gender: Male Female Birth Date: _____

Name of ACMMSCO (Mohs College) Physician Who Supervises Mohs Histotechnology Procedures

(Required for membership): _____

Physician Signature: _____

Office Address:

Home Address:

Telephone #: _____ Fax #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Please send Society mail to: Office Address **OR** Home Address

Employment Status - Please check appropriate box.

- Full Time Part Time (Hours/week: _____) Student (Fellow) Retired
- Presently Unemployed Other (Please identify): _____

Position - Please check appropriate box and circle your degrees/credentials.

- Technician* Nurse (RN, LPN) Other: _____

*If you are a registered Histotech (HT or HTL), upon applying for membership, you are required to provide either your certification number or a copy of your certificate. Membership applications will not be processed without this information.

As a technician, do you have a certification? If so, please indicate below.
Certification is not required for membership.

- HT HTL Certificate Number: _____ **OR** Copy of Certificate enclosed

Indicate Method of New Member Dues Payment (\$150.00) Below:

- Check enclosed payable to: ASMH
- Credit Card - Check one → MasterCard Visa American Express

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date (MM/YY) _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

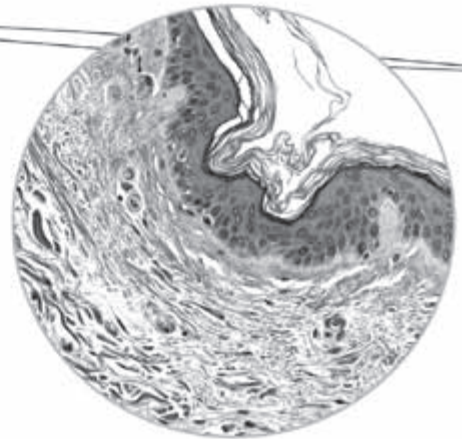
Please return this application form, with dues payment of **\$150.00** to:
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2009 ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

Advance Registration
Deadline - Postmarked by
March 26, 2009

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MOHS HISTOTECHNOLOGY

Please print:

NAME _____ ASMH MEMBER # _____
(Not Required)
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PHONE _____ FAX _____ E-MAIL _____

REGISTRATION CATEGORY: If you are a technician, please indicate the ACMS physician with whom you are affiliated on the line provided below. ALL FEES INCREASE BY \$25 AFTER March 26, 2009.

- ASMH Member \$225 (\$250 after March 26)
 Non-Member..... \$525 (\$550 after March 26) Affiliated ACMS Physician _____
 Fellow (ACMS) \$150 (\$175 after March 26)

HANDS ON WORKSHOPS:

No additional charge if registered for the meeting, however, in order to assure the proper amount of equipment, you must reserve a seat. Each workshop is limited and reserved on a first come, first served basis.

Friday, April 24 (2:30 pm – 4:30 pm)

- 101: Beginner's Cryostat Workshop
 102: Intermediate Cryostat Workshop
 103: Slide Troubleshooting Workshop*
 104: MART1 Immuno Staining Workshop

Saturday, May 25 (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm)

- 201: Intermediate/Troubleshooting Cryostat Workshop
 202: Advance/CartilageWedges Workshop
 203: Slide Troubleshooting Workshop*
 203: MART1 Immuno Staining Workshop

*For the Slide Troubleshooting workshop, you are asked to bring your own slides for the instructor to help troubleshoot.

TOTAL REGISTRATION FEES \$ _____

PAYMENT METHOD:

If paying by check, please make payable in US dollars to ASMH and mail to: **ASMH**
555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100
Milwaukee, WI 53202

If paying by credit card, please complete the information below and **FAX to: +1-414-276-3349** or
MAIL to: ASMH – 555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100 – Milwaukee, WI 53202.

Visa MasterCard American Express

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name as it appears on Card _____

Signature _____

Refunds, less a \$35.00 administrative fee, will be available for cancellations received in writing at the Society office on or prior to March 26, 2009. There will be no provision for refunds or cancellations received after that date or for lack of attendance without notification.



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROSCOPY HISTOTECHNOLOGY

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And More!