

# Carolina Skin Surgery Center Monthly Newsletter

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## *What are the differences in the types of skin cancers?*

By: Cynthia Clevinger

When patients find out that they have skin cancer, a lot of questions run through their mind. What kind do I have? Is it “the bad” kind? How fast will it grow? Can it spread? Can it turn into a more aggressive type? Here is a breakdown of the different types that will hopefully be able to answer some of those questions.

There are 3 common types of skin cancer. The most common is basal cell carcinoma (BCC). BCC is the least aggressive and is slow growing. It usually begins as a papule (a solid, rounded growth that is usually less than 1.0cm). It then enlarges and can develop a central crater or ulcer. This type of skin cancer usually only

spreads locally (not to other parts of your body via the blood or lymphatic system).

Next is squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). SCC is a little more aggressive than BCC and can grow faster than a BCC. It usually begins as a firm, red nodule or scaly, crusted flat lesion. SCC is a potentially more dangerous type of cancer than BCC. If not treated, SCC can spread to other parts of your body through the blood or lymphatic system.

Malignant Melanoma (MM) is the most aggressive of skin cancers. It is a fast-growing skin cancer. MM can arise on normal skin or from an existing mole. If not treated, it can spread to other parts of your body. MM is potentially the most life threatening skin cancer. Early detection and surgical removal can result in a high cure rate.

Actinic Keratosis (AK) is a “pre-cancer” that exhibits

abnormal changes in skin cells. These have the potential to turn into SCC.

Dysplastic nevus (DN) exhibits abnormal growth of cells in a mole (melanocytes). These abnormal moles are a sign that the person with them may be at an increased risk for developing melanoma.

So we have learned a little bit about the different skin cancer types and each one’s potential to spread or grow. Once you have a proven skin cancer, no matter the type, it cannot change to another type of skin cancer. The most important lesson, is to maintain regular follow up with a dermatologist for body checks. It is also important to become familiar with your own skin so that you know when lesions are changing in size, shape, or color and you can notify your doctor in a timely fashion.

## We are all about the Vision of Carolina Skin Surgery Center

What is a vision statement? It is often called the picture of a company. It is a statement that defines the future and destination. It should describe who we are and what we hope to achieve. The vision statement will remain constant even when strategies and services change. When you are creating a vision statement, you want to look at the big picture. Be creative because this statement is meant to inspire the people that a company employs and the people it serves.

We decided to come up with a Vision Statement for Carolina Skin Surgery Center. We wanted to create this statement as a team. Why, you ask, is it so important to do this as a team? Have you ever heard the phrase “2 heads are better than one?” People have different ideas and thoughts and when you put them all together, you can come up with one, really great vision. Also, by working together as a team, we have created an exercise that inspires everyone who works together at this practice. We remember why we are so passionate about what we do and it re-energizes each of us to carry out the vision that we represent each and every day.

We started the process by breaking up into groups of three. We all answered three questions.

- 1) What exactly do we do?
- 2) Why do we do what we do?
- 3) What gets us most excited about the future of the practice?

We came back together as one group and discussed what each smaller group came up with. The answers that everyone came up with were inspiring! Here are a few examples of answers for each question.

- 1) What exactly do we do?
  - Provide quality, personalized medical care
  - We are experts at skin surgery
  - We are caring, honest, & empathetic
  - We provide a pleasant and comfortable experience
  - We help people overcome skin cancer
- 2) Why do we do what we do?
  - We care for the welfare of others

- We are passionate about people
- We calm patients and relieve them of their fears when dealing with skin cancer
- We teach them about skin cancer prevention

3) What gets us most excited about the future of the practice?

- We are a growing practice
- We are offering new services to patients
- We strive to be the best at what we do
- We are always improving
- With advances in technology, we strive to learn and grow as individuals, as a team, and as a community

I do not think that one person could have come up with all of these great thoughts alone. The meeting was light, fun, and inspiring to say the least. After we discussed the ideas as a group, we decided to take a break. We asked people to come up with sentences on their own. We decided to regroup in a few weeks and see what everyone came up with.

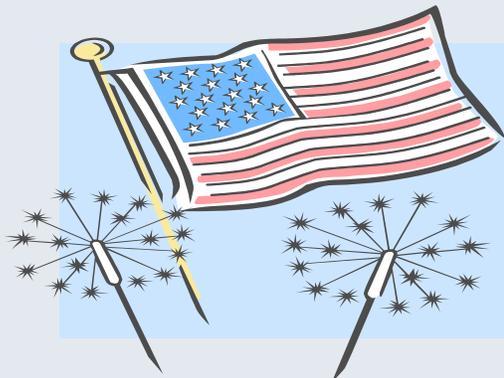
So we are pleased to announce our new Vision Statement:

*“Carolina Skin Surgery Center will always be a patient-centered practice that strives to provide patients with the highest quality surgical skin care. We are committed to providing exceptional support and personalized treatment in a comfortable environment.”*

Written (as a team) by: April, Ashley, Cathy, Chiffon, Cynthia, Dr. Carruth, Jackie, Lisa, Sandy, & Tara

### Announcements for July:

1. The office is closed on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Have a happy and safe Independence Day!



# CAROLINA SKIN SURGERY CENTER

*"Specializing in the treatment of skin cancer"*

## About Dr. Carruth:

Dr. Marc R. Carruth is the Director of Carolina Skin Surgery Center. Dr. Carruth received his M.D. degree from Duke University where he graduated with highest honors in 1993 and was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. He was awarded a Howard Hughes Medical Institute fellowship at the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Carruth completed his internship in Internal Medicine at Harvard, Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts and a Dermatology residency at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia where he was chief resident. Dr. Carruth completed his Mohs Micrographic and Dermatologic Surgery fellowship at Baptist Hospital in Kansas City, MO.

Dr. Carruth is known for his personable bedside manner and has been providing excellent care to patients in the Charlotte region since 1997. He has performed thousands of Mohs micrographic procedures during his tenure.

## About Lisa Matuga, PA-C:

Lisa has been a Physician Assistant for over 5 years and has been providing excellent dermatologic care in the Charlotte area for over two years.

Lisa received her Master of Science in Medicine and graduated from the Physician Assistant Program at Western Michigan University in 2008. She has a passion for helping patients with their dermatological needs and we are very excited to have her as a part of our team.

## Meet the Staff:

Receptionist: Sandy - She always has a smile on her face and is willing to help with anything. Sandy has been with Dr. Carruth since April of 2010.

Billing: Cathy – Understanding health insurance can be overwhelming, but Cathy is always willing to call and verify benefits and then explain them to you as simply as possible. Cathy has been with Dr. Carruth since December of 2008.

Surgery Coordinator/Medical Assistant: Ashley – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa Matuga, PA-C with procedures and also handles the surgery scheduling. If you have had Mohs surgery then you have probably spoken with her! Ashley has been with Dr. Carruth since May of 2011.

Lab Technician/Certified Medical Assistant: Tara – She is the one who processes the tissue for Dr. Carruth to review under the microscope (Mohs surgery). She also assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures. She has been with Dr. Carruth since September of 2007.

Registered Medical Assistant/Lab Technician: Jackie – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures and also helps process the tissue in the lab. Jackie has been with Dr. Carruth since October of 2008.

Certified Surgical Technician: Cynthia – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures and has been with Dr. Carruth since September of 2009.

Medical Assistant/Front Office Assistant: Chiffon – our newest member! Chiffon started with us on 3-17-14. Chiffon is assisting Lisa Matuga, PA-C with patients and helping out the front office. We are happy to have her on our team.

Office Manager: April has been with Dr. Carruth since August of 2006. Please let her know if you have any suggestions or comments – we encourage feedback and are always willing to learn.

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