Environmental Impacts and Emerging Health Concerns Associated with Unconventional Natural Gas Extraction

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Wednesday, March 8th, 2017, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM
UPMC Shadyside, Hillman Cancer Center
Cooper Classroom C

Light lunch provided. In order to ensure enough food is available, please RSVP to Darren Gilmartin (gilmartind@upmc.edu), or contact him if you need directions or additional information.

The Cooper Classrooms are located on the ground level of the Hillman Cancer Center, 5115 Centre Avenue, in Shadyside. After entering the building, walk to the left past the elevators. Facing the gift shop, turn right down the hallway. Room C is the 3rd door in the lobby area on the left.

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Abstract: The extraction of oil and gas from tight shale reservoirs through horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) has led to a resurgence of the fossil fuel industry across the country for more than a decade. Concurrently, concerns about health risks to workers and the communities surrounding these activities have also arisen. The “slick water” stimulation and fracking involves a plethora of chemicals and “proppant” (fine grained silica sand) while the shales themselves contain a variety of salts (e.g., chloride, bromide) and metals (e.g., barium, strontium) including NORMs. Other aspects of the operations include condensate tanks, open impoundments, and compressor stations, each which can be a source of volatile organics. Waste water disposal has presented challenges, such as the generation of trihalomethanes in municipal water and brining of rural roads. Our group has collected and analyzed over 1,000 water samples of surface and groundwater in Southwestern PA over the past five years in an effort to determine the extent to which extractive activities are affecting regional water quality. These results as well as other environmental impacts will be presented in an effort to identify potential health risks including cancer.

CME Faculty Disclosure
In accordance with Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education requirements on disclosure, information about relationships of presenters with commercial interests (if any) will be included in materials distributed at the time of the conference.

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