

# ACHIEVING CURES TOGETHER

NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



## SPREAD HOPE



### ACHIEVING CURES TOGETHER

Thank you to all who joined us for our virtual fall fundraiser, Spread Hope which was streamed in 12 countries around the world! We had an outstanding line up of speakers, including Dr. Alexander Khoruts, Dr. James Adams, Dr. Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown, Dr. Byron Vaughn & Dr. Shernan Holtan. These experts shared highlights of their research on restoring gut microbes in patients with Ulcerative Colitis, Autism, Graft Versus Host Disease, and more. If you weren't able to tune in, you can still watch the event at: [www.achievingcures.com/2020spreadhope](http://www.achievingcures.com/2020spreadhope) and hear more about the below clinical trials.

**Autism Clinical Trial | Arizona State University:** In their research, Dr. James Adams & Dr. Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown discovered that children with Autism are missing hundreds of beneficial species of microbes, which produce chemicals that communicate with our brain. In their clinical trial, patients received Intestinal Microbiota Transplant capsules to restore their gut communities. After 2 years of monitoring, 60% of patients had a reduction in gastrointestinal symptoms and 50% had a reduction in Autism symptoms. A new phase of the clinical trial is beginning, to further investigate and continue progressing a treatment for Autism.

**Graft Versus Host Disease | University of Minnesota:** Dr. Shernan Holtan is researching the impact of microbiota support during cancer recovery. Investigators are targeting using microbiota therapeutics to support the body and its tolerance of chemotherapy in addition to preventing Graft Versus Host disease.

The traditional treatment for GVHD is immune suppression, which also creates a hosting ground for increased risk of cancer relapse. Dr. Holtan and her team hope by reducing the need for immune suppression, patients will have better outcomes both with reduced rates of GVHD and cancer relapse.

**Ulcerative Colitis | University of Minnesota:** Dr. Byron Vaughn is studying the impact of regulating the microbiota in patients with Ulcerative Colitis. UC is a condition where the immune system attacks the colon and the residing gut bacteria resulting in inflammation and life debilitating symptoms. Currently, the only way to manage UC is through immune suppression, treating the inflammation, but not the root cause. Researchers hope by targeting patients' microbiota and changing the underlying cause of the illness, the body can heal without immune suppression.

Through your generosity, and our anonymous donor, all Spread Hope donations were doubled, with a total impact of **\$84,425 to advance research and find cures!** While 2020 has thrown some major curve balls, Achieving Cures Together is relentless in our efforts to treat patients, drive research and ultimately find cures.



## A DIFFERENT MODEL

To date, we have treated over **800 patients** struggling with *C. difficile* infections through Intestinal Microbiota Transplants with a **98% curative rate**. Because these treatments are classified by the FDA as investigational therapies, they are not able to be prescribed nor covered by insurance. To allow all patients in need access to these lifesaving treatments, we do not charge patients. Rather, we ask patients contribute what they can to help the next person in need. From day one, our primary goal has been the health and safety of patients, not profit and we continue to shift the standard model of care to better fit the needs of patients.

## YOUR YEAR END GIVING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

As we near the end of 2020, we are so thankful for the village of supporters that carry our mission forward, bringing lifesaving treatments to patients in need and driving critical research forward. As you consider your charitable gifts between now and the end of the year, remember that all gifts post marked by December 31st are tax deductible.

You can donate online:

[www.achievingcures.com/donate](http://www.achievingcures.com/donate)

By mail: Achieving Cures Together | 1650 West End Blvd, Suite 100 | St. Louis Park, MN 55416

### ACT is now also accepting gifts of securities.

If you're interested in making a gift of stocks, bonds or mutual funds, please contact us at [info@achievingcures.com](mailto:info@achievingcures.com) or (763) 259-5766. Remember to start early to ensure your gift will be completed by December 31st.



## ACT's 2020 VIRTUAL RACE TEAM

Thank you to our **2020 ACT Virtual Race Team!** This dedicated group ran in the heat, rain and snow from August through October and exceeded our goal of 1,000 miles by collectively running or walking **1,100 miles... which amounts to 42 marathons!** The race team had the option to enter into weekly challenges to earn entries for a \$25 Amazon gift card. A big congratulations to our Race Challenge winner, Becky Hopf!



Not surprisingly, our main challenge over the past months has been to maintain operations in the face of the challenges posed by the Coronavirus. Luckily, our patients suffering with *C. difficile* infections did not experience any delays in treatment because we had sufficient material for them manufactured prior to December 1st, 2019. However, all formal clinical trials were temporarily suspended by the FDA. Furthermore, for a number of months the University shut down all non-COVID research activities. We restarted microbiota capsule manufacturing in August. Prior to that we cleared all the regulatory hurdles with the FDA and the University. Our stool donors are closely monitored for COVID-19 symptoms and high-risk contacts. They get tested a minimum of every 14 days for COVID-19 by nasopharyngeal swabs. We do not know whether Coronavirus can be transmitted via intestinal microbiota transplantation. Obviously, both we and the regulators want to exercise maximal caution.

Unfortunately, most clinics in the country have suspended their intestinal microbiota transplant treatments for patients with *C. difficile* infections because of unavailability of therapeutic material. Therefore, we are expanding our reach to other clinical practices. Our non-negotiable condition for sharing this material is that all treatments are captured in a registry, which records the different aspects of patient clinical history and outcomes of therapy. This multi-center experience will allow the community to learn about the various clinical challenges associated with treatment of *C. difficile* infections.

At this time, the clinical trials are back on track. This includes the autism trials at the Arizona State University; the Veterans Administration multi-center trial on recurrent *C. difficile* infections; as well as the ulcerative colitis, leukemia, and bone marrow transplantation trials at the University of Minnesota. More trials are expected soon for patients with Parkinson's disease and patients receiving immunotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer.

-Dr. Alexander Khoruts



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[www.achievingcures.com](http://www.achievingcures.com)  
763-259-5766  
[info@achievingcures.com](mailto:info@achievingcures.com)