Parkinson’s Vaccine Safe in Phase I Trial

Michael J. Fox Foundation, Maggie McGuire, July 31, 2014

A treatment that could slow or stop Parkinson’s disease today took one step closer to pharmacy shelves. The Austrian biotech AFFiRiS AG announced positive results of its Phase I safety trial of a vaccine against alpha-synuclein.

Alpha-synuclein is the sticky protein that clumps in the cells of people with Parkinson’s, and AFFiRiS hopes to stop the disease by inducing antibodies against alpha-synuclein accumulation. The Michael J. Fox Foundation funded this work with close to $2M, first with a grant for a pre-clinical study and then $1.5M in 2011 for the Phase I trial. It’s the first drug against alpha-synuclein to reach clinical testing.

“A treatment that could slow or stop Parkinson’s progression would be a game changer for the five million worldwide living with this disease and the many more who will become at risk as our population ages,” said MJFF CEO Todd Sherer, PhD. “This trial is one of the most promising efforts toward that goal.”

In two different doses the drug, called PD01A, was safe and tolerable. Half of those vaccinated showed alpha-synuclein antibodies, which is a promising but very early sign. Further trials will test PD01A’s benefit to patients.

The next step is a boost study that will test the safety and effect of a boost vaccination (another dose). MJFF will support that trial, which will take place in Vienna, Austria and start recruiting in September.

The AFFiRiS trial is one study in the Foundation’s robust alpha-synuclein portfolio. Read more about other ways we’re targeting this protein at http://www.michaeljfox.org/foundation/news-detail.php?few-ways-we-may-stop-parkinson or listen to a discussion at http://www.affiris.com/index_en.html.

Like us on Facebook and Twitter and find the latest information, ways to volunteer and even make a donation.

www.facebook.com/CapitalAreaParkinsonsSociety

www.twitter.com/CAPSaustin
Power for Parkinson’s – Changes Indicated with **

Power for Parkinson’s is officially offering ten free classes a week in the Austin/Round Rock area! For those of you considering Power for Parkinson’s, we hope you’ll join us—NO experience is necessary! We’re here to help you stay active, have fun, make friends and fight PD! Although PD is a struggle at times, we have a great group of people to share your experiences and exercise within a relaxed and fun atmosphere. For more details, see [www.powerforparkinsons.org](http://www.powerforparkinsons.org).

**South – New Class**
Wellmed Senior Community Center
706 Ben White Blvd., Suite 100
** Move and Shout (Lauren Lewis)**
** Wednesdays 1:30–2:30 p.m.
Dancing with Parkinson’s
Thursdays 2:00–3:00 p.m.

**East/Central**
Healthsouth Rehab Hospital
1215 Red River, 1st Floor Annex
Dancing with Parkinson’s
Mondays 1:30–2:30 p.m.
Strength & Conditioning
Fridays 2:00–3:00 p.m.

**North Central – New Name & Time**
Covenant Presbyterian Church
3003 Northland Drive, 2222 & MOPAC
Fitness for Parkinson’s
Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
** Balls & Balance**
** Thursdays 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

**North Central**
Jewish Community Center of Austin,
7300 Hart Lane, Far West & MOPAC
** Walking Group**
** No Classes in July and August**

**Northwest Austin**
Unity Church of the Hills
9905 Anderson Mill Road,
Unity Oaks Room 201
Movement & Balance
Mondays 10:30–11:30 a.m.
Dancing with Parkinson’s
Wednesdays 1:30–2:30 p.m.

**Round Rock – New Location, Class and Time**
2111 Sam Bass Road
** Fitness for Parkinson’s (Kristi Richards)**
** Thursdays 1:00–2:00 p.m.**

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**August Membership Meeting**

Saturday, August 16 ■ 2:00 p.m.
Medical Office Building, St. David’s Medical Center
5th Floor Conference Room, 3000 N. IH-35

Dr. Elizabeth Peckham will speak on “New Developments in Parkinson’s.” Dr. Peckham is a movement disorder specialist who recently moved from Dallas to join Central Texas Neurology Consultants in Round Rock. She is board certified in Neurology by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and has completed specialized fellowship training in movement disorders at the National Institute of Health. Dr. Peckham has extensive experience with the evaluation for and programming of deep brain stimulators and botulinum toxin injections. Please join us in welcoming her to our community.