



Dr. George C. Tsokos Receives Lupus Insight Prize at FOCIS 2015 *Grant Project Aims to Improve Lupus Nephritis Treatment*

SAN DIEGO, CA (June 24, 2015) – **George C. Tsokos, M.D.**, Chief of the Rheumatology Division at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, received the 2015 [Lupus Insight Prize](#) today for a project with great promise in improving treatment for lupus nephritis. The award was presented at [FOCIS 2015](#), the 15th Annual Meeting of the Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies.

The Lupus Insight Prize is a collaborative initiative among the [Alliance for Lupus Research \(ALR\)](#), the [Lupus Foundation of America \(LFA\)](#) and the [Lupus Research Institute \(LRI\)](#). The \$200,000 Prize recognizes a major, novel insight and/or discovery that has the promise of changing thinking about lupus as well as a high likelihood of generating further advances in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

Innovative Project Aims to Improve Lupus Nephritis Treatment

Dr. Tsokos will use the award funds to study the molecular link between the immune system and the kidney damage seen frequently in patients with lupus nephritis, a dangerous complication of lupus. His research also aims to develop a targeted delivery of drugs directly to kidney cells that block the action of a single destructive enzyme.

“I am honored to receive this award from the leading organizations in lupus,” commented Dr. Tsokos. “I have dedicated my career to defining the abnormalities in the immune cells of patients with lupus to advance the development of tools for diagnosis and monitoring as well as safer and more effective therapies. The Lupus Insight Prize will allow my team to further our exciting current work that has potential to significantly improve treatment of lupus nephritis, serious damage to the kidneys.”

“The collegial effort among the organizations involved in the Lupus Insight Prize demonstrates the focus of all involved in accelerating progress towards better treatments and ultimately, to finding a cure for lupus,” said Kenneth M. Farber, President of the Alliance for Lupus Research. “By working with these organizations and with leaders in the field of lupus research towards a common goal, we have the potential to more quickly improve the lives of those estimated 1.5 million Americans living with lupus.”

“We are extremely proud that Dr. Tsokos was selected to win this prestigious award and congratulate him on his long and illustrious career,” adds Sandra C. Raymond, President and CEO of the Lupus Foundation of America. “Dr. Tsokos’ longstanding commitment to exploring the underlying causes of

lupus and identifying new ways to diagnose and treat the disease has resulted in important and game-changing discoveries, including the identification of treatments that are specific for lupus with fewer debilitating side effects. These treatments are in various stages of clinical development.”

Margaret G. Dowd, President and CEO of the Lupus Research Institute concluded, “Dr. Tsokos’ outstanding body of work exemplifies what the three national lupus organizations came together to advance with the Lupus Insight Prize – the most novel science that builds on groundbreaking contributions to innovative treatment and drives toward a cure. This study is particularly meaningful for patients because of its potential to deliver safer and more effective drugs to treat lupus nephritis, one of the most common and dangerous complications of the disease.”

For more information visit LupusInsightPrize.org.

About Lupus

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that can cause inflammation and tissue damage to any organ system in the body. An estimated 1.5 million Americans and at least 5 million people worldwide have lupus.

About Lupus Nephritis, a Dangerous and Common Complication

Many people with lupus develop lupus nephritis — when lupus attacks the kidneys. Lupus nephritis is typically treated with immunosuppressive drugs that increase risk of infection as well as corticosteroids which can cause serious side effects such as weight gain and high blood pressure. People with lupus nephritis may need dialysis, which filters the blood through a machine to remove waste products from the body, and in severe cases, a kidney transplant.

For More Information about the Funding Organizations:

[Alliance for Lupus Research](#)
[Lupus Foundation of America](#)
[Lupus Research Institute](#)

About FOCIS

FOCIS exists to improve human health through immunology by fostering interdisciplinary approaches to understand and treat immune-based diseases.

###

Media Contacts:

Courtney Love, Alliance for Lupus Research, clove@lupusresearch.org, 212-218-2869
Lauren Topf, Lupus Foundation of America, topf@lupus.org, 301-424-8546
Margy Meislin, Lupus Research Institute, mmeislin@lupusny.org, 212-685-4118 x34
Sarah Martis, Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies, smartis@focisnet.org, 414-359-1670 x1103

Source: Lupus Research Institute