



Sturge-Weber Foundation Announces Grant Award

Study to Focus on Photodynamic Treatment of Port Wine Stain Birthmarks

For Immediate Release

MT. FREEDOM, N.J./EWORLDWIRE/March 4, 2005 --- The Sturge-Weber Foundation of Mt. Freedom, N.J. has awarded a one year, \$20,000 research grant to Dr. Kristen Kelly, of the University of California, Irvine. Kelly and collaborator Dr. J. Stuart Nelson will explore the photodynamic treatment of port wine stains.

Port wine stains (PWS) are congenital, progressive vascular malformations of the skin that have potentially devastating psychological complications and can have serious physical effects as well. Current therapies achieve complete blanching of less than 10 percent of these lesions. Multiple treatments are usually required.

The research will evaluate the ability of photodynamic therapy (PDT) to achieve permanent destruction of the most clinically relevant PWS blood vessels, without injury to surrounding skin. Initial animal experiments confirmed the efficacy of PDT for destruction of vessels with size and depth comparable to PWS.

The results of the studies are expected to lead to the development of novel and innovative technology, which will provide a more effective and - most importantly - safer methods for removal of PWS birthmarks.

Kelly is an associate clinical professor in the Department of Dermatology at UC, Irvine. Nelson is a professor in the Departments of Dermatology and Surgery at UC, Irvine, as well as the director of the UC, Irvine Surgery Laser Clinic.

The Sturge-Weber Foundation is the leading non-profit organization for Sturge-Weber syndrome and related port wine stain conditions. The foundation provides education, networking and information for affected individuals and families. The foundation also provides funding for a number of basic and clinical research programs.

Karen Ball, CEO of the Sturge-Weber Foundation, said, "The foundation believes this award will serve as a catalyst for further insight into the most efficacious treatment of port wine stains. Once there is increased understanding of PWS, the pace of discovery will increase for Sturge-Weber syndrome."

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