



# VASCULAR CURES

## Spring Newsletter



May 2020

### A Message from Our Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Michael Conte

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global public health crisis on a scale not seen in most of our lifetimes. The pandemic has major effects, both direct and indirect, on vascular health and the vascular community. **Many patients with cardiovascular disease are at high risk for more serious complications of coronavirus infection**—those with pre-existing cardiac conditions, diabetes, immune compromise or advanced age. It is critical that exposure risk be kept to a minimum for these individuals. Indirectly, the effects of the pandemic on the health system are profoundly disruptive. The potential untoward effects of delayed physician visits, diagnostic tests and procedures in those with advanced vascular disease is a major concern. So too are the socio-economic and mental health consequences of the social isolation needed at this time. **It is critical to maintain compliance with prescribed medications, healthy diet and lifestyle, and**

**vigilance for signs or symptoms that should be brought to physician attention.** Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 is understandable but we must minimize secondary damage by maintaining awareness and connectivity. Hopefully the public health indices continue to improve, and we can cautiously transition to a state of containment. The impact on the scientific community has also been profound but will likely lead to unanticipated benefits in medicine. **Keep safe, stay informed, and try to maintain your vascular health in these trying times.**

### Additional Info for Patients

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China and has since spread across the world. We know the virus is transmitted through small droplets produced from coughing, sneezing, or talking. The virus survives on surfaces for up to 72 hours and people can become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then their face. Individuals may be asymptomatic for several days before showing symptoms, and some will never show symptoms at all. This has made the virus incredibly contagious.

### What to Do

- Follow your State and Local government guidelines about shelter-in-place
- Follow CDC national guidelines about social distancing, cleaning and disinfecting your home, and use of cloth face covers
- Practice appropriate hand hygiene (washing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol)
- If you have a fever, cough, or diarrhea these may all be signs that you may have COVID-19. The best place to recover is at home isolated from others, with rest and hydration. There is currently no evidence-based treatment for the disease (although a myriad of clinical trials are underway) and the overwhelming majority of people will recover within 14 days without seeking medical attention. If you develop emergency signs such as trouble breathing, persistent chest pain, or new confusion please get medical attention immediately as you may need to be admitted to a hospital.

For up-to-date resources, please visit [vascularcures.org/COVID19](http://vascularcures.org/COVID19) ■

## At-Home Exercises



### OVERHEAD ARM RAISE

Hold weights above shoulders. Extend arms straight up, then back to starting position 12 times.



### BACK LEG RAISE

Kick leg back slowly without bending knee or leaning forward 12 times per leg.



### BALANCE WALK

Raise arms to side, take 20 steps while raising knee waist high with each step.



### SIDE LEG RAISE

Kick leg to the side slowly without bending knee or leaning sideways. 12 per leg.



### TOE STAND

Stand behind a sturdy chair for balance and slowly stand on tiptoes. Repeat 12 times.

# The Pandemic Teachable Moments

## Collaboration Is Key To Solving Complex Health Problems by Ed K. Yu

The health ecosystem as we've known it has been disrupted. There are many lessons yet to be learned, but one clear lesson is that there is nothing like a health crisis to align incentives and foster collaboration with a shared sense of urgency.

There are parallels between coronavirus and vascular diseases like peripheral artery disease (PAD). PAD

affects hundreds of millions of people around the world, causing disability, functional decline and limb loss. Yet we understand very little about the disease or how available treatments are affecting patients in their daily lives. Why can't we foster collaboration to solve for PAD with the same degree of urgency as we do with the pandemic?

### *Witness the collaborations that are delivering remarkable innovations in the era of coronavirus:*

#### • **Test Labs & FDA Coordination**

Almost 30 academic laboratories and medical device companies have developed tests for coronavirus on short order. These molecular diagnostic tests typically require lengthy FDA review and approval timelines, but the FDA has issued Emergency Use Authorization guidelines.

#### • **Biopharma R&D Without a Business Case**

19 companies are developing treatments and vaccines for COVID-19. They are not making this a priority based on market opportunity. Rather the solution is within their core competency and it's the right thing to do.

#### • **Removing the barrier of payment**

Removing the barrier of payment: 'Who Pays?' is often the unanswerable question when it comes to advancing health innovations. However, most private health insurance companies are waiving the fee for access, testing and

treatment of COVID-19. We are living in a rare moment of healthcare for all.

#### • **Silicon Valley Face Mask Disruptors**

Two tech bros created a nonprofit, Operation Masks, to broker procurement of medical face masks. They applied their entrepreneurial network around the world to solve for an insurmountable medical supply issue, while admitting they know little about the field.

#### • **DIY PPE**

Everyday citizens are educating themselves on the virus, its transmission, symptoms of the illness, and cooperating with social distancing guidelines. News of the severe shortage of PPE (personal protective equipment) prompted a movement to fabricate DIY face masks. This social behavioral engagement directly improves health outcomes.

There has always been a need to co-op the talent of diverse experts and stakeholders to find a cure for PAD and other vascular diseases. **Vascular Cures serves as a nonpartisan, nonprofit, trusted convener and arbiter of patient-voice driven research. The foundation evolved through real world lessons learned.**

**It takes a village:** Despite the plethora of academic research in vascular disease, sharing ideas and insights is difficult. We are convening collaborative working groups to facilitate better research and discovery. Collaboration takes a village – payers, providers, clinicians, researchers, biopharma, tech and patients – to work together in a trusted environment.

**Better treatments require patient voices:** For the tens of millions of people suffering from PAD, there isn't a single biopharma or medical device company that offers the complete solution. The right treatment is likely a combination of surgery, taking medication, and exercise therapy. The expert community don't know and don't always agree on what the optimal combination is for the best outcomes, especially from the

patients' perspective. We host trusted forums where thought leaders can listen to patients directly, interpret their voices into clinical implications and formulate more meaningful research questions.

The acts of collaboration around the coronavirus outbreak is validating to the Vascular Cures' team. We are a small nonprofit foundation, guided by a talented, diverse volunteer board of directors, dedicated to operational excellence in a purpose-driven organization. We will learn more lessons from this pandemic to guide our work. The impact will benefit us all. ■



Ed K. Yu, Board Chairman

# Pulling the Rope Together in the Same Direction

## Donor Spotlight: Doug Grey

Board member Doug Grey, MD, spent his career as a vascular surgeon at Kaiser treating patients with peripheral artery disease (PAD). Doug has always been a problem solver and even though he left his surgical practice, he did not retire from his passion for figuring out ways to help improve the lives of PAD patients.

### Doug's Commitment

**The vision of Vascular Cures to reduce pain, disability and death from vascular diseases aligns with Doug's ongoing commitment to help PAD patients live healthier lives.** Doug has embraced the avenue provided to board members to be active in the creation, funding and construction of solutions that make a lasting impact. He appreciates the opportunity to channel his energy and join forces with fellow board members whom he describes as a "diverse group of amazing talents with wide-ranging attributes and skillsets." Doug applauds the leadership and ability of board chair Ed Yu to recognize and optimize the individual and collective efforts of board members. Doug is grateful for the support he was given to engage the board in the mission of disease prevention. "Ed pushed me out of my comfort zone to accomplish something larger than I ever could have accomplished on my own." Doug describes the board's resulting efforts and teamwork as "all pulling the rope together in the same direction."

### Firsthand Experience

As a surgeon, Doug recognized that one of the best ways to keep his patients healthy after surgery was to have them participate in a structured exercise program. He saw the positive impact of this type of exercise program firsthand on a family member following a cardiac procedure. Doug credits the board with providing him with an avenue to pursue a potential solution to provide PAD patients with a home-based exercise program via the Project Voice program. This prevention-focused research project compliments the intervention research that has been a core mission of Vascular Cures and balances our focus on mitigating sick care and promoting health care.

### Leveraging the Vascular Cures' Network

Doug's drive to make Project Voice (digitally enabled home-based exercise therapy program for PAD patients) available to a large number of PAD patients is on the cusp of becoming reality. The Grey Family Foundation has provided funding to kick off the design phase of a Project Voice study at a large integrated care delivery network. Doug chose to make his foundation's charitable contribution directly to Vascular Cures because he sees that we "can leverage the power of the greater vascular community to bring greater impact with greater quality to the problem". Doug's commitment to invest his time and funds is yet one more way he is continuing his work to improve patients' lives. ■



Dr. Grey Teaching Fellow Doctors in Tanzania



## Announcing Our Newest Board Member: Robert Kain

Vascular Cures is excited to announce the addition of Robert (Bob) Kain to the Board of Directors. Bob brings over three decades of experience in the genomics and health space, including 15 years at Illumina, Revere BioSensors (co-founded in 2015) and most recently LunaDNA where he current serves as Co-Founder & CEO. LunaDNA is the first community-owned health and DNA data platform dedicated to advancing research through community engagement and personal data ownership. Bob is the lead inventor on multiple U.S. patents, and has spent much of his career at start-ups scaling people, processes, and systems. He serves on numerous scientific advisory and charitable boards, including Dovetail Genomics, Arc Biosciences, San Diego River Parks Foundation and Mesa Rim Climbing Center (co-founder and Chairman). Bob received a BS in Physics from San Diego State University and an MBA from Saint Mary's College of California. ■

# A Lifetime of Impact: Ron Stoney Legacy Society

Vascular Cures was built on a foundation of your contributions that have created innumerable opportunities to advance transformative solutions that better align with patient needs. Our co-founder, Dr. Ronald J. Stoney is a passionate champion for patients, an innovator and inventor, and a mentor to young vascular surgeons who go on to have a lifetime of impact. After years of seeing the devastating effects on lives and families, Ron made it his personal mission to try to put vascular surgeons out of business. The Ron Stoney Legacy Society is a unique opportunity to make a meaningful contribution that will advance vascular research in perpetuity.

As you explore the various ways to create a legacy at Vascular Cures, we look forward to assisting you. Your thoughtful planning will leave a footprint on the community we serve for future generations.



## Create a Gift in Your Estate Plan

Create a legacy by setting aside a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your assets to an area of your choice at Vascular Cures. Making a gift through your estate will not affect your current cash flow and may offer future tax savings. If your plans change, such gifts are generally revocable.

## Create a Gift that Provides Income

These gifts offer current or future income for you and your loved ones, a charitable income tax deduction, possible capital gains, estate and gift tax savings. Your gift may be funded with cash or appreciated assets. Remaining funds are distributed to Vascular Cures for the purpose that you specify.

## Create a Gift of Non-Cash Assets

Most people choose to make gifts of cash. Yet you may have other valuable assets which would make ideal gifts for Vascular Cures and provide you significant tax savings.

## Contact Us to Learn More

Please email us at [info@vascularcures.org](mailto:info@vascularcures.org) for more information.

## Ronald J. Stoney, MD, Co-Founder

Ronald J. Stoney, MD is Emeritus Professor of Surgery at UCSF. In 1982, he co-founded the Pacific Vascular Research Foundation, now Vascular Cures, to improve patient care and prevent death and disability from vascular disease. That same year, he and an engineer colleague began the development of device that is still being used in surgical operations around the world. He has served as President of the International Society for Cardiovascular Surgery and the Western Vascular Society. Dr. Stoney has received numerous awards, lectured around the world, and published more than 250 works in vascular healthcare.

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## Calling All Patient Partners!

We're looking for passionate patients to share their story and help us better understand how we can serve our community. To get involved email [katelyn@vascularcures.org](mailto:katelyn@vascularcures.org).

## Thank you to our Newsletter Collaborators!



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