

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NEWS FROM THE CICATRICIAL ALOPECIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

**CONTACT: Sheila Belkin, CEO, Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation  
(phone 310-475-2419, e-mail [sheila@carfintl.org](mailto:sheila@carfintl.org), website [www.carfintl.org](http://www.carfintl.org))**

**NIH AWARDS \$1.77 MILLION GRANT TO CARF SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR  
PRATIMA KARNIK, PhD, FOR CICATRICIAL ALOPECIA RESEARCH!**

*Investigation will provide new information about the origination and development of the condition and may facilitate the development of new and effective therapies*

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 23, 2009 — The National Institutes of Health have awarded Principal Investigator Pratima Karnik, PhD (Case Western Reserve University), a grant of \$1.77 million to fund a five-year study titled “PPAR-gamma Signaling in Normal Pilosebaceous Units and in Scarring Alopecia.” This study is a continuation of collaborative scientific research linking a defect in lipid processing and peroxisome biogenesis to the rare and painful hair loss disorders known as the cicatricial alopecia.

“In preliminary studies that formed the basis of the NIH award, we provided insight into highly complex interactions between hair follicle cells and environmental factors that may cause cicatricial alopecia,” said Dr. Karnik. “This funding provides us the support necessary to aggressively test novel ideas aimed at understanding progression of disease and the development of novel therapeutic strategies.”

In December 2008, Dr. Karnik and her collaborators, Paradi Mirmirani, MD (Case Western Reserve University and University of California, San Francisco), and Vera Price, MD (University of California, San Francisco), published findings that unprocessed lipids set the stage for developing scarring hair loss. The work

suggests that either processed lipids are necessary for hair growth or unprocessed lipids are toxic. These clinical studies corroborate similar studies performed in mutant mice. In their preliminary studies, the researchers found that treating patients with drugs that enhance lipid processing relieved the clinical symptoms and signs of the disorder.

Karnik P, Tekeste Z, McCormick TS, Gilliam AC, Price VH, Cooper KD, Mirmirani P (2009) "Hair Follicle Stem Cell-Specific *PPAR gamma* Deletion Causes Scarring Alopecia." *J Invest Dermatol* 129: 1243-57.

According to Vera Price, MD, Co-Founder of the Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation (CARF), who has been treating this group of hair diseases for many years, "This grant is validation of Pratima Karnik's seminal work, and will support further studies to unravel the mystery of these diverse diseases and explore new directions for their management."

This groundbreaking work by Drs. Karnik, Mirmirani and Price has been supported in part by the Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation (CARF).

### **About C.A.R.F.**

The Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation (C.A.R.F.) was formed in 2001 as a result of one person's experience with scarring alopecia (cicatricial means scarring). When the patient realized that little is known about such disorders, she decided, with the help of her doctor, to initiate a grass roots effort to raise funds for research to find effective treatments and a cure, to support education and advocacy, and to raise public awareness of these rare diseases.

The Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation is a 501(c)3 tax exempt not-for-profit organization. C.A.R.F. funds are available to support research that will

enhance our knowledge about this difficult group of diseases. To learn more about CARF research opportunities and activities, please visit [www.carfintl.org](http://www.carfintl.org).

###

*Contact Sheila Belkin (310-475-2419) for more information or to arrange an interview with Drs. Karnik, Mirmirani and Price.*