

For Immediate Release

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MitoCanada announces Research funding

This year has heralded significant growth in our capacity to fund research. The research committee, in consultation with leading Canadian Mitochondrial Disease researchers, has set our focus on supporting research that aims to improve the identification and treatment of Mitochondrial Diseases.

Acting on behalf of MitoCanada, the research committee designed a RFP (Request for Proposal) and we were thrilled to receive 14 outstanding submissions. "Our panel of experts deliberated and MitoCanada is proud to announce that the successful research project will receive \$45,000 in funding!" says Dr. Josh Slatkoff, Research Committee Chair.

The funding will support Dr. Jane Shearer and her team of researchers at the University of Calgary.

Dr. Jane Shearer explains the study, "This study examines the utility of cell-based therapy (stem cells) to alleviate symptoms associated with mitochondrial dysfunction. Stem cells are promising as they are able to reduce oxidative stress, alleviate inflammation and repair damaged tissues. Recent work also shows that they have the ability to transfer healthy mitochondria into host tissues. The goal of our work is to better understand this process and its potential clinical utility for the treatment of mitochondrial disease. The research team involves four investigators from the University of Calgary and the Alberta Children's Hospital, Drs. Jane Shearer, Aneal Khan, Steven Martin and Jong Rho. This team is unique as it combines expertise in mitochondrial disease, metabolic physiology, pediatric neurology and cell transplantation. With MitoCanada's support we envision that our work will one day contribute to a cellular therapy for the treatment of mitochondrial disease."

Every 30 minutes a child is born that will develop a chronic disease like Mitochondrial Disease. Due to the complexity and challenges of diagnosis, and broad spectrum of symptoms, it is estimated that less than 10% of people affected receive a diagnosis. This disease robs those affected of their quality of life and is often terminal. To date there is **no cure for Mitochondrial Disease**, and only minimal treatments are available.



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