

# University Hospitals Health System

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University Hospitals  
of Cleveland

## News Release

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### University Hospitals Receives \$5 Million, Largest Dermatology Gift in U.S.

**CLEVELAND** – University Hospitals’ Department of Dermatology has received a \$5 million gift from The Murdough Foundation to advance the research and treatment of psoriasis, a chronic genetic disease that affects the skin and the joints. The gift is the largest known in the U.S., for dermatology, at an academic medical center. The *Murdough Family Center for Psoriasis* will support and stimulate clinical research and treatment for, and education about, psoriasis.

The Murdough Foundation of Hudson, Ohio, is an independent foundation that primarily provides support to organizations in Northeast Ohio. Foundation President Thomas G. Murdough, Jr., is a member of the University Hospitals Board of Directors, and is the founder and CEO of Step2, a multinational manufacturer and marketer of high-quality plastic products for children and for the home and garden, based in Streetsboro, Ohio. Mr. Murdough is also the founder and former president of The Little Tikes Company.

“We want University Hospitals to be the #1 location in the world for research and treatment of psoriasis,” Mr. Murdough says. “Great progress has been made and we hope even greater strides will be possible with this gift,” adds his wife, Joy Murdough. “Our ultimate hope is to cure psoriasis.”

The Department of Dermatology at University Hospitals is recognized among the top psoriasis programs in the world, with a strong record of accomplishment for innovation and translational research. The Department consistently ranks among the top dermatology programs nationally for competitive research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Department also is one of six NIH-designated National Skin Diseases Research Centers.

Psoriasis manifests as patches of itchy, inflamed skin that can vary from mild to extremely severe. Currently, the Department of Dermatology studies the triggers of psoriasis flares and the natural mechanisms and therapies that can bring this complex disease under control. “With the *Murdough Family Center for Psoriasis*, we will be able to continue to determine causes of psoriasis, as well as identify improved therapies for

patients living with the condition,” says **Kevin D. Cooper, MD, Chairman of the Department of Dermatology at University Hospitals Case Medical Center**. “This gift allows us to educate the community and physicians about the cause and treatments for psoriasis that will improve the quality of our patients’ lives.”

According to the National Psoriasis Foundation, psoriasis affects an estimated 2-3 percent of people worldwide. The NIH estimates between 5.8 and 7.5 million of these are Americans. **Neil Korman, MD, PhD**, who will direct the Murdough Family Center’s Psoriasis Treatment Program, has treated thousands of psoriasis patients, and directs the Clinical Trials Unit in the Department of Dermatology. The Clinical Trials Unit has played a leading role in the all of the major recent psoriasis clinical trials. “The opportunity to create an innovative clinical education and treatment network in the community will enable pioneering treatment advances in our community as a model for the nation,” Dr. Korman says.

“We are truly grateful for supporters like Tom and Joy Murdough, and their commitment to not only enhancing quality care at University Hospitals, but their dedication to millions of people living with skin disorders,” says **Thomas F. Zenty III, University Hospitals President and CEO**. “At University Hospitals, our mission is *To Heal. To Teach. To Discover*. This gift will help us deliver on that promise to those afflicted by psoriasis locally, regionally, nationally, and throughout the world.” “This gift is a meaningful tribute to the work and vision for diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases at University Hospitals,” adds **Fred C. Rothstein, MD, President and CEO, University Hospitals Case Medical Center**. “The generosity of the Murdough family will enable our researchers and clinicians to discover new ways to continue to care for psoriasis patients, and will provide information to patients and educational opportunities for the next generation of healthcare professionals.”

For additional information, visit [www.murdoughpsoriasis.com](http://www.murdoughpsoriasis.com).

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University Hospitals Health System is celebrating 140 years of caring for Cleveland. Its 947-bed, tertiary medical center, University Hospitals of Cleveland (UHC), is an affiliate of Case Western Reserve University (Case). Together, they form the largest center for biomedical research in the State of Ohio. The System provides the major clinical base for translational researchers at the Case Research Institute, a partnership between UHC and CWRU School of Medicine, as well as a broad and well-characterized patient population for clinical trials involving the most advanced treatments. Included in UHC are Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital, among the nation’s best children’s hospitals; Ireland Cancer Center, designated by the National Cancer Institute as a Comprehensive Cancer Center (the nation’s highest designation); and MacDonald Women’s Hospital, Ohio’s only hospital for women.

Committed to advanced care and advanced caring, University Hospitals Health System offers the region’s largest network of primary care physicians, along with outpatient centers and hospitals. The System also includes a network of specialty care physicians, skilled nursing, elder health, rehabilitation and home care services, managed care and insurance programs. For more information, go to [www.uhhs.com](http://www.uhhs.com).