March 2026 VOLUME 49 ISSUE 1

50 YEARS
MYASTHENIA GRAVIS
mgmi
FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN

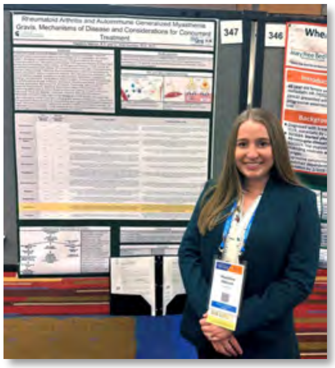
ACCELERATING Our Future

COMMUNICATOR

MG-MI Funds 2026 MSU Students' Research

MG medical research isn't just about new meds—it's also about digging into what we already know and finding fresh insights. This year, the Esther Land Finding Solutions in Myasthenia Gravis grant is funding eight second-year med students at Michigan State University. These students are in the middle of deciding what kind of doctor they want to be, so this project is a potential game changer for them. Most neurology students focus on the brain, but this group is excited to look at how MG affects muscles and the rest of the body.

Led by Amit Sachdev, MD, the students will review published research, analyze it, and share their recommendations as posters at two big conferences in October. If they finish everything, they'll each receive a $2,500 stipend.



2025 grant recipient, Madeline Niblock, presents her findings

2026 Student Research Topics

- ***Muscle Pain***
- ***Muscle Relaxants & Safety***
- ***gMG & Anti-Lipid Meds***
- ***The Underhoused & Underinsured***
- ***Pre-existing Infectious Illness Screening***
- ***Minimal Manifestations (MMD)***
- ***Inebilizumab Transition***
- ***gMG and Employment***

Dr. Sachdev said he was pleased by the student interest—having so many willing to focus on muscle and body impacts is exciting. Last year, just one student, Madeline Niblock, got the grant and presented a review on meds for myasthenia gravis and rheumatoid arthritis.

This is MG-MI's first time offering this much funding ($20,000 total), and there are still four topics left for future research. The board is also talking with partners about supporting and expanding the program.

FUELING THE CARE

At MG MI, we know myasthenia gravis brings major challenges beyond medical care, including high costs, complex information, and insurance barriers. That's why we're launching Fueling the Care in Michigan—a new program that connects patients and families with social workers for added support.

Together with partners, neurologists and donors, we aim to improve MG care and set a model for other communities. We'll be telling you more about this exciting program as we get closer to launch on August 20, at the 50th Anniversary Celebration.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2
- MG-MI Co-founder's Story
- MG-MI 50th Anniversary Plans
- Sponsor Ad: Alexion

Page 3
- Changes at the Top
- Sponsor Ad: argenx

Page 4
- Research News
- Clinical Trial Resources

Page 5
- Health Summit & Resource Fair May 30 in Kalamazoo

Page 6
- Website Updates – New Tools
- Spanish Language Support
- MG Alliance
- Sponsor Ad: Johnson & Johnson

Page 7
- Ask the Specialist: MG & Pregnancy
- Sponsor Ad: Amgen

Page 8
- Support Meeting Calendar

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60 years living with MG

MG-MI co-founder shares her story with medical students

Back in 1960, Esther Land—one of the founders of MG-MI—was diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. At the time, treatment options were pretty limited. There was Mestinon and prednisone. Immunosuppressants such as Imuran was just starting to show up. Surgery to remove the thymus gland was also an option.

Fast forward to today, and medical students learning about MG have a whole menu of treatments to learn, plus some exciting new biological therapies in the works. Recently, Esther shared her MG journey with nearly 300 first-year students at MSU's School of Osteopathic Medicine. She talked about living with MG for over 65 years, including two serious crises—one of which kept her in the hospital for three and a half months. Even though she didn't have access to the high-tech treatments we have now, the immunosuppressants that became available in the 1980s helped her stabilize the disease and enjoy more than 20 years of a pretty "normal" life. She's been in remission for eight years.

Esther explained that MG affects you in every way—physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. She credits her faith for helping her find peace and purpose, and for inspiring her to reach out and give hope to others.

Fifty years ago, she helped start MG-MI with a mission to put patients first, offering information, education, support, and service to MG patients across Michigan. She's thrilled to be celebrating MG-MI's big anniversary, from 1976 to 2026!

It's OUR Anniversary!

50 YEARS
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Fifty Years of Caring for Community & Working for a Cure

In 2026, MG-MI will celebrate 50 years of supporting the MG community—and we'd love to include your memories. Whether it's a special event you attended, a meaningful support group experience, or what MG-MI has meant to you personally, your story matters.

Please share your thoughts by mailing them to our office or emailing **esther@mg-mi.org**, who is collecting memories for an anniversary program. A celebration event is also being planned for August 20.

Meet MG-MI's New Dynamic Duo

Recent MG treatment approvals have increased pharmaceutical support for MG-MI, enabling expanded services for Michigan patients. Guided by its five-year strategic plan, MG-MI hired two professionals in a shared leadership model—one focused on organization and strategy, the other on development. Together, they position MG-MI for continued progress in its next 50 years. We are pleased to welcome Keshia and Wardell!

Keshia Dickason, MHA

Development and Planning

Keshia has joined us as Co-Executive Director and Development Director for the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of Michigan. A business owner, author, and community advocate, Keshia has held multiple public leadership roles and founded the Big Red Heart Scholarship Fund. She is widely recognized for her leadership and commitment to community impact. Welcome, Keshia!

Wardell J. Frazier, Jr.

Organizational Strategy and Administration

Wardell is a seasoned nonprofit executive with nearly 20 years of experience. He brings deep expertise in program leadership, financial oversight, and partnership development. In his role, he will support staff development and organizational culture while representing MG-MI in public, coalition, and funding spaces to advance equitable, people centered investment. Welcome aboard, Wardell!

Thank you, Rhonda Wentworth!

We bid Rhonda Wentworth a sad but warm goodbye as she has departed MG-MI to assist her son in his newly established fishing gear business. As a quick learner eager to support our MG community, Rhonda joined us four years ago as Office Administrator and moved into the director role two years later. Her compassion and support of patients and connections with our partners and colleagues are appreciated and will be greatly missed. We wish Rhonda the very best!

Missing Anything?

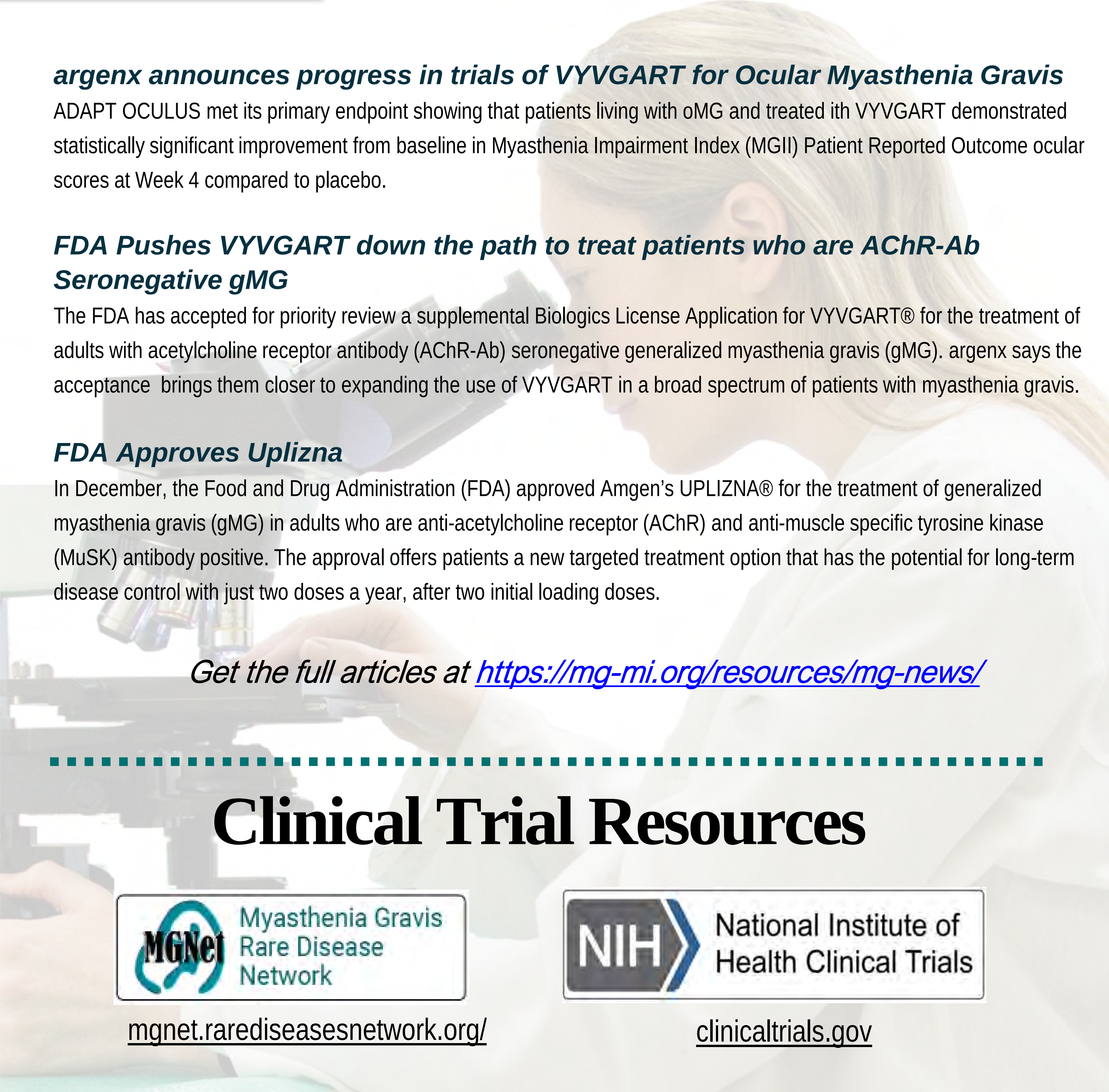
Have you moved recently? Do you have a new email address or phone number? Make sure you're getting the regular mailings and invitations by updating your contact information.

- Go to our contact page at: https://mg-mi.org/about/contact/
- Email us at: info@mg-mi.org
- Call 616 956 0622

Research News

More big news on the medical front

In the past few months, there have been several advances in MG treatments announced that could pay off for MG patients for years to come.



argenx announces progress in trials of VYVGART for Ocular Myasthenia Gravis

ADAPT OCULUS met its primary endpoint showing that patients living with oMG and treated ith VYVGART demonstrated statistically significant improvement from baseline in Myasthenia Impairment Index (MGII) Patient Reported Outcome ocular scores at Week 4 compared to placebo.

FDA Pushes VYVGART down the path to treat patients who are AChR-Ab Seronegative gMG

The FDA has accepted for priority review a supplemental Biologics License Application for VYVGART® for the treatment of adults with acetylcholine receptor antibody (AChR-Ab) seronegative generalized myasthenia gravis (gMG). argenx says the acceptance brings them closer to expanding the use of VYVGART in a broad spectrum of patients with myasthenia gravis.

FDA Approves Uplizna

In December, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Amgen's UPLIZNA® for the treatment of generalized myasthenia gravis (gMG) in adults who are anti-acetylcholine receptor (AChR) and anti-muscle specific tyrosine kinase (MuSK) antibody positive. The approval offers patients a new targeted treatment option that has the potential for long-term disease control with just two doses a year, after two initial loading doses.

Get the full articles at https://mg-mi.org/resources/mg-news/

Clinical Trial Resources

MGNet Myasthenia Gravis Rare Disease Network

mgnet.rarediseasesnetwork.org/

NIH National Institute of Health Clinical Trials

clinicaltrials.gov

MG-MI Regional Health Summit & Resource Fair

Saturday, May 30, 2026 • 9 am to 1 pm

Delta Marriott Kalamazoo Conference Center
2747 S. 11th St., Kalamazoo, MI 49009

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Meet, listen and talk with fellow MG patients & caregivers.
Get the latest updates from Michigan MG specialists.

8:30	Registration and continental breakfast
9:00 – 10:00	Michelle L. Crooks, MD – *Managing Your Chronic Condition* *Neurology consultant in the Kalamazoo area* 
	.April Davenport, LMSW, CDP – *Living with a Chronic Condition* *Clinical Social Worker Specialist in Kalamazoo* 
10:00 – 10:20	Break - Visit Sponsor/Resource Tables
10:20 – 11:00	Olivia Buckhout, MS, CCC-SLP – *MG & Speech Pathology* *Speech-Language Pathologist w/RCM Healthcare* 
	Dr. Laura Lenkey, PhD, CCC-SLP *Founder and CEO of VPEd* 
11:00 – 11:45	Patient Panel
11:45 – 12:00	Susan Woolner, CPXP – *Access to New Therapies in Michigan* Pres., MG-MI Board of Directors, Trinity Health 
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch, Table Discussions, Visit Sponsors
1:00	Closing

Virtual and in-person attendance is free of charge. There will be a box lunch, snacks and refreshments at the event. **You may register for either the virtual or in-person presentation HERE. REGISTRATION ENDS MAY 12.**

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New additions to our “electronic home”

A big part of our job is providing information and support to the MG community. One way we do that is to make sure our website is kept updated and new features added. In the past few months, here are some of the enhancements we've made.

Upgraded event calendar When you go to the MG-MI event calendar, you’ll find more details at your fingertips. You can choose to find virtual and in-person support meetings scheduled by the day, month or see a running list of events. You can send a reminder to your personal digital calendar, too.

Go to: https://mg-mi.org/upcoming-events/

New Lexicon and more The Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America has produced a nifty dictionary of MG-related terms. It’s become an instant hit with patients and care providers alike. You can download it from our MG Toolbox, along with MG resources, Treatment Summary and special documents for appealing insurance denials, and more. Go to:

https://mg-mi.org/living-with-mg/mg-toolbox/

Find out about The MG Alliance

MG-MI is a member of The MG Alliance, a new national coalition uniting organizations dedicated to supporting the myasthenia gravis community. The Alliance provides you with: Access to information on nationwide MG-related conferences, a directory of resources, and opportunities to connect with diverse communities, including LGBTQ+, Black, Hispanic, caregivers, teens, and holistic wellness groups.

Learn more at www.theMGalliance.org

¡No Están Solos!

Grupo Internacional De Apoyo Para La Miastenía Gravis

Si usted es un paciente, cuidador, familiar, amigo o miembro de la profesión médica, lo invitamos a participar y conocer mas sobre miastenía gravis. Comparta sus experiencias, consejos y trucos para lidiar con MG y manténgase actualizado sobre las noticias de MG.

Meets Every Other Month
Second Saturday
1PM (Central Time)

Encuentro Virtual Zoom
Regístrese con anticipación para esta reunión:
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/1fllGcAiRheVRF6_9x3mMg

Ask the Specialist

__Ask the Specialist__ is a forum for patients and caregivers to ask questions of clinicians who treat MG. See mg-mi.org for a list of topics that have been addressed such as the one below. If you have questions to share with other MG patients, use the link on the page or contact us at info@mg-mi.org or 616 956 0622.

Question: How is MG treated in pregnancy?

This is a challenging area, because there is a general lack of good data. In general, many autoimmune diseases are less aggressive in pregnancy. We really do not understand why, but we do know that your immune system must accept that a child is developing. That child has tissues that are not a part of you.

Typically, the immune system eliminates anything it judges to be foreign. In pregnancy, the immune system needs to reduce its tendency to do that. Exacerbation of MG can happen in pregnancy, but overall, it is less common because of this.

It becomes important in pregnancy to think about the chemistry of the medicines. Some of our category treatment medications are chemicals. For example, oral medications such as mycophenolate have very clear effects on the body but it is hard to predict how a developing baby will respond to this exposure.

Which medications are designed "more naturally" so to speak? Medications like prednisone much more closely mimic the steroids that your adrenal glands make anyway, but taking such a medication may lead to weight gain in both mom and baby. A bigger baby may be harder to deliver. IVIG is donated antibodies from plasma donors. While these certainly can cause problems with the pregnancy, they at least appear to avoid some of the unpredictability of a chemical.

In the end, one of the ideal strategies may be to drive disease activity down pre pregnancy. We really encourage patients to make their life choices first, and then we help patients achieve them. If you want kids, do not think that Myasthenia must limit that.

--Amit Sachdev, MD, MS

Find other answers by MG specialists at:
[mg-mi.org/ resources/ask-the-specialist/](mg-mi.org/resources/ask-the-specialist/)

2026 Support Calendar

2026 VIRTUAL SUPPORT MEETINGS

10 am	NOON	6:30 pm
May 19	Apr 16	June 2
Aug 18	Jul 16	Sept 1
Nov 17	Oct 15	Dec 1

Zoom Link
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6169560622
Meeting ID: 616 956 0622
By phone 1 309 205 3325
Enter meeting ID 616 956 0622

2026 IN-PERSON SUPPORT MEETINGS

CLICK HERE FOR MORE MEETINGS

Macomb County Regional: June 8, 7:00 – 8:30pm. Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Warren
Grandville: March 26, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, Russ' Restaurant, 4440 Chicago Dr., Grandville
East Lansing: April 23, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, Coral Gables Restaurant, 2838 Grand River Rd., E. Lansing
Holland: April 27, *Danger of Exposure to Forever Chemicals (PFAS)*, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm, Holland District Library
Berrien Springs: May 12, Maryjo Prince-Paul, Alexion, *Productive Conversations with your Healthcare Providers* 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

MG-MI Regional Health Summit & Resource Fair

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Delta Marriott Kalamazoo Conference Center
2747 S. 11th St., Kalamazoo, MI 49009

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REGISTER HERE!

MG-MI 50th Anniversary Celebration - Thursday, August 20, 5 pm – 8, Grand Rapids Art Museum, An evening of history and hope. Event launching "Fueling the Care" fundraiser

Tenth Annual Patient Education Conference – Saturday, October 10, 10 am – 3 pm Hilton Garden Inn Detroit, 27355 Cabaret Dr, Novi

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https://www.facebook.com/MGofMI
https://www.instagram.com/mgofmi/
https://www.youtube.com/@MG-MI/videos

Our Mission: The Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of Michigan is committed to our MG Community by providing patient support, community connections, education, and advocacy.

Our Vision: Living your best life with MG