

For Immediate Release

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**St. Joseph Health Announces Clinical Trial of  
Biogen's New Alzheimer's Drug, Aducanumab**

*St. Joseph Health-Sonoma County will offer North Bay Area's  
only clinical trial of new Alzheimer's drug, Aducanumab.*

**(Santa Rosa, Calif. – May 6, 2015)** St. Joseph Health-Sonoma County will offer the North Bay Area's only clinical trial of Biogen's new Alzheimer's drug aducanumab. The trial will begin approximately July 2015 and will be administered through Annadel Medical Group oncology services, which partners with St. Joseph Health-Sonoma County.

**Abducunumab**, an experimental monoclonal antibody drug from the Massachusetts-based global biotechnology company Biogen, is an innovative treatment that may significantly reduce cognitive decline and potentially damaging beta amyloid in the brain of patients with early and mild onset of Alzheimer's disease. Beta amyloid, and a protein named tau, are protein fragments that create plaque in the brain and an excess may be a key biomarker for Alzheimer's disease. Annadel Medical Group is currently administering two other monoclonal drug studies for Alzheimer's patients, including Genentech's crenezumab and Lilly's solanezumab, both of which are designed to work similarly to abducunumab.

"Monoclonal drugs such as abducunumab are a breakthrough in the study of Alzheimer's disease," says Dr. Allan Bernstein, neurologist and principle investigator of research for the drug in Sonoma County. "It's one of the most promising treatments we've seen for people in early stages of the illness."

In July 2015, Dr. Bernstein will lead a clinical study of abducunumab where participants will undergo a two-year experimental trial of the drug. Patients will receive the drug or a placebo intravenously, once per month, while being closely monitored by frequent MRI's, specialized PET (positron emission tomography) imaging, and neurological and cognitive assessments for potential improvements and side effects.

"Everyone needs to pay attention to someone who says they have memory loss," says Dr. Bernstein. "Old age alone isn't a valid reason for cognitive decline. It's important to recognize the early stages of Alzheimer's so the disease can be treated as soon as possible. Hopefully, aducunumab will help us to do that."

Beginning this May, Dr. Bernstein will host a series of talks entitled All About Memory, which will explain how memory works, how to preserve it, and what to do when it begins to slip. The differences between Alzheimer's and other types of dementia will be discussed, as well as information regarding how diet, exercise, medications, and trauma may affect the brain.

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**Dates:**

- Sebastopol Senior Center, Sebastopol, May 15, 2 p.m.
- Primrose Alzheimer's Living, Santa Rosa, May 20, 2:30 p.m.
- Airport Health Club, Santa Rosa, June 1, 6:30 p.m.
- Science Buzz Café at French Garden Restaurant, Sebastopol, July 15, 7 p.m.

A partner of St. Joseph Health-Sonoma County, Annadel Medical Group offers clinical trials and research studies to patients throughout the North Bay Area. Currently, the department has 19 studies open for enrollment, including those on breast cancer, lung cancer, and Alzheimer's disease, among others. Many patients participate for the opportunity to receive new treatments that are not available otherwise. All volunteers must sign an informed consent form before the trial and may leave the study at any time. More information about the clinical trials can be found here:

<http://www.stjoesonoma.org/Our-Services/Clinical-Trials.aspx>

-For information about the learning sessions or how to participate in the clinical trial of aducanumab, call (707) 521-3830.

-For information on various clinical trials underway at St. Joseph Health Sonoma County, contact Research Director Kimberly Young at (707) 521-3814.

**About Annadel Medical Group:**

Annadel Medical Group is the local physician organization which partners with the St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare medical practice foundation and St. Joseph Health. Physicians employed by the medical group provide outpatient and hospital-based services at facilities operated by St. Joseph Health throughout Sonoma County, including Petaluma Valley and Santa Rosa Memorial hospitals. Annadel Medical Group formed in Santa Rosa in October 2008, and has expanded to serve a broad range of patients, with growing primary care and specialty bases in Sonoma County. With the addition of 19 new doctors formerly belonging to Redwood Regional Medical Group, Annadel now has 89 physicians.

**About St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare**

Part of St. Joseph Health, St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare includes seven medical groups in California, three of which are in Northern California (based in Sonoma, Napa and Humboldt counties).

**About St. Joseph Health-Sonoma County**

St. Joseph Health in Sonoma County is a not-for-profit provider of integrated health care, sponsored by the St. Joseph Health Ministry. Its mission is to extend the healing ministry of Jesus in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange by improving health and quality of life in the communities it serves. Entities include the 278-bed Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital (the region's Level II Trauma Center), the 80-bed Petaluma Valley Hospital, Memorial Hospice, Hospice of Petaluma, North County Hospice, St. Joseph Urgent Care centers, and St. Joseph Home Care Network. The organization's more than 2,000 local employees offer residents of California's North Coast a spectrum of healthcare services. These include Family Birthing, Neonatal Intensive Care, Pediatrics supported by on-site pediatric hospitalists 24/7, urgent care, preventive care and health promotion, outpatient behavioral health care, palliative care, rehabilitation, and community benefit programs. Visit [stjoesonoma.org](http://stjoesonoma.org) to learn more.

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