

RESEARCH FUNDED BY THE BENIGN ESSENTIAL BLEPHAROSPASM

RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

As of January 2026

YEAR	DOCTOR(S)/PROJECT	AMOUNT
2024	Dr. Brian Berman, MD, MS, FAAN – Richmond, VA The Role of Melanopsin Retinal Ganglia Cells in Blepharospasm	~\$50,000
2020	Dr. Rona Silkiss, MD, FACS – San Francisco, California The Effect of Non-Psychoactive Cannabidiol as an Adjunct to Botulinum Toxin	\$70,061
2020	Dr. Mark LeDoux, MD, PhD – Memphis, Tennessee The Investigation of REEP4 as a Gene for Blepharospasm	\$40,000
2019	Dr. Xin Jin, PhD – San Diego, California Unraveling Hierarchical Network Loops in Isolated Dystonia (Joint Project with Dystonia Coalition)	\$15,000
2019	Dr. Brian Berman, MD, MS – Denver, Colorado Non-Invasive Inhibitory Neurostimulation for the Treatment of Blepharospasm: A Pilot Study	\$75,000
2018	Dr. Alfredo Berardelli, MD – Rome, Italy Longitudinal Analysis of Clinical and Neurophysiological Variable in Idiopathic (Benign Essential) Blepharospasm	\$31,000
2018 – 2015	Dr. H. A. Jinnah, MD, PhD – Atlanta, Georgia Project 4: Improving the Diagnosis of Blepharospasm and Related Disorders (Joint Project with Dystonia Coalition)	\$175,000
2014	Quoc Nguyen, PhD – San Diego, California Pharmacology of the Modulation of the Eye Blink Reflex Probed by High-Speed Two-Photon Calcium Imaging	\$50,000
2014	Dr. Mark LeDoux, MD, PhD – Memphis, Tennessee Genetics of Blepharospasm	\$80,000
2014	Dr. Aparna Wagle Shukla, MD – Gainesville, Florida Combined Effects of rTMS and Botulinum Toxin in Benign Essential Blepharospasm	\$50,000
2013	Dr. L. Craig Evinger, PhD – Stony Brook, New York A Novel Treatment for Benign Essential Blepharospasm	\$10,000
2013	Dr. Brian Berman, MD, MS – Denver, Colorado Neural Mechanisms of Reflexive Blinking and Eye Muscle Spasms in Blepharospasm: An Event-Related fMRI Study	\$73,923
2013	Dr. H. A. Jinnah, MD, PhD – Atlanta, Georgia Neuropathology of Blepharospasm	\$75,000
2013	Dr. David Copenhagen, MD – San Francisco, California Corneal Mechanisms of Pain During Photophobia	\$49,762
2012	Dr's. Tatiana Fuchs, PhD & Laurie Ozelius, PhD – New York, New York Identification of a Primary Blepharospasm Gene Using Exome Sequencing	\$51,000
2011	Dr. Cristopher Bragg, PhD – Boston, Massachusetts	\$35,000

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2011	Investigating the Effects of the DYT6 Dystonia Protein, THAP 1, on Par-4 and the D2 Dopamine Receptor Dr.'s. Andrew Harrison, MD, Linda McLoon, PhD, & Michael Lee, MD – Minneapolis, Minnesota	\$35,000
2011	Potentiating Botulinum Toxin A Effectiveness Using Co-Treatments Dr. Alfredo Berardelli, MD – Rome, Italy	\$30,000
2011	A Family Study of Increased Blinking in Primary Blepharospasm: Epidemiological and Neurophysical Aspects (Published in Neurology 80 on June 11, 2013, Page 2241) Dr. Allan Wu, MD – Los Angeles, California	\$53,000
2011	Modulation of the Blink Reflex with Alternating Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation in Blepharospasm Dr. David Peterson, PhD – San Diego, California	\$31,884
2010	The Interaction of Ophthalmic and Dopaminergic Factors in the Pathogenesis of Blepharospasm Dr.'s. Andrew Harrison, MD, Linda McLoon, PhD, & Michael Lee, MD – Minneapolis, Minnesota	\$50,000
2010	Potentiating Botulinum Toxin A Effectiveness Using Co-Treatments Dr. Giovanni Defazio, MD – Bari, Italy	\$12,500
2010	Development and Validation of Clinical Diagnostic Guidelines and a Novel Severity Rating Scale for Primary Blepharospasm (Joint Project with Dystonia Coalition) Dr. Angelo Quartarone, MD – Messina, Italy	\$49,000
2008	Role of Corneal Sensitivity in the Pathophysiology of Blepharospasm Dr.'s. Jill Ostrem, MD & Philip Starr, MD, PhD – San Francisco, California	\$50,000
2007	Subthalamic Nucleus Deep Brain Stimulation for the Treatment of Cranial-Cervical Dystonia (Meige Syndrome) Dr. Giovanni Defazio, MD, PhD – Bari, Italy	\$30,000
2006	Non-Conventional Imaging Studies in Benign Essential Blepharospasm Dr. Laurie Ozelius, PhD – New York, New York	\$80,000
2006	Whole Genome Association Studies to Identify a Blepharospasm Gene Dr. Kirsten Zeuner, MD – Kiel, Germany	\$60,000
2006	Probing the Plasticity of the Blink Reflex Circuit in Patients with Blepharospasm Dr. Mark Hallett, MD – Bethesda, Maryland	\$65,000
2006	Closed International Blepharospasm Workshop – took place in Houston, Texas. Representing six foreign countries and the US, thirty-five doctors attended.	
2004	Blepharospasm as a Result of Excitatory Sensorimotor Feedback Dr. David Kleinfeld, PhD – San Diego, California	\$55,683

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2004	Dr's. Jianhua Wang, MD, PhD & Steven Feldon, MD, MBA – Rochester, New York Tear Dynamics of Blepharospasm	\$50,780
2003	Mattie Lou Koster Fellowship Established Dr. Elizabeth Ulrich Peckham under the Following Mentors: Dr's. Andrew Singleton, MD & Mark Hallett, MD, NIH – Bethesda, Maryland Characterization and Collection of Families with Blepharospasm; Facilitating the Identification of Genetic Defect(s) Causing Blepharospasm (Published 11/06 & 3/09 in the Journal of the Movement Disorder Society) *BEBRF Board of Directors voted to fund this Fellowship, but NIH decided to fund it entirely.	\$60,000*
2003	Dr's. Bradley Katz, MD, PhD & Kathleen Digre, MD – Salt Lake City, Utah FL-41 Tinted Spectacles in the Management of Blepharospasm	\$15,193
2003	Dr. Motohir Kiyosawa, MD – Tokyo, Japan Study of Cerebral Glucose Metabolism and Benzodiazepine Receptors in Patients with Essential Blepharospasm	\$60,788
2002	Dr. Alan Scott, MD – San Francisco, California Removal of Motor Neurons with a Novel Immunotoxin *This project was not completed due to unforeseen circumstances. The unused funds were returned to the Foundation.	\$41,095
2002	Dr. Philip Bonner, PhD – Lexington, Kentucky Long-term Reduction of Muscle Function Through Chemo-Myectomy & Inhibition of Regeneration	\$64,661
2002	Dr's. Andrew Harrison, MD, Stephen Christiansen, MD, & Linda McLoon, PhD – Minneapolis, Minnesota Novel Immunotoxin Therapy for Muscle Spasm Disorders	\$68,554
2001	Dr. Paul Fishman, MD, PhD – Baltimore, Maryland Permanent Motor Chemodenervation with a Tetanus-Diphtheria Hybrid Neurotoxin	\$58,300
2001	Dr. Robert Baker, MD – Lexington, Kentucky Functional MRI in Benign Essential Blepharospasm Mapping of Cortical and Subcortical Areas Involved in Spontaneous and Reflex Blinking	\$41,704.64
2001	Dr. Giovanni DeFazio, MD – Bari, Italy Genetics of Blepharospasm	\$36,600
2001	Dr. Kathleen Digre, MD – Salt Lake City, Utah Photophobia and Blepharospasm	\$5,300
2000	Dr. Padma Mahant, MD – Phoenix, Arizona Risk Factors and Familial Occurrence of Blepharospasm	\$35,000

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2000	Dr. Philip Bonner, PhD – Lexington, Kentucky Inhibition of Axon Sprouting After Botulinum Toxin	\$51,203.11
2000	Dr. Mark Hallett, MD, NINDS, NIH – Bethesda, Maryland Closed International Blepharospasm Workshop – took place in Bethesda, Maryland. Representing five foreign countries and the US, forty doctors attended. Funded by the Allergan Foundation.	\$65,000
1999	Dr. Mark LeDoux, MD, PhD – Memphis, Tennessee Eyelid Sensorimotor Networks in Rodents & Primates	\$35,000
1999	Dr. Robert Morecraft, PhD – Vermillion, South Dakota Cortical Control of the Upper Facial Musculature: Organization of Central Systems with Etiological Potential to Induce Involuntary Facial Spasms – 3rd year (this pilot study led to NIH grant for 5 years – through 2005)	\$22,896
1998	Dr. Josep Valls-Sole, MD, PhD – Barcelona, Spain The Role of Prepulse Modulation of the Blink Reflex in the Pathophysiology of Blepharospasm & Meige’s Syndrome (Report was published in Clinical Psychology)	\$8,800
1998	Dr. Robert Morecraft, PhD – Vermillion, South Dakota Cortical Control of the Upper Facial Musculature: Organization of Central Systems with Etiological Potential to Induce Involuntary Facial Spasms – 2nd year	\$40,450
1997	Dr’s. Susan Warren, PhD & Paul May, PhD – Jackson, Mississippi Physiology of Blink Circuits in an awake Behaving Monkey	\$19,292
1997	Dr’s. Linda McLoon, PhD & Jonathan Wirtschafter, MD – Minneapolis, Minnesota Minimizing Inflammation & Maximizing Muscle Loss with Doxorubicin Chemo-Myectomy for Treatment of Blepharospasm	\$14,443
1996	Dr. John McCann, MD – Salt Lake City, Utah Trial of Cervical Sympathetic Blockade for the Treatment of Benign Essential Blepharospasm	\$13,000
1995	Dr’s. Mark Hallett, MD, NINDS, NIH & Robert Daroff, MD – Bethesda, Maryland Closed International Blepharospasm Workshop – took place in Bethesda, Maryland. Representing six foreign countries and the US, thirty-eight doctors attended. (Article Published in Neurology)	\$25,763
1994	Dr. Robert Forget, PhD – Quebec, Canada Clinical & Electrophysiological Characterization of Non-Paralytic Involuntary Eye Closure	\$43,809
1994	Dr. Michael Hutchinson, MD, PhD – New York, New York Neuroimaging of Blepharospasm	\$62,325

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1993	Dr. Bartley Frueh, MD – Ann Arbor, Michigan Characterization of the Physiology & Biochemistry of Normal Human Adult Pretarsal Orbicularis Oculi Muscles	\$11,700
1993	Dr. George Krauthamer, PhD – Piscataway, New Jersey Activation of Orbicularis Oculi Motoneurons by the Basal Ganglia	\$20,000
1993	Dr. Jean Jacoby, PhD – New York, New York Use of CA-Channel Blockers to Reduce Eyelid Contractility in the Alert Rabbit	\$32,733
1993	Dr. Robert Baker, MD – Lexington, Kentucky Excitability of Blink Systems in the Blepharospasm Patient	\$23,762
1993	Dr's. Linda McLoon, PhD & Jonathan Wirtschafter, MD – Minneapolis, Minnesota Testing an Improved Doxorubicin Chemo-Myectomy Protocol in Monkeys: Reduction of Skin Ulceration and Increased Muscle Loss with Cyclosporin Co-Treatment	\$7,879
1992	Dr. John Mazziotta, MD, PhD (First Mattie Lou Koster Scholar) – Los Angeles, California PET Studies of Patients with Blepharospasm & Meige Syndrome	\$67,242
1990	Dr. Joel Perlmutter, MD – St. Louis, Missouri Task-Related Blood Flow Responses in Benign Essential Blepharospasm – PET Study Funded by MLK Endowment and continued through NIH grant.	\$30,000
1990	Dr. Kathy Alderson, MD – Salt Lake City, Utah Reorganization of Neuromuscular Interactions Following Botulinum Toxin Injection for Therapy of Benign Essential Blepharospasm	\$23,495
1990	Dr. John Porter, PhD – Lexington, Kentucky Quantitative Assessment of the Effects of Oculinum on Eyelid Function: A Model for Evaluation of Improvements in Clinical Treatment of Blepharospasm	\$20,000
1990	Dr. Jean Jacoby, PhD – New York, New York Effect of the CA Channel Blocker Diltiazem on Orbicularis Oculis Muscle Contractility	\$20,000
1989	Dr. Jay Schneider, PhD – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Neurochemical & Receptor Autoradiographic Assessment of a Possible Primate Model of Blepharospasm/Meige Syndrome	\$15,000
1989	Dr's. Joseph Jankovic, MD & James Jerger, MD – Houston, Texas Stapedius Muscle Reflex in Cranial Dystonia	\$10,000
1989	Dr. Stewart Abramson, PhD – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Development of New Neuromuscular Blocking Agents for the Treatment of Blepharospasm	\$15,000
1989	Dr. Janice Massey, MD – Durham, North Carolina	\$20,000

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	Study of the Remote Effects of Botulinum Toxin	
1988	Dr. Alan Scott, MD – San Francisco, California Blepharospasm Treatment by Botulinum Toxins (Effects of B, D, F, & G)	\$20,000
1988	Dr. Richard Anderson, MD, et al – Salt Lake City, Utah The Chronic Effects of Botulinum Toxin on the Neuromuscular Junction	\$5,600
1988	Dr. Jonathan Wirtschafter, MD – Minneapolis, Minnesota Chemo-Myectomy with Adriamycin	\$5,000
1987	Dr's. Gerald Bratton, DVM, PhD, & W. R. Klemm, DVD, PhD – College Station, Texas Development of an Animal Model for Research on Blepharospasm	\$18,800
1987	Dr. John Hotson, MD – San Jose, California Blepharospasm Memory-Contingent Saccades	\$14,972
1985	Dr. Joseph Jankovic, MD – Houston, Texas Research on Botulinum Toxin Injections to Relieve BEB/Meige & Related Disorders	\$19,645
	Total Research Funded to Date:	\$2,823,598