



**For Immediate Release**

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**Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer & Melanoma Research Alliance  
Announce Grant Award Focusing on Immunotherapy Side Effects**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., May 31, 2019** – The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) and the Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA) today announced funding for important research to understand rare, but serious immunotherapy side effects and their mechanisms of action.

The jointly-funded Young Investigator Award will support Dr. Shaheen Khan, Ph.D., a researcher at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Khan's work is focused on understanding how the specific make up of a patient's immune system contributes to the development of immune-related adverse events in melanoma patients being treated with checkpoint immunotherapies.

"The valuable partnership with the Melanoma Research Alliance provides SITC the opportunity to support the exciting work of this promising early career scientist," said SITC President Mario Sznol, MD. "Together we are providing the foundation to understand and reduce unwanted toxicity from cancer immunotherapy and therefore improve overall outcome for our patients."

Immunotherapy drugs have revolutionized melanoma treatment, and have also shown promise in treating several other cancer types including lung, head and neck, kidney, bladder, Merkel cell carcinoma, classical Hodgkin lymphoma, and MSI-H cancers. However, sometimes the treatments result in the immune system attacking healthy cells, which can cause a range of side effects.

"This is the third research award we've been proud to co-fund with SITC," said MRA President & CEO of Michael Kaplan. "I have no doubt that this award and the partnership that made it possible will help bring the power of immunotherapy to more people facing melanoma and other cancers."

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**About the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC)**

The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is the world's leading member-driven organization specifically dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the science and application of cancer immunotherapy. Established in 1984, SITC, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, serves

scientists, clinicians, academicians, patients, patient advocates, government representatives and industry leaders from around the world. Through educational programs that foster scientific exchange and collaboration, SITC aims to one day make the word cure a reality for cancer patients everywhere. To learn more, visit [www.sitcancer.org](http://www.sitcancer.org) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

**About Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA)**

Founded in 2007 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, with the generous support of Debra and Leon Black, the Melanoma Research Alliance exists to accelerate treatment options and find a cure for melanoma. As the largest nonprofit funder of melanoma research, it has dedicated over \$110 million and leveraged an additional \$150 million towards its mission. Through its support, MRA has championed revolutions in immunotherapy, targeted therapies, novel combinations and diagnostics. Due to the ongoing support of its founders, 100 percent of donations to MRA go directly to its melanoma research program. MRA's ability to fund wide-ranging research in melanoma is amplified by unique collaborations and partnerships with individuals, private foundations, and corporations. Visit <http://www.CureMelanoma.org> for more information.