

# Sturge-Weber Foundation Awards Dr. Naïem T. Issa its 2020 Lisa's Research Grant

Naïem T. Issa, M.D., Ph.D., a clinical dermatologist in the Dr. Phillip Frost Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, has received the 2020 Lisa's Research Grant from the Sturge-Weber Foundation.



Naïem T. Issa, M.D.,  
Ph.D.

Dr. Issa's expertise is in *silico* drug discovery, where computational tools are used to predict molecules that could interact with and modulate disease targets. He searches for drugs that are already FDA approved, experimental or have been removed from the market due to safety concerns – a process known as “*drug repurposing*.”

## Seeking potential therapies

Dr. Issa will receive \$30,000 to support his search for the first small molecule drugs to inhibit (GNAQ) *Gq* protein mutations, which when left unchecked lead to dysregulated cellular responses such as capillary malformations. Recent research studies into potential therapies have targeted the different aspects of *Gq* signaling. However, no drugs have been discovered that directly inhibit the *Gq* protein itself, ultimately affecting all downstream pathways.

The Sturge-Weber Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization that raises funding for research into therapies for Sturge-Weber syndrome and port-wine birthmarks. Additional information is available on the foundation's [website](#).

Content Type Article