

# PACT

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

[www.PACTstudy.org](http://www.PACTstudy.org)

Summer 2020 | Vol.2 | Preventing Alzheimer's with Cognitive Training

## *Reminders*

We appreciate the time and effort you have invested in participating in the PACT study. We hope you find the games challenging. Remember, you will be enrolled in the study for at least 2 years. During this time, we ask that you please **do not** participate in any other research studies or participate in any other computerized brain training programs outside of the PACT study. Thank you for your commitment to the PACT study. Have a safe and healthy summer!

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## Meet the PACT Study Coordinators

**Alisa Houseknecht, PhD** is the University of South Florida (USF) Study Coordinator.



Dr. Houseknecht earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology and her Master of Arts in

Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling from the University of South Florida. She completed her doctorate in Counseling and Counselor Education from the University of Florida.

Dr. Houseknecht's educational background combined with her experience in the USF Memory Disorders Clinic working with adults with memory decline have created the perfect combination for the success of our team.

Dr. Houseknecht has been instrumental in the establishment of the PACT Study and she has coordinated the opening of 6 different PACT study locations. She has been an extremely motivating and uplifting team leader. Dr. Houseknecht has brought a sense of joy to the team in difficult times. A main source of excitement for her, and our team, has been her 9-month-old son, Ryan.

**Steph Krauchunas, PA-C** is the Michigan State University (MSU) Study



Coordinator. Steph earned her Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences and her Master of Science in

Physician Assistant Studies from Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan.

Steph has worked as a Physician Assistant in clinical practice for over 21 years specializing in general pediatrics, adult neurology and Alzheimer's Research. She has worked in both Grand Rapids and The Villages, Florida and has done mission work in Guatemala, Haiti, and Northern Kenya.

Steph works as the Director of Clinical Research for the Alzheimer's Alliance of MSU. She is growing and expanding Alzheimer's disease research in the west Michigan area. She enjoys interacting with the community and educating about memory and health. Steph provides talks and answers questions about Alzheimer's disease and the aging process. She would like nothing more than to help find a cure for Alzheimer's disease!

**MSU Staff Changes:** As of June 5, Baraa Abu-Dalu and Kelsey Magolan will no longer be seeing participants at the MSU site. If you have been scheduled with them in the past, you will now be contacted by either Patricia, Austin, Laura or Christin for all future visits. We wish Baraa and Kelsey the best as they move forward to new positions.

## It's Time to Rethink What We Know About Alzheimer's Disease

### Update on PACT Study Progress:

Annual Booster 1 Training has started. If you haven't already, you will receive an email from PACT staff with instructions to start booster training. Remember, booster training starts 1 year from your first visit.

**Our study team is always available to answer any questions at any time.**

**Tampa** (813) 974-6703, usftampapact@gmail.com

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**MSU Spanish** (616) 426-9150, msupact@gmail.com

### ALZHEIMER'S FACTS & FIGURES

(COURTESY OF ALZ.ORG)

### Updates on Alzheimer's Research

At the 12th Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's Disease conference, held in San Diego in December, 2019, research findings sparked renewed interest in a particular type of medication called, monoclonal antibodies. These medications include aducanumab, donanemab, gantenerumab, and BAN2401. Monoclonal antibodies are drugs that may be able to slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease by removing the build-up of amyloid plaques. Amyloid plaques are misfolded proteins in the brain that form in the spaces between nerve cells. These plaques are believed to be the first changes that cause Alzheimer's disease. Researcher revealed that these drugs were successful in clearing amyloid in the brain. Additionally, the findings hinted that amyloid clearance preserved memory. Future research will continue to examine this potential treatment. While future research is still needed, researchers believe monoclonal antibodies will be useful as preventative treatment in the progression of Alzheimer's Disease.

- 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease
- It is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the US
- 1 in 3 seniors die from Alzheimer's or some form of dementia
- It kills more than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined
- In 2020, Alzheimer's and other dementias cost the nation \$305 billion and by 2050, it could top \$1.1 trillion
- 16 million Americans provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias
- In 2030, these caregivers will provide an estimated 18.6 billion hours of care valued at \$244 billion
- 50% of primary care physicians believe the medical profession is not ready for the growing number of people with Alzheimer's and other dementia