



## CRAVAT Foundation

# Dr. Guy Weinberg

The **C**enter for **R**esearch and **A**nalysis of **V**ascular **T**umors (CRAVAT) is raising awareness of and harnessing research to address one of the rarest forms of cancer, vascular tumors. CRAVAT has its origins in a small but effective support group called HEARD (**H**emangioendothelioma, **E**pithelioid Hemangioendothelioma And Related Disorders),

Thanksgiving Day, 2007, Dr. Guy Weinberg, a professor of Anesthesiology at the University of Illinois learned that his 13 year old son had a large liver tumor that was later identified as epithelioid hemangioendothelioma (EHE). This began a journey that included a new hypothesis for the cause of EHE and a liver transplant for his son. Dr. Weinberg proposed that in some patients EHE might be associated with an infection by Bartonella, a bacterium that has the unusual ability to cause growth of endothelial cells. This effect has been seen in patients with HIV where Bartonella causes formation of endothelial tumors that are microscopically similar to those of EHE. Dr. Weinberg believes that in rare cases, the same process can occur in patients with normal immune systems and that this variant of Bartonella-induced endothelial growth (i.e., in non-HIV patients) could be a cause of EHE in some patients.



**Bartonella Bacterium**

Although this is just a hypothesis that still needs to be scientifically tested, there are patients with EHE who were found also to have Bartonella infection. Several scientists at a number of medical centers are now collaborating on a study to test this theory. If confirmed, it suggests that eradicating bacteria might reduce the stimulus to tumor growth. However, this is **not proven** and there is **no evidence at this point** to suggest that antibiotic treatment changes tumor growth or clinical outcome in EHE. Nevertheless, this area of research is intended to help us learn more about possible causes of EHE and the disease in general.

This is only one example of the basic science approaches being used by medical scientists to unravel the mystery of EHE. We believe such knowledge will eventually help us understand and find a cure for EHE and other vascular tumors. CRAVAT will raise funds to help support such work.

Now, Dr. Weinberg, and his brother Mark Weinberg, an attorney with expertise in structuring charitable foundations, have partnered with Cynthia Pollak, to establish CRAVAT.

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To contact Dr. Weinberg, send an e-mail to: [guyw@uic.edu](mailto:guyw@uic.edu)