

Clarification from Vitaly Citovsky

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I would like to clarify the involvement of my research group in the Morgellons studies. We are biochemists and cell and molecular biologists who study fundamental and diverse biological processes, such as genetic transformation, intercellular transport, and chromatin remodeling, using plants as experimental systems. Because one of our model organisms, *Agrobacterium*, is capable of genetically transforming not only plants, but also other eukaryotic species, including human cells, we were contacted by Dr. Stricker and MRF to investigate potential presence of *Agrobacterium* in biopsies from Morgellons patients. A limited number of anonymous samples provided by Dr. Stricker were tested by PCR for the presence of different families of *Agrobacterium* genes. Control reactions included samples from healthy donors provided by us. Only Morgellons, but not healthy subjects tested positive in these studies. This observation does not imply that *Agrobacterium* causes Morgellons or that Morgellons is indeed an infectious disease. However, it does encourage future studies to determine (i) statistical significance of our data, (ii) whether or not *Agrobacterium* is not only present extracellularly, but also causes genetic transformation of the infected tissues, and (iii) whether or not infection of laboratory animals with *Agrobacterium* can recreate at least some symptoms of Morgellons. These are the immediate goals which may or may not be pursued, depending on the available research funding which is currently non-existent for Morgellons.

Vitaly Citovsky, Ph.D.

Professor of Biochemistry and Cell Biology