Most Children with SMA Don't Reach Their Second Birthday

Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) is the leading genetic killer of infants and toddlers. Each year, up to 1,000 babies are born with this deadly genetic disease that dooms them to a life of suffering and premature death, usually before the age of two.

Today, an estimated **25,000** Americans suffer from this devastating disease. **Over seven million** potential parents, most unknowingly, carry the gene that can give their newborns this crippling disease. SMA is untreatable, incurable, and fatal.

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SMA attacks the spinal cord nerve cells and causes skeletal muscles to waste away, trapping healthy minds inside withering bodies. Over time, SMA victims lose muscle control and strength, leading to a progressive inability to walk, stand, sit up, move and, eventually, breathe. In many cases, babies are so weak that death occurs in the womb or shortly after birth. Even in less severe forms, patients generally require ongoing physical therapy, frequent hospitalization, and repeated surgery to help slow down the impact of the disease.

But there is hope. Thanks to recent, extraordinary scientific breakthroughs, a treatment or cure for SMA is now within reach.

In fact, leading scientists say only adequate government research funding for SMA stands in the way of a chance at life for the thousands of children afflicted with the disease.

For SMA families, whose lives have been devastated by this horrible disease, and the millions of Americans who live with this gene, this remarkable opportunity for a treatment or cure can't come soon enough.

To learn more about the role that government can play in speeding the realization of a treatment or cure for this horrific disease, log on to: **www.smafoundation.org/government.**

Paid for by the SMA Foundation on behalf of the SMA Foundation, FightSMA, Families of SMA, SMA Support, Inc., Our SMA Angels and Miracle for Madison.

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