

I Met With A Theravax Herpes Vaccine Patient And Here Is What He Said



By Josh Bloom — February 8, 2018



Richard Mancuso - Theravax Trial
Participant Photo: Twitter

Richard Mancuso is one of the 17 (1) patients who participated in the highly controversial Theravax herpes vaccine trial in St. Kitts. Mancuso was in New York for media appearances promoting his new book, "Asking For A Friend." **(2)**He kindly took the time to stop by our office and answer questions about his personal experiences with the vaccine, the company (Rational Vaccine) and its founder, Dr. Bill Halford.

JB: Richard, thanks for agreeing to speak with me about this very controversial topic. Can you explain how you first became involved with Bill Halford and Rational?

RM: As a long-time herpes sufferer I was a member of many Facebook groups. Just by chance, one of the admins saw my post and photos of a herpes outbreak on my left cheek below my ear. Unbeknownst to me, she already knew Dr. Halford from reading his research and speaking with him. She advised me to contact Bill since he was going to begin an offshore trial that she thought would be good for me. So I sent an email. Bill called me a few days later. I was one of the lucky ones who was chosen.

JB: What were your primary reasons for volunteering to try a vaccine which has little or no safety information?

RM: That's easy. I have been suffering from severe herpes outbreaks on my face for more than 20 years. I have tried everything under the sun to control my outbreaks, which were occurring 2 to 3 times per month, despite the fact that I was taking antiviral medicines. It was a no-brainer. As far as safety was concerned, after speaking with Bill and reading his studies, I was fairly comfortable

with my decision to give it a try.

JB: What was your level of comfort before the first shot?

RM: I won't lie, I was a little apprehensive, mostly because everything I tried has failed. I was worried that the same would be true here. Even though I was nervous about possible safety issues, based on Bill's papers, I still felt it was worth a shot.

JB: What happened after you received the first injection?

RM: On April 1st, 2016, I received the first of three shots in my lower calf, just under the skin. I recall that Dr. Halford believed that an injection under the skin would provoke a better immune response than one in a muscle. After the injection I closely followed the injection site, documenting it with photos every couple of hours for the first five days. The injection site became a one-inch red circle after two hours. Within a day it had become an oval red patch, about 4 by 6 inches. There was minor discomfort, much like a sunburn. It was no big deal.

JB: Your three injections were administered in 2016. Can you describe what effect, if any, that the vaccine has had on your symptoms since then?

RM: After the first injection in early April 2016. I was astounded to see that during that month I had only one outbreak instead of my usual 2-3. Injection #2 was given to me in May. Between May and my next shot in July, I had a total of three outbreaks and they were milder instead of the 6 sever ones I expected. The lesions were smaller, hurt less, and went away 2 weeks instead of 3. By this time I was pretty sure it was working. The third injection was in July. This time I did not get an outbreak for three months. This was totally unprecedented in my life. In November, three months after my last shot, I had two very mild outbreaks. During the ensuing 4 months, I had a total of 4 outbreaks, all mild, instead of 8-12. Since March 25, 2017, I have had none. I had not felt this happy in a very long.

JB: Since his death, Bill Halford has been described both as Dr. Mengele and also a saint. These cannot both be true. What are your impressions of the man?

RM: "Dr. Bill", knowing that the cancer was killing him, continued to work until he could no longer function. I don't know if I could have done the same had I been in his shoes. He had only one goal - to help people. I cannot fathom how anyone could make him out to be a monster when the exact opposite was true.

JB: There have accusations of impropriety by Halford and Rational, as well as Twitter comments from people who claimed to suffer adverse effects. What are your thoughts?

RM: There is a handful of people who claim that it didn't work. As far as I know, no one in that group received all three shots. To me, it makes perfect sense that it didn't work for them. This same group also complained about adverse reactions were also taking antiviral medications. But these same adverse effects can result from the antiviral drugs. Also, "Dr. Bill" designed this vaccine to be interferon-sensitive, which means that people who are immunocompromised can safely get the vaccine without fear of infection. Is this right? Let Rational Vaccines do an FDA trial to prove it. I'm willing to bet the farm that the science will prove Bill correct.

JB: It takes quite a bit of courage to step into the limelight and tell the world that you have an infection that most people are deeply ashamed of. What was your motivation for doing so? What kind of reception have you received?

RM: My motivation was Bill. When Bill died his voice died with him. I felt that was important since he changed my life, someone needed to honor his. The reception has been mixed. People either loved the idea or wanted me to die in a fire.

JB: A huge number of people are suffering from genital herpes. Is there anything you would like to say to them?

RM: I know that there is a lot of information on the internet, but much of it puts much of the onus on the person who is suffering as if they can snap their fingers and make themselves better. Last I heard, finger snapping does not cure herpes. It is my wish that this information will give hope to people; to let them know that there is something promising out there.

JB: If you had to do it over would you?

RM: In a heartbeat.

NOTES:

(1) 20 people started the trial 17 completed it.

(2) Regardless of Mr. Mancuso's writing aptitude, title brevity is not his strong suit: "*Asking For A Friend. A True Story of Surviving Herpes and Receiving a Functional Cure From a Vaccine - One You Are Not Allowed to Get.*" It is not yet clear whether the book is longer than the title.

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/02/08/i-met-theravax-herpes-vaccine-patient-and-here-what-he-said-12543>