

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

OMB APPROVAL	
OMB Number:	3235-0287
Estimated average burden hours per response:	0.5

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <u>EMIGH JAMES F</u>  (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>C/O ACURA PHARMACUTICALS, INC.</u> <u>616 N. NORTH COURT, SUITE 120</u>  (Street) <u>PALATINE</u> <u>IL</u> <u>60067</u>  (City) (State) (Zip)	2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>ACURA PHARMACEUTICALS, INC [</u> <u>ACUR ]</u>	5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)  Director 10% Owner  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)  <u>VP Corporate Development</u>	
	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>01/27/2012</u>		6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person  Form filed by More than One Reporting Person
	4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)		

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			
Common Stock	01/27/2012		M		6,225	A	\$1.3	177,450 <sup>(1)</sup>	D	

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
				Code	V		Date Exercisable	Expiration Date					
Common Stock	\$1.3	01/27/2012		M		6,225	01/01/2011 <sup>(2)</sup>	12/31/2014 <sup>(2)</sup>	Common Stock	6,225	<sup>(3)</sup>	12,450	D

Explanation of Responses:

1. Amount of securities include 77,750 Restricted Stock Units held by Reporting Person. Absent a change of control, shares of common stock will be distributed in exchange for Restricted Stock Units (after payment of \$.01 par value per share) in two equal installments on January 1st of each of 2013 and 2014. An additional 38,750 Restricted Stock Units, which were previously included in Reporting Person's holdings were exchanged for shares of the Issuer as of 1/1/2012.
2. Option was exercisable with respect to 6,225 shares commencing January 1, 2011, and with respect to 6,225 shares commencing January 1, 2012. Remaining portion of option (with respect to 12,450 shares) is exercisable (absent a change of control) in two equal installments commencing on January 1 of each of 2013 and 2014, and each installment must be exercised in the year in which it first becomes exercisable.
3. Not Applicable

Remarks:

/s/ James Emigh  
\*\* Signature of Reporting Person

01/30/2012  
Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.