

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

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

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
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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 IL 60067</u>  (City) (State) (Zip)	2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>ACURA PHARMACEUTICALS, INC [</u> <u>ACUR ]</u>  3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>04/24/2009</u>  4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)	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 Marketing &amp; Administration</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
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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	04/24/2009		A		18,000 <sup>(1)(2)</sup>	A	(3)	160,000	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	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date					
Common Stock	\$6.29	04/24/2009		A		72,000		(4)	04/23/2019	Common Stock	72,000	(5)	72,000	D

Explanation of Responses:

1. Restricted Stock Units vest in equal monthly installments over 24 months commencing May 24, 2009. Absent a change of control, shares of common stock will be distributed under the Restricted Stock Units (after payment of \$.01 par value per share) in four equal installments on January 1st of each of 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. If a change of control occurs (whether prior to or after 2011), one share of common stock will be distributed for each outstanding Restricted Stock Unit (after payment of \$0.01 per share par value) at or about the time of the change of control.
2. The Restricted Stock Units have no expiration date. Absent a change of control, distributions of common stock under the Restricted Stock Units will be made in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.
3. Grant is a grant of Restricted Stock Units. Restricted Stock Units represent rights to an equivalent number of shares of Common Stock of the Issuer. Upon issuance of Common Stock under the Restricted Stock Units, holders of Restricted Stock Units must pay par value (\$.01) for each share acquired.
4. Option vests and is exercisable in 24 equal monthly installments on the 24th day of each calendar month beginning May 24, 2009.
5. Not Applicable.

Remarks:

/s/ James Emigh 04/24/2009  
\*\* Signature of Reporting Person 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.