

Scientists Identify Seven Worst Non-Motor PD Symptoms

Scientists in the United Kingdom have identified the seven worst non-motor symptoms in Parkinson's disease (PD).

Addressing the fact that, until recently, non-motor symptoms have received relatively little attention, David Gallagher, MRCP, and Drs. Andrew Lees and Anette Schrag, assessed the impact of non-motor symptoms on 94 patient-participants. Their findings were published in the journal *Movement Disorders*.

The order and frequency of the most common symptoms are:

- Urinary and gastrointestinal symptoms (84 percent)
- Mood (74 percent)
- Fatigue (74 percent)
- Daytime somnolence (65 percent)
- Pain (56 percent)
- Nighttime sleep problems (55 percent)

Of all PD symptoms, those having the greatest impact on quality of life are depression, followed by fatigue, thermoregulatory, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular autonomic function, daytime somnolence and urinary problems.

The scientists also found that while psychiatric problems are increasingly being documented, many symptoms, particularly those perceived as embarrassing or unrelated, remain underreported.

Study Shows that Women Benefit from some Antioxidant Vitamins

A six-year study involving more than 600 volunteers has concluded that women who consumed higher amounts of vitamin E and β -carotene (the precursor of vitamin A) were significantly associated with reduced risk of Parkinson's disease. The reduced risk was down to 45 percent for vitamin E, and down to 56 percent for β -carotene. No relationship occurred in men.

The research, reported in the *European Journal of Neurology*, investigated the relationship of the dietary intake of antioxidant vitamins and the risk of PD. It was conducted at Fukuoka University, Osaka, Japan, by 14 scientists and the Fukuoka Kinki Parkinson's Disease Study Group, and adjusted for gender, age, region of residence, pack-years of smoking, years

of education, body mass index, dietary intake of cholesterol, alcohol, total dairy products and coffee, and the dietary glycemic index.

No relationships were found between PD risk and vitamin C, α -carotene, other vegetables, cryptoxanthin, or fruit.

Vitamin E is found in mustard greens, Swiss chard, spinach, kale and nuts; β -carotene-rich foods are sweet potatoes, carrots, peppers, kale and spinach.

Source: APDA Newsletter-Summer 2011

Staying Safe Behind the Wheel

Many of us have been driving for so many years that we no longer give it a second thought. But as we age, that attitude might be a mistake.

On its own, aging doesn't make you a bad driver. But, according to various experts, aging is linked with changes that may affect driving skills.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DRIVER?

Among other things, safe drivers:

Have good vision. Most people ages 40 to 64 should get an eye exam every two to four years. People 65 and older should be tested every year or two.

Have good hearing. After age 50, have your hearing evaluated every three years. If you need a hearing aid, be sure to wear it when you drive.

Limit distractions. Don't drive and eat, drink or talk on the phone. Keep the radio volume down or off, for example, and conversations to a minimum.

Consider conditions. As much as you can, avoid driving at night, in heavy traffic or in bad weather, all of which make accidents more likely.

Drive a safe vehicle. Your visibility is better when your windows, windshield wipers, mirrors and headlights are clean. Replace wiper blades as needed. Keep headlights aligned. Also inspect your tires for uneven wear. Check tire pressure, including the spare, at least monthly.

Keep skills sharp. Consider taking a driver refresher course. Consider working with an occupational therapist who can evaluate your driving and—with retraining, exercises and adaptive equipment—help you compensate for age-related changes that affect safety.

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; National Institute on Aging

The Group Scoop

MEETING NOTES



The Central New York Parkinson Support Group gathered on July 19, 2011 at Preswick Glen for the 20th Annual "Park Pic." What a wonderful setting for an afternoon of good food, good fellowship, good fun and good entertainment. There were lots of goodies and great door prizes. While all of this was happening, we had musical entertainment by the "Two Old Cowboys" which was enjoyed by all in attendance!

One of the highlights of our summer gathering is always the awarding of the Walter H. Dickson Memorial Awards.

Our congratulations and thanks go out to the committee who planned the event for a job well done!

Guest speaker for the meeting on September 20th was Wendy Benton, Social Worker at the Presbyterian Home. She gave a very informative presentation about the Day Care Program and how to become involved in it. Following her program, the people with PD and the caregivers met in separate groups to share their experiences and concerns.



Under the Weather?

Fall has arrived and we hope our membership are all staying in good health. We hope those who had some summer ills are recuperated! Best wishes to Pat Duciaume, Don Hamlin, Stan Kowalski, Charlie Mahaffy and Baden Mudge.



*CNYPSG Website
Check it out!!*

<http://www.vtboxtwr.org/parkinson.html>

Walter H. Dickson Memorial Awards

The annual presentation of the Walter H. Dickson Awards was held when we gathered at Preswick Glen for our summer outing. Recipients of the awards were chosen by the membership.

Chosen this year as an outstanding Person with Parkinson's (PWP) was Sam Kitchen. Sam is a resident of the Elm wing at the Presbyterian Home and has dealt with Parkinson's disease for many years.

Esther Kitchen, caregiver of her husband, Sam, was recognized as the outstanding Caregiver of 2011. A member of CNYPSG for some time, she now serves on the Board of Directors as Corresponding Secretary. She is always ready to help with any project and share her ideas to help those in the PD community.

Certificates were presented to the other nominees. The Parkinsonians who received certificates were Joe Leary and Marty Zippen. Kerry Thieme was recognized as an outstanding caregiver.

Our CONGRATULATIONS to all of the nominees! We thank you for sharing your special talents and expertise!

WELCOME

What a pleasure to have new people at our most recent meetings! We hope that they will all see fit to come back and join us for our future activities! So we say "WELCOME" Jo Ellen Hadlock, Nelson, Marty and Carol Soggs and Joyce Joseph.

Health Fair

Looking ahead – there will be a Health Fair in Rome at the Ava Dorfman Senior Center on October 14th. There is always a need for people to help man our booth and meet the public!



Editor's Note

You will probably remember seeing this letter in the last newsletter. A request has been made to repeat it. Dr. Higgins has been in touch with some of our people and he is willing to bring his staff to this area to meet with people with PD and their siblings and/or relatives with PD. Unless he has enough people for this study, he will lose the grant for the study.

This study does not involve or hinder involvement with your physicians or your insurance companies. There is no charge for the NIH study.

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Subj: Inquiry
Date: Monday, April 18, 2011 5:20:09 PM
From: HigginD@mail.amc.edu
To: glynnismoy@aol.com

I was provided a list that Mary Fenn had put together of Parkinson's disease Support Groups in NY. I send you this email now seeking assistance. We are involved in an NIH study examining the genetics of Parkinson's disease. We are trying to identify families in which 2 or more living members have PD. The study consists of a standard neurological examination, a number of cognitive assessments, review of family history and a blood sample. Recruitment has proven most difficult with concern that the study might be prematurely stopped due to poor enrollment. Was curious to know if you might be aware of families in Upstate NY that would be interested in getting involved. Funds are available to assist with travel expenses. We would be happy to meet/work with your Support Group. I welcome any thoughts that you might have.

Thanks in advance for considering this request.

Best regards,

Don Higgins

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10 Signs of Caregiver Stress

1. **Denial** – about the disease and its effects on the person who's been diagnosed. *"I know Mom's going to get better."*
2. **Anger** – at the person with the disease that no effective treatments or cures currently exist and that people don't understand what's going on. *"If he asks me that question one more time, I'll scream."*
3. **Social Withdrawal** – from friends and activities that once brought pleasure. *"I don't care about getting together with the neighbors anymore."*
4. **Anxiety** – about facing another day and what the future holds. *"What happens when he needs more care than I can provide?"*
5. **Depression** – begins to affect the ability to cope. *"I don't care anymore."*
6. **Exhaustion** – makes it nearly impossible to complete necessary daily tasks. *"I'm too tired for this."*
7. **Sleeplessness** – caused by a never-ending list of concerns. *"What if she wanders out of the house or falls and hurts herself?"*
8. **Irritability** – leads to moodiness and triggers negative responses and reactions. *"Leave me alone."*
9. **Lack of Concentration** - makes it difficult to perform familiar tasks. *"I was so busy. I forgot we had an appointment."*
10. **Health Problems** – begin to take their toll, both physically and mentally. *"I can't remember the last time I felt good."*

Source: Alzheimer's association