



The Parkinsonian

☀ *Summer Issue, 2009*



Northwest PADRECC

Parkinson's Disease Research, Education & Clinical Center



Evidence Backs Benefits of Exercise In Parkinson's

By Kevin Lockette, PT

The key to an effective exercise program with Parkinson's disease is to focus on posture and purposeful movement. The postural muscles are vital to maintaining the range of motion you need to carry out the activities of daily living.

These muscles are also critical for balance in that they help you keep your center of gravity over your base of support (your feet), which prevents you from falling.

The main postural muscles are the scapular muscles, the muscles of the upper back, the back and hip extensors, and the quadriceps.

The stronger your postural muscles are, the better equipped you will be to battle *forward posturing*. The tendency in Parkinson's to lean forward in a stooped posture, which can trigger *freezing* (the sudden inability to take a step) and *festination* (a shuffling gait).

We all know exercise is good for us – for cardiovascular conditioning, for building muscle to support aging bone, and for staying flexible. But exercise has special benefits for people with Parkinson's, and not just for the body but for the brain.

One University of Southern California study looked at treadmill exercise in mice with reduced dopamine-producing capacity, comparing outcomes against a group of normal mice. (In Parkinson's disease, the brain's dopamine-

producing neurons are diminished.) In the mice with neuron loss, exercise showed a positive effect on dopamine levels.

An Italian research group evaluated the capacity of a rehabilitation exercise program to improve mobility in people with Parkinson's. The researchers found statistically significant improvements in the subjects' motor performance after they had gone through the program. And researchers at Washington University recently noted significant improvements to functional mobility in groups of study subjects who took tango lessons and exercise classes. Those who took tango classes showed the greatest improvement in balance.

More research is underway to better understand the effects of exercise on Parkinson's disease. The bottom line is that exercise is one thing you can do to combat the physical symptoms of Parkinson's, including tai chi, Pilates, dance, and resistive training.

An exercise program designed specifically for Parkinson's can help improve posture, reduce the affects of fatigue, improve mobility, and decrease the incidence of freezing and falls. Ask your health-care provider or physical therapist to advise you on exercises to help with your Parkinson's.

Kevin Lockette is a Hawaii-based physical therapist with 20 years' experience working with people with neurological issues.

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Calendar of Events

Upcoming classes, support groups, and other events related to movement disorders

Parkinson's Resources of Oregon

Wednesday, July 17, 2009: Senior Care and Housing Options in Oregon and Southwest Washington: This talk is located at the Portland Providence Medical Center at 1 p.m. Learn about different care options including home health, independent living, assisted living, and adult foster homes. Find out how these options differ and how to select one that is right for your needs or those of your loved one. Call PRO to RSVP (503) 594-0901.

Thursday, August 17, 2009: Family Caregiver Training: This talk is located at the Medford Public Library, and is a 4 hour program geared towards individuals who provide care for a family member in the advanced stages of Parkinson's disease. Call PRO's Social Worker, Sarah Movius Schurr at (800) 426-6806 for details.

Saturday, September 19, 2009
Sole Support - Hawthorne Park Pavilion, Medford, Ore.

Sunday, September 20, 2009
Sole Support - Alton Baker Park, Eugene, Ore.

Sunday, September 27, 2009
Sole Support - Willamette Park, Portland, Ore.

All walks include activities and registration beginning at 12:30 p.m. There are options of a 1k or 5k walk, and walkers are encouraged to form teams and raise money for Parkinson's disease. Registration fees are \$15 for adults (13 and over), \$10 for children between 12 and 4. Children under 3 are free, and if you register them they will receive a Sole Support t-shirt, too. Participants may register online (recommended), by mail or at the event. We encourage everyone to walk as a team and fundraise to help exceed our goal of \$110,000! Event festivities will include live music, snacks and refreshments, a vendor fair, children's activities, and honorarium opportunities. Questions? Call (800) 426-6806.

Portland Patient Education Talks

All talks are held in the Portland VA Medical Center Auditorium from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please arrive early for parking. To register call (503) 721-1091.

Friday, July 10, 2009: Exercise Fair: Enjoy booths and a talk about the benefits of exercise in Parkinson's Disease. Lunch included during the talk. **RSVP is required to attend this event.**

Parkinson's Center of Oregon (PCO)

Newly Diagnosed Educational Session: Occurs every other month. For more information call (503) 494-9054.

Thursday, July 23, 2009: Caregiver Conference: From 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Caregivers Conference 2009 to be held at OHSU Doernbecher Hospital's Vey Auditorium, Portland. An offering from the Parkinson Center at OHSU. Keynote address: Collaboration & Communication: "Parkinson's Disease and Your Relationship" by Elliot Geller, LCSW. Registration is only \$10; call OHSU at (503) 494-7231.

Saturday, September 12, 2009: 26th Annual Symposium: Symposium to educating patients and caregivers about ways to live well with PD. For more information call (503) 494-9054.

St. Charles Medical Center - Bend, Ore.

Parkinson's Exercise Class: \$35 for a six week session. Located in the St. Charles Training Room E in Bend, Ore. For more information call Terry Shelby at (541) 706-6390.

Parkinson's TeleHealth Program

The Parkinson's TeleHealth Program broadcasts live, interactive educational talks to a network of rural communities in the Northwest. All sessions start at 2:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time).

Monday, July 20, 2009: The Pros and Cons of Nagging Someone with PD: Jeff Shaw, PsyD.

Monday, August 17, 2009: Thinking About Sleep? What is Sleep? How Does it Work?: Dr. Belenky, M.D., Ph.D.

Please call for more information and to register:

Anchorage, Alaska,	Rose Lahti	(907) 278-7500
Billings, Mont.,	Mark Horn or Mike Roscoe	(406) 657-4870
Clarkston, Wash.,	Francie Jacobson	(509) 758-7070
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho,	Tom Hauer	(208) 666-2987
Grangeville, Idaho,	Karla Kroug	(800) 772-5137
Kennewick, Wash.,	Angel L. Trump	(509) 586-5119
Kirkland, Wash.,	Shelly Henderson	(425) 899-2660
Pendleton, Ore.,	Mary Finney	(541) 276-1881
Sandpoint, Idaho,	Sue Fox	(208) 265-3390
Seattle, Wash. ,	Alecha Newbern	(877) 980-7500
Spokane, Wash.,	Larry Campbell	(509) 232-8134
Walla Walla, Wash.,	Debbie Deccio	(509) 522-5835 ext. 2835

PADRECC Website



Check out the newly updated PADRECC Website at:
<http://www.visn20.med.va.gov/portland/PADRECC>

The PADRECC website provides information about Parkinson's Disease and other movement disorders, as well as services available to veterans and their caregivers. Here are some things you can find on the website:

- ◆ PADRECC clinic, staff, and contact information.
- ◆ Information about Parkinson's Disease and its treatments.
- ◆ Information about local support groups, and outside resources.
- ◆ Patient Education events.

Recruiting VA Studies

Memory and Movement Disorders Demonstration Project (VA IRB ID: 1585 VA IRB Grant Number: #02-2202)

Dr. Joseph Quinn, MD is conducting this research study in order to track the frequency and types of changes in mental functioning that occur over time in Parkinson's patients. Participants would be asked to attend one or more study visits. All study visits would take place at the Portland VA Medical Center. The first visit would take less than twenty minutes. If asked to continue in the study there would be a second 90 minute visit and then follow-up examinations once a year for the next 3 years. All patients in the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinic Center (PADRECC) are invited to participate in this study. You may or may not personally benefit from participating in this study. However, by serving as a subject, you may help us learn how to benefit patients in the future. For more information on how to participate, please contact Susan O'Connor, RN at (503) 721-1091.

Parkinson Associate Risk Study (PARS): Evaluating Potential Screening Tools for Parkinson Disease (VA IRB ID: 2021; VA IRB Grant Number: # 05-0307)

Dr. Penny Hogarth is conducting this research study to estimate the frequency of olfactory loss in first-degree relatives of Parkinson's patients. Participation by a first-degree relative of a Parkinson's patient would require 6 one hour annual visits to the Portland VA Medical Center and completion of 6 annual smell tests by mail. The sub-study would require travel to Connecticut for a brain imaging procedure. All costs for travel to Connecticut will be paid by the study sponsor. All first-degree relatives of PD patients above the age of 50 or within 10 years of the age of diagnosis of PD are invited to participate. This is a research study and not treatment or diagnosis of PD. You may not benefit from participating in this study. However, by serving as a subject, you may help us learn how to benefit patients in the future. For more information on how to participate, please contact Susan O'Connor, RN at (503) 721 – 1091.

Recruiting OHSU Studies

Fish Oil for Depression in Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's Disease (PD)

The Parkinson's Center of Oregon at Oregon Health & Science University is looking for people with a confirmed diagnosis of PD who are suffering from Depression. The purpose of the study is to determine if taking omega-3 fatty acids along with your current antidepressant helps with symptoms of depression in people with PD. In addition we will determine if omega-3 fatty acids decrease blood levels of substances that are associated with depression.

You may be eligible to participate in the study if you meet all of the following criteria.

- Have a definite diagnosis of PD
 - On a stable dose of anti-depressant medication
- Between 18-85 years of age

This is a three-month pilot study in which 60 participants with either PD or MS will be randomly assigned to receive either fish oil capsules (which have high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids) or placebo capsules. The study requires 5 visits to OHSU. The research study will pay for all costs associated with the participation in this study. You will be responsible for any expenses that have to do with other aspects of your participation such as childcare and transportation. If you meet the eligibility requirements described above and are interested in participating in this study please call Dr. Lynne Shinto at (503) 494-5035.

Ask The Doctor: Answers to Questions Submitted by Patients and Caregivers

Question: Do Parkinson's Disease Medications Cause Wandering?



Answer: by Kathryn Chung, MD

Wandering is not likely to be solely caused by medications used to treat PD. It is more likely that cognitive (or "thinking") problems lead to wandering. Indeed, wandering is common in other diseases dominated by dementia such as Alzheimer's.

This kind of activity may result from disorientation, confusion, restlessness or other excessive energy. Some PD medications may worsen confusion and agitation, so it is still important that the patient's medications are appropriately chosen and correctly dosed.

Because safety can be compromised, installing locks and ensuring that an identification bracelet is worn at all times can help to prevent serious incidents. It may help to arrange for enjoyable outings, or encourage relaxation and regular exercise, along with other stress management techniques. Examples might include

encouragement to engage in suitable hobbies or other methods of self-expression like artwork or talking about the past.

If wandering is a problem that can no longer be safely managed by caregivers at home, then moving to a care facility may be the best solution. It is important to discuss this with your PD care team early, so that it can be monitored and options discussed well ahead of time.

Have a Question? Ask the Doctor.

Do you have a question about Parkinson's Disease that you would like to see answered in this newsletter by one of our doctors or nurses? If so, please submit your question to nwpadrecc@va.gov or call Jessie at (503) 220-8262 ext. 54687. You can also mail requests to the Portland VA Medical Center address listed on the back page.

Want to Contribute?

This newsletter is yours, and we think you should be involved. If you have any art, poems, stories, or articles you would like to share with other Parkinson's patients, please send them to the address listed below or e-mail them to nwpadrecc@va.gov with newsletter submission as the subject line.

Portland VA Medical Center
Attention: Jessie Little
P3-PADRECC
3710 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd.
Portland, OR 97239

To receive the Parkinsonian by e-mail please forward a request to nwpadrecc@va.gov. Call (503) 721-1091 to be removed from our mailing list



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