



American Parkinson Disease Association
Georgia Chapter and
The Information and Referral Center
at Emory University
P.O. Box 49416
Atlanta, GA 30359

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The next Educational Meetings located at Clairmont Oaks in Decatur, GA

****** NO MEETINGS~ May, June or July ******

August 16, 2008

Parkinson Disease Update 2008-2009 by Dr. Jorge Juncos

September 20, 2008

Cognitive Disorders in Parkinson's Disease by Dr. Mark Kozinn, President of the Georgia Neurological Society.

Educational meetings will start at 10:30am. Please come prepared with your questions.

OTHER EVENTS:

May 15th, 2008

Caregiver Conference with Keynote speaker Lonnie Ali

October, 2008

Cycling event



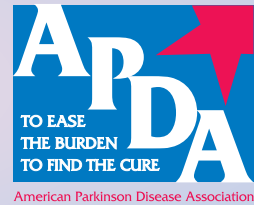
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DISCLAIMER

The material in this newsletter is presented solely for the information of the reader. It is not intended for treatment purposes, but rather for discussion with the patient's physician.

Parkinson's & Us

NEWSLETTER



SPRING / SUMMER 2008

A Publication of the Georgia Chapter, American Parkinson Disease Association, Inc.
and The Information & Referral Center at Emory University

VITAMIN D - BEYOND PREVENTION OF RICKETS

By

Marian L. Evatt, M.D.

Frequently in medicine the more we learn about a topic, the more we realize there is to learn: such is the case with vitamin D, which has recently occupied the news spotlight. For years, people only thought about vitamin D for preventing rickets, a disease of bone weakness and deformity that is caused by vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D fortification of milk since the 1930's has kept the incidence of rickets relatively low.

However, more recent research suggests that vitamin D plays a far wider role than previously believed in maintaining normal body functions. Even with this new information, experts are still not in agreement on who needs routine vitamin D supplement and how much a person should take.

Vitamin D deficiency is associated with a number of chronic disorders, including diabetes, autoimmune diseases, several cancers and cardiovascular disease. In addition, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with increased risk of several disorders related to neurology, including decreased balancing ability, muscle strength, depression, and cognitive problems. Chemical receptors for Vitamin D are quite widespread in the body and brain, lending support to the notion that vitamin D is necessary for normal functioning in the peripheral and central nervous system.

Vitamin D sources for humans include sunlight exposure and dietary intake from foods and supplements. The daily tablespoon of cod liver oil your mother or grandmother advocated for health provided a good supply of vitamin D. However, most foods, including fortified milk, don't contain much vitamin D. Historically, when most of the world's population was either farmers or hunter-gatherers, the majority of vitamin D came from exposure to sunlight, or more specifically ultraviolet B radiation (290-315nm wavelengths). Although vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin and excessively high supplemental intake of vitamin D can cause toxicity, sunlight also breaks down vitamin D in the skin and thus excessive sunlight exposure does not cause vitamin D toxicity. As Dermatologists have taught us, excessive sunlight does cause sunburn and

long-term damage to skin. Therefore, one should always wear sunscreen, even if you are trying to boost your vitamin D by staying in the sunshine! The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has suggested that most of us need between 200 international units (IU) and 600 IU daily to meet our body's requirements and have published these amounts as the daily adequate intake, or "AI." In addition, the IOM has published 2000 IU per day as the "upper tolerable limit" for vitamin D intake. However, these numbers are based on very old and sparse research. Many vitamin D researchers now feel these amounts are woefully inadequate. At a recent conference on Vitamin D held in September, 2007 at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), speakers repeatedly expressed the need for more research into what doses of vitamin D persons should be taking.

The amount of Vitamin D stored in the body is estimated by checking a 25-hydroxyvitamin D (also known as 25-OH vitamin D) blood level. Most experts agree that levels below 20 nanograms per milliliter (ng/ml) are low, and advise patients to get their vitamin D levels above 30 ng/ml. Older age, higher body fat content, darker skin tone and lack of sunshine exposure are all known to increase a person's risk of having vitamin D deficiency. It appears with the increasing portion of our population staying indoors, vitamin D deficiency has become a silent epidemic, with multiple studies showing as many as 40-100% of elderly persons who live in the community (ie, not in a nursing home) having vitamin D deficiency.

A Japanese researcher found patients with Parkinson's disease were more likely than similar persons without Parkinson's disease to have vitamin D deficiency. Here at Emory University, we have found vitamin D deficiency is more common in patients with PD than in patients with Alzheimer's disease or healthy individuals, and we are now conducting a trial of vitamin D supplementation in PD patients to try to start to answer what is an appropriate vitamin D dose for patients with PD who are vitamin D deficient. This study also examines whether supplementing vitamin D helps patients function or feel better. For more information on the Vitamin D study, please call Elaine Sperin at 404-728-4786.

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President's Corner

As I write this message, our chapter has already concluded one of our big fundraising events for this year and is well into the planning stages of several others. We hope that our members and any readers of this newsletter will want to participate in our activities either as a volunteer, sponsor, or donor!

In March we held our third annual "Driving Parkinson's Away" Golf Tournament at Smoke Rise Golf and County club. Kicking off the event on the eve of the tournament was the gala dinner with a live auction. We are very pleased to report that this was our most successful fundraiser ever! This is thanks in very large part to our small but faithful organizing committee which included two new enthusiastic members this year (Bill Wilkins of Wilkins Media, Inc and Cheryl Mann of Atlanta Home Care Partners, Inc). As always we are very grateful to Bill Pender who is the inspiration for this event. Please save the date for 2009 and join us: March 14 (dinner/live auction) and March 15 and 16th – tournament.

In April we had another big event: the Concourse Benefit for Parkinson's at the Concourse Athletic Club in Sandy Springs. We all know that this event is unofficially called the Margaret Miller party as it is held in her honor. There was plenty of wonderful food, music, dancing and more

Upcoming in May, APDA Georgia will help bring Lonnie Ali to Atlanta to give the keynote speech at the Caregiver Conference. Go to www.apdageorgia.org for more details.

Our publicity committee is working hard to raise public awareness. It started with the billboard campaign made possible by Wilkins Media and is now extending to public service announcements on radio. We have just learned that B98.5FM and B985.com stream will air our announcements throughout the rest of the year! We would welcome your feedback when you hear the PSAs.

And finally, we must say goodbye to board member, Cathy Frazier, who has served us so well for the past few years. Although she will no longer be on our board she will continue to head up the Cycling Event for Parkinson's – thank goodness!

*Thanks for all you do!
Annemarie Schwarzkopf*

Support Group Highlight

The Gwinnett Parkinson's Support Group affiliated with the **American Parkinson's Disease Association** in 1994 (13 years ago), which is as far back as my records go. Some of the founding members still attend including Margaret Andrews and Mamie Beason. The support group is provided meeting space, as well as mailing privileges and a person to coordinate meetings by The Gwinnett Hospital System. The Gwinnett Group meets in Lawrenceville at Summit Ridge which is centrally located in our county. People from Walton, Rockdale, and Dekalb also attend. Our meeting time is always the second Friday of the month at 1:30 p.m. Monthly notices are sent out with announcements and information on the monthly program. Most of our programs feature speakers. We have over 70 on our mailing list and we have anywhere from 15-25 at a meeting. We also have several volunteers who are the calling committee reminding people of the meetings. In addition to people with Parkinson's Disease, we have spouses, caregivers & adult children who attend our meetings.

One thing I notice about the people that come to our group is their attitude. These people are choosing to Live with Parkinson's Disease, not die from it. They work hard to maintain a positive outlook and to educate themselves on every aspect of Parkinson's Disease.

If you would like more information on the support group call Sharon Hansen at 678-312-6175 or e-mail shansen@gwinnettmedicalcenter.org

HELP for the Early Onset

Did you know the American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) operates the nation's only full-time, free-standing, information and resource center specifically designed to meet the needs of the young people with Parkinson's disease. APDA's National Young Onset Center is dedicated to helping young people "Live Well and Stay Strong," despite the physical as well as emotional impact of the disease.

In addition to expanding current programs and services, the center is committed to developing new opportunities for education, networking, and wellness that will help young people, their family members, friends, and healthcare providers manage the disease as effectively as possible.

Education

APDA publishes many informational booklets and supplements about Parkinson's disease and various aspects of living with the disease. All publications, including the new Young Parkinson's Handbook and the center's recently re-designed newsletter, are available free of charge. Another primary educational tool is our Web site: [HYPERLINK "http://www.youngparkinsons.org"](http://www.youngparkinsons.org) www.youngparkinsons.org through which you can access a wide range of resources and articles that allow you and those you love to stay informed, connect with others, prepare and plan for the future. Visit our Web site often as we will soon be re-launching the site in order to provide you with a more interactive and dynamic way of learning about the disease.

Networking

Our Person-to-Person program offers young people with Parkinson's the opportunity to connect with others who have situations or experiences similar to their own. We maintain a calendar of events and can connect you with support activities in your area.

Wellness

Through its newsletter, informational booklets, and Web site, the center offers current information on nutrition, fitness, and treatments—both traditional and alternative—of interest to young people living with PD.

For more information call or to register with us, call **1-877-223-3801** or visit our Web site at: www.youngparkinsons.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

ASK the Doctor

by Alan Freeman, M.D.

1. Why would I have my Vitamin D level checked?

Low Vitamin D levels are extremely common in the US. These low levels are associated with decreased immunity, increased cardiovascular risk, increased risk of falls, and increased risk of cancer- including prostate. Research is ongoing at Emory to further determine the role of Vitamin D in Parkinson's disease.

2. Why does Parkinson's disease cause constipation?

Constipation is a very common complaint among patients with PD and is probably multifactorial in origin. It has been shown that PD patients have fewer intact dopaminergic neurons in the colon compared to controls, thus slowing colonic motility. PD patients also have anal sphincter dysfunction (paradoxical anal sphincter muscle contraction during defecation) causing functional anal outlet obstruction that may contribute to constipation. Medications may aggravate constipation, most notably anticholinergic agents (i.e. trihexyphenidyl= Artane). Finally, PD patients have a significantly reduced water intake per day contributing to the problem.

3. Is depression a symptom of Parkinson's disease?

Depression may occur at any stage of PD and is a major factor related to poor quality of life for both patients and caregivers. Prevalence rates vary from 7-90%, but 40% is a frequently cited estimate. Depression may be a response phenomenon associated with the diagnosis of PD (exogenesis) or neurochemical (endogenous), due to lower concentrations of chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin. Patients may obtain symptomatic benefit with antidepressant medications, but these have not been formally studied in PD. Studies are ongoing to evaluate the efficacy of various antidepressants for PD patients.

4. Are the side effects of Requip and Mirapex the same?

Requip and Mirapex are both nonergot dopamine agonists and have similar side effects including nausea, sleepiness, confusion, orthostatic hypotension (blood pressure drop when sitting or standing) hallucinations, and lower extremity edema (swelling). More recently described impulse control disorders including pathologic gambling have been seen in a small percentage of patients on dopamine agonists. The side effects of these drugs are similar, but vary from patient to patient. If one drug is not tolerated, it is not unreasonable to try the other.

April Declared ~ PARKINSON'S DISEASE Awareness Month by Governor Sonny Perdue



On March 19, 2008 Mary Louise Weeks, Information and Referral Center Coordinator, Mark Weeks, Georgia Chapter Supporter and Charlotte Weeks met with Governor Sonny Perdue for the signing of the Proclamation declaring the month of April as PD Awareness Month in Georgia. This declaration joins 53 countries from the World Parkinson Disease Association, along with more than 1.5 million Americans with Parkinson's disease in raising awareness about Parkinson's disease. April 11th marks the 233rd birthday of Dr. James Parkinson who first described disease symptoms in 1817 calling it "Shaking Palsy." There is now a better understanding of the disease process which has led to new treatments to "Ease the Burden and Find the Cure." For more information on Parkinson's disease, or opportunities to assist in "Easing the Burden," please contact the local American Parkinson Disease Association Information and Referral center at 404-728-6552. Or visit the local Georgia Chapter website at www.apdageorgia.org.

Left to right: little Charlotte weeks on the knee of Gov. Sonny Perdue
Mary Louise Weeks
and husband Mark Weeks

Caregiver Symposium in Atlanta

APDA
TO EASE THE BURDEN... TO FIND THE CURE

American Parkinson Disease Association Proudly Presents

The Role of the Caregiver
In Successful
Parkinson's Treatment
with Lonnie Ali

FIGHT FORMORE™
www.FightForMore.com

Speaker
Dr. Stewart Factor
Director of
Movement Disorders,
Dept. of Neurology
at Emory University

Keynote Speaker
Lonnie Ali, wife of
Muhammad Ali

Thursday, May 15th
1:00 pm to 3:00
Cobb Galleria Center

Call for more info:
404-778-7777

APDA Support Groups

American Parkinson Disease Association Support Group Meetings in Georgia and the Carolina's
 If there is not a support group in your area and you would like to start a support group, contact the Information and Referral Center at 404-728-6552

ATLANTA

APDA Educational Meeting
 Clairmont Oaks
 441 Clairmont Avenue
 Decatur, GA 30030
 3rd Saturday, 10:30 AM (Aug-May)
 Mary Louise Weeks, RN (404) 728-6552

People with Parkinson's PWP Group

Westminster Presbyterian Church
 1438 Sheridan Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30324
 3rd Tuesday, 1:00 PM
 MaryAnne Brawley
 (770) 554-4193

Atlanta Veterans Medical Center

Veterans Learning Center, 1st floor
 1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033
 1st Tuesday, 1:00PM
 Betty Robinson
 404-321-6111 x7121

ATHENS

Athens Council on Aging
 135 Hoyt Street, Athens, GA 30606
 4th Monday, 2:30 PM
 Ann Boyer (706) 425-9591

BLAIRSVILLE

Union County Library
 Blairsville, GA 30512
 2nd Wednesday, 3:00PM
 Paula Wilde(706) 745-6594
 Peter Schlitze(706) 745-9171

DOUGLASVILLE

Wellstar Medical Center
 8820 Hospital Dr., Douglasville, GA 30134
 1st Tuesday, 2:00 PM
 Larry & Maebelle Hennessy
 (770) 949-9467

DUBLIN

Laurens County Library
 801 Bellevue Ave., Dublin, GA 31021
 2nd Monday, 10 AM
 Gary Gray 478-275-3058

DUNWOODY EARLY ONSET PD GROUP

Dunwoody Baptist Church
 1445 Mt. Vernon Rd., Atlanta, GA 30338
 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
 Eileen Piasecki(770) 837-9545

FAYETTEVILLE

Dogwood Forest Senior Living Home
 1294 Hwy 54 W., Fayetteville, GA 30214
 4th Tuesday, 7:00 PM
 Pam MacCallister 770-487-4444
 Betty Fry 770-631-2665

GAINESVILLE

St. Paul United Methodist Church
 404 Washington St., First Floor
 Gainesville, GA 30501
 First & Third Thursday, 11:00 AM
 Marie & Bob Bridges (770) 532-8848

GAINESVILLE

Lanier Village Estates
 4511 Misty Morning Way, Apt 2118
 Gainesville, GA 30506
 4th Tuesday, 11:00AM
 Ruth Pearce 770-718-9752

GRIFFIN

Spalding Regional Medical Center
 601 S. 8th St., Griffin, GA 30224
 4th Wednesday, 2:00 PM
 Liz Tarleton 770-233-2001

LAWRENCEVILLE / GWINNETT

SummitRidge Community Room
 250 Scenic Highway (Hwy 124)
 Lawrenceville, GA
 2nd Friday, 1:30 PM
 Sharon Hansen (678) 312-6175
 shansen@ghsnet.org

MACON

Medical Center Wellness Center
 3797 Northside Drive
 Macon, GA 31210
 September-May
 Last Thursday of the month, 3:00PM
 Patti Jones 478-746-9401

ROSWELL

Roswell United Methodist Church
 814 Mimosa Boulevard
 Roswell, GA 30075
 2nd Sunday (Aug. - May), 4:00 PM
 Julie Eckert (770) 924-6416

TIFTON

LeRoy Rogers Senior Center
 315 West 2nd Street
 Tifton, GA 31794
 2nd Tuesday, 2:00 PM
 Linda Boyette, R.N. (229) 388-1888

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

4th Monday 7-8:30pm
 Rotating location
 Contact Jan Rabinowitz
 jhrteam@hotmail.com
 404-579-6782

SOUTH CAROLINA

ANDERSON, SC

Anmed Rehab Hospital
 1 Springback Way
 Activity Room
 3rd Tuesday, 2-3:30 PM
 Katherine Vickerman
 (864)332-2850

MYRTLE BEACH/ MURRELL'S INLET, SC

Waccamaw Community Hospital
 Hwy 17 Murrell's Inlet
 2nd Thursday
 Elaine Casavant
 (843) 650-8756

SPARTANBURG, SC

Senior Centers of Spartanburg
 142 S. Dean St.
 Spartanburg, South Carolina 29302
 2nd Thursday, 3:00 PM
 Ethel Perricone
 (864) 597-1150
 Norbert Collins
 (864) 457-2439

COLUMBIA, SC

Lexington
 Medical Park Auditorium
 Sunset Boulevard
 Columbia, SC
 Every other month
 3rd Sunday 3:00PM
 Betty Millender
 (803) 874-3211

NORTH CAROLINA

ASHEVILLE, NC

1st Tuesday 10:30-12:00PM
 Care Partners Health Services
 Seymour Auditorium
 Lisa Laney-Kendrick, MSW
 828-277-4886

"Driving Parkinson's Away"

3rd Annual golf tournament

A special thanks to everyone who participated in the 3rd Annual "Driving Parkinson's Away" golf tournament held the weekend of March 8, 2008. For those of you who attended the *Dinner/Live Auction*, we hope you enjoyed the night. Thank you for your participation and especially for the individuals and businesses that donated items for the live auction.

The weather was beautiful for both day's golf – 15 teams on Sunday, March 9th and 28 teams on Monday, March 10th.

The first place winners were as follows:

Low Gross Team:	Low Net Team:
Sean Pender,	Wes McDowell,
Jenny Pender,	Ernest Morrison,
Faye Pender,	Dave Skinner,
Larry Harris	Jimmy Durham

We extend a special thanks to the sponsors for making this tournament possible. You truly make a difference to the Parkinson's community. (picture to right) outstanding job this year. Thanks to Bill Pender, Ken Alfiero, Annemarie Schwarzkopf, Bill Wilkins, Donna

McOwen, Cheryl Mann, Ajay Koduri, Kathy Edwards and the staff at the Smoke Rise Golf and Country Club.

Put this date on your 2009 calendar – March 14 – 16, 2009. Pass this information on the family and friends. We hope that you will join us for the 2009 event. It is a fun filled weekend with dinner/live auction on Saturday night and golf on Sunday and Monday. The awards dinner is on Monday night and everyone that plays golf on Sunday is invited back for this event.

All proceeds from this event go directly to fund Parkinson's programs. The APDA slogan is "To Ease the Burden, To Find the Cure" and together we can make this happen.

It was a great success because of the generosity of individuals like you who want to make a difference in the lives of those with Parkinson's disease.



Fundraiser Event was a big Success!

The Third Annual Concourse Athletic Club's Benefit for Parkinson's took place on Thursday evening, April 17, 2008. In each of the three years, Carrabba's Italian Ristorante has provided heavy hors d'oeuvres – (some would call it dinner) – for the crowd assembled around the pool for the festivities. Metrotainment Bakeries provided dessert for the second year. Gentle Rain Jazz Trio provided live music which set the tone for the party as they have done for all three years.

Thanks to the many shops, entertainment companies, restaurants and hotels, guests enjoyed participating in a successful silent auction and the always exciting Balloon Pop for prizes. All proceeds go to the Georgia Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association for Respite Care and Research.

Jacci Nightingale, a member of the athletic club, served as chairperson for the event for the second time. Her husband Tom assisted her as they worked with Concourse Athletic Club staff, club committee members, and American Parkinson Disease Association volunteers, to oversee this party which has gained the reputation of being a highlight of the spring social season. Concourse staff member Tracy Mezell has served as club chairperson for the party since its inception.

