

Parkinson's Patients Support Groups, Inc.

Feb./Mar. 2007

1170 Morse Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1605
www.ppsg.org 408.734.1593

Editor-in-chief: Phyllis Hsu Ng

Articles Editor: Ann Roper

Webmaster: Solna Braude

Editorial Staff:

Linda Chen

Charmaine Eng

Viola Mays

Drug Used for Parkinson's Disease Treatment May Damage Heart

1/7/07(HULIQ.com) - Your heart valve may be damaged if you are receiving treatment for Parkinson's disease using drugs Permax and Dostinex, says the study published in the current issue of New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM).

Two drugs applied in Parkinson's disease treatment may cause heart valve problems, according to the research published in the current issue of New England Journal of Medicine. The commercial names of mentioned drugs are Permax and Dostinex, while medically they are called Pergolide and Cabergoline. The drugs are used for other disease treatments as well. For example, Dostinex is approved in USA only for cases of excessive hormone - prolactin in blood.

The study in the United Kingdom among 114 thousand patients having Parkinson's disease showed that people who recently had heart-valve problems were a big share in pergolide and cabergoline users. German doctors have found that those who take these drugs were five to seven times more likely to have severe problems with valves.

Another study performed in Milan at the Istituti Clinici di Perfezionamento among its 155 patients found that 23% of Permax and 29% Dostinex users' valves were damaged while control subjects not taking these medications made only 6%. As other researches have showed that the group of maximal risk includes the patients who took the highest doses for longest time.

One of these drugs – Permax – already has a black-box warning label. This means that the medication could damage heart valves and doctors should pay special attention prescribing this drug. For the first time the warning was placed on the boxes in 2003. Dostinex has a warning as well, but of a lighter nature added just last month.

Parkinson's disease results in tremors, loss of muscle control and sometimes death. Around 1.5 million Americans and 6 million people worldwide suffer from this disease. The problem is a lack of the brain chemical, dopamine. The main stimulator for the body to produce more dopamine is levodopa. Pergolide and cabergoline are added to that drug or replace it, especially if symptoms worsen over time.

The reason for doctors being in favor of the drugs in poorer countries is that they are cheaper than Levodopa. However, experts say it would not be more expensive for Parkinson's drugs users to change the medication. Though Levodopa has its own negative effects anyway, they do not include heart valve damage.

Valeant Pharmaceuticals International owns the property right to Permax in USA. The company representatives insist that the drug has no influence on heart valve problems in patients having Parkinson's disease. However, the company is no longer promoting the drug. The original developer Eli Lilly and Co. admitted, while adding warning to Permax in 2003, that risk was very low: 5 in 100 000 users.

Happy New Year from the Parkinson's Institute

Dr. Melanie Brandabur, Medical Director, has been a long time advocate for Parkinson's education for patients and their care partners. In this effort, she and **Dr. Grace Liang** are offering mini-seminars for the newly diagnosed at the Parkinson's Institute. Call **408.734.2800** for more information. Dr. Brandabur also announces that she may have a limited number of timeslots available for support group talks and senior center presentations. Please call **Marilyn, PT**, at **408.542.5685** for more information

*This newsletter was assembled by
The Morgan Center. Thank You!*

“Ask Marilyn, PT”

Phyllis Ng at the PPSG newsletter asked if I might ponder questions sent in by the PPSG community and then write a response for the newsletter. The idea sounds great. Questions should relate to my area of practice, i.e. movement, alignment, sport activities, yoga, ADL's, and care giving. Medication questions are not within my scope of practice. Mail questions to: PPSG-Ask Marilyn, PT, c/o The Parkinson's Institute, 1170 Morse Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1605. In the meantime, STAND TALL and STRIDE LONG.

Marilyn Basham, PT

They May Lose Home (www.nwpcf.org)

Layla Bohm

State seeking over \$300,000 from Galt family to pay for Parkinson's sufferer's care

1/10/07(Lodinews.com) - The manila envelope bears a state of California return address and is directed to Olivia Valdez. Postage cost \$1.11, and it's not the first envelope she and other family members have received requesting payment for her grandfather's hospitalization while he battles Parkinson's disease.

By May, the state estimated the care had amounted to \$335,639, and California law makes Honorato Rodriguez's family members liable. That's a bit too much for Olivia Valdez to understand, though — the Galt girl is only 5 years old and is more interested in things like playing with her cousin.

Rodriguez, who turns 55 next week, was diagnosed with the disease in 1990 and at the time was the youngest person with Parkinson's in the San Joaquin Valley, his wife, Gloria Rodriguez said on Tuesday.

Support groups and doctors explained the disease, but nobody imagined that Honorato Rodriguez would hallucinate that his neighbors were harassing him, that he would be charged criminally with arson against them and that his wife would face losing everything the couple worked to save for 30 years.

Because he was found not guilty by reason of insanity and committed to a state hospital, the Rodriguez family is liable. "His public defender said if he pleaded no contest to the charges, he would go to Napa (State Hospital) and he would be well taken care

of. I never thought I would be losing my husband," Gloria Rodriguez said Tuesday, tears filling her eyes and running down her cheeks.

In a twist of irony, had Honorato Rodriguez been ruled competent and found guilty, taxpayers would foot the bill for any time spent in prison, as well as any medical treatment.

Now state officials want payment, and they've sent letters to Rodriguez's wife, children, and even his grandchildren. The matter is set for a February court hearing.

"They want the whole house. They want everything, not even half," Gloria Rodriguez said. "At least with half, I don't have to become completely homeless."

A spokesman for the state declined to comment as the matter is under litigation.

It's not a common situation for Parkinson's sufferers, said Dr. Melanie Brandabur, clinical director of the Sunnyvale-based Parkinson's Institute. Roughly 1.5 million Americans suffer from the disease, but Brandabur said she'd never heard of a case quite like Rodriguez's.

Most people think of actor Michael J. Fox and boxer Muhammad Ali, who who show the common symptoms of tremors and shakes. Hallucinations, however, are a part of the disease, and Brandabur said some experts estimate that 40 to 50 percent of Parkinson's sufferers will also face cognitive declines.

For instance, one of her patients was so convinced that his wife's cooking contained bugs that he would only eat at restaurants.

"He actually brought me a jar of his wife's food from dinner the night before to show me the bugs. There were no bugs, but it was real to him," Brandabur said.

Another elderly patient confronted his neighbor and accused him of having an affair with his 74-year-old wife, which was not the case.

Honorato Rodriguez didn't always battle Parkinson's Disease. He moved from Mexico more than 30 years ago and settled in Galt, where he met his future wife, also a native of Mexico.

Gloria Rodriguez smiled when asked how the couple met, then explained that she had taken a second job as a teacher's aide at the local adult school. Honorato Rodriguez knew some English but enrolled in classes to better learn the language. The teacher's aide and the student were soon married.

Both worked full-time and they bought a home in southern Galt, where they raised a son and daughter. Honorato Rodriguez spent many years working at a nursery but sometimes found extra work. He was working at Holtz Rubber when co-workers noticed him shaking. A doctor diagnosed Parkinson's.

Honorato Rodriguez wanted to keep working, because he didn't want to see his wife go off to work at Pacific Coast Producers while he stayed home. But they also planned for the future.

"When the doctor diagnosed him, we decided to save up and pay off the house so we would have it," Gloria Rodriguez said.

The disease worsened but Gloria Rodriguez kept working part-time as a seam inspector at PCP — finding that it offered a break from caring for her husband. Family members stopped in to check on him when she was gone.

Then, according to state hospital reports provided by Lodi attorney Randy Rosá, the disease worsened in 2000. Honorato Rodriguez became delusional and was convinced that his neighbors were harassing him. On July 6, 2002, he threw a glass bottle over the fence into his neighbors' yard, and it burst into flames after hitting the patio.

He later waived his right to a jury trial and a judge found him not guilty of arson by reason of insanity. He was sent to Atascadero State Hospital on Aug. 17, 2004, then transferred on Jan. 12, 2005, to Napa State Hospital to be closer to his family.

Under California's Welfare and Institutions Code, spouses, parents, and children of such patients are liable for the cost of medical care.

Honorato Rodriguez's care costs totaled 50 pages by June, and each day in the hospital costs roughly \$400.

Family members make the hour-and-a-half drive to visit Honorato Rodriguez every other week, said his daughter Raquel Valdez. Her 7-year-old son asks if they're going to take him home, which upsets Honorato Rodriguez.

And he doesn't know the latest advice given to his wife, who wears a gold wedding band and whose living room wall has photos of her in-laws.

"I was told to look for a divorce attorney," she said quietly.

Beating Heart Tissue from Embryonic Stem Cells Created in Israeli Lab

By ISRAEL21c staff; www.israel21c.com

January 17, 2007 An Israeli scientific team from the Technion have succeeded in creating in the laboratory beating heart tissue from human embryonic stem cells.

Moreover, the researchers - Dr. Shulamit Levenberg and Prof. Lior Gepstein - have succeeded in creating blood vessels in the tissue, which will enable its acceptance by the heart muscle.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the US. During heart attacks, tissue is destroyed when blood is temporarily cut off to a section of the heart, and this tissue can never be repaired

The scientific journal *Circulation Research* reports in its on-line issue on two innovations in the researchers' work: one, the use of human embryonic stem cells, and two, the creation of a vascular system in the tissue, which is critical for its acceptance by the body.

"Without this system, acceptance could be prolonged and the cells could die during this time period," explains Levenberg. "In our work, we demonstrated the importance of the endothelial cells (cells that build blood vessels), which encourage differentiation of the heart cells and their organization, in addition to their multiplication. That is - it is important to create heart cell tissue, with all its component cells, in this case the endothelial cells, heart cells and cells that support the blood vessels."

The Technion researchers created the heart tissue in the laboratory by differentiating human embryonic stem cells into heart muscle cells and endothelial cells and growing them together with embryonic supporting cells (fibroblasts). The growth was done in three dimensions on a porous, biodegradable scaffold that the Technion researchers also created in their laboratory.

In the future, they will examine the possibility of implanting the tissue in a heart, in order to see if the blood vessels in the engineered tissue will improve acceptance of the new tissue and its connection to the vascular system.

Last year Levenberg was named by the prestigious American journal *Scientific American* as one of the world's 50 leading scientists for 2006, for her groundbreaking work in tissue engineering - a development which could result in the ability of

scientists to create tissue for various medical uses and to eventually replace damaged organs in the body. Levenberg believes the accomplishment may one day lead to the cure of degenerative diseases.

Israeli Researchers Regenerate Torn Ligaments and Tendons with Adult Stem Cells

By David Brinn; www.israel21c.com

April 09, 2006 It's a moment that every athlete fears - when they get the news that they have a career-threatening ligament or tendon tear. And it's not just the pros. Millions of Americans play tennis, jog, or join pickup softball or basketball games every day without proper stretching, resulting in similar injuries.

Over 200,000 Americans undergo tendon or ligament repair each year, usually consisting of tissue grafting and synthetic prostheses, but rarely offering a full pre-injury recovery or a long-term solution. With tendon and ligament injuries presenting a major clinical challenge to orthopedic medicine, Israeli researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem are using adult stem cells to provide new hope for both patients and doctors.

In studies conducted on rats, the researchers at the Skeletal Biotechnology Laboratory at the university's Faculty of Dental Medicine have successfully used adult stem cells to form new tendon or ligament tissue. This novel approach for tendon regeneration was reported in the April issue of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*.

"What we're doing is using adult stem cells taken from the bone marrow and genetically engineering them. By introducing specific gene proteins to the cells, they become different cells. With this in mind, we can genetically engineer new skeletal tissue - ligaments, cartilage, tendons," said Dr. Gadi Pelled, a senior scientist in the lab, who worked together with team leader Prof. Dan Gazit.

"What happens in tendons and ligaments when there is a partial tear, is that they don't regenerate by themselves - they form scar tissue, which is less elastic and doesn't provide as much functionality," Pelled told ISRAEL21c.

"Of course in a complete tear, it doesn't heal at all. Either the patient becomes disabled, or there are a number of sub-optimal procedures. Orthopedic surgeons are therefore looking for an alternative."

Pelled and the HU team began their attempts to find

that alternative by taking mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs), which reside in the bone marrow and fat tissues, and injecting two proteins called Smad8 and BMP2.

According to Pelled, the fortified cells were then implanted into the torn Achilles tendons of rats. The researchers found that the cells not only survived the implantation process, but also were recruited to the site of the injury and were able to repair the tendon.

"There was complete healing in seven weeks - which is very quick," said Pelled.

The cells also changed their appearance to look more like tendon cells (tenocytes), and significantly increased production of collagen, a protein critical for creating strong yet flexible tendons and ligaments.

Tendon tissue repair was detected using a special type of imaging known as proton DQF MRI, developed by Prof. Gil Navon at Tel Aviv University, which recognizes differences among collagen-containing tissue such as tendon, bone, skin, and muscle.

"The imaging emits a white symbol which identifies whether the new cells generated are tendons or not," said Pelled.

The two proteins - BMP and Smad - are involved in other tissues, including nerve and liver tissue, suggesting that this type of delivery technology may be helpful for other degenerative diseases, according to the researchers.

The research could also affect injuries to the invertebrate disc, which, according to Pelled, "consists of in large part a tendon that deteriorates over time, and results in a large segment of the population suffering from lower back pain."

"Our next step will be to conduct the tests on large animals. For tendons and ligaments, goats are the best subjects," said Pelled, adding that pigs would be used for tests on the invertebrate disc.

He explained that the research has grown out of clinical trials currently being conducted on humans in collaboration with the Hadassah Medical Center and pharmaceutical giant Teva on the subject of bone regeneration using the same adult stem cells.

"It's using the same original cells as our ligament study. But the nice thing about this is that depending on the protein that you introduce, it creates different tissue," said Pelled. "For example, if you're attempting

to generate new tendon tissue, you wouldn't want bone tissue to be formed, so that determines which protein you introduce."

The HU tendon and ligament regeneration study has been acclaimed by peers. In an accompanying commentary in the journal, Dwight A. Towler and Richard Gelberman from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, state, "Given our limited understanding of how MSCs become tenocytes, the recent progress demonstrated in these studies is quite remarkable and may be potentially useful in cell-based therapeutic approaches to musculoskeletal injuries."

The study was supported by GENOSTEM, an integrated project of the European Union for the engineering of mesenchymal stem cells in connective tissue disorders.

House Passes Stem Cell Legislation

On January 11, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3, legislation to expand embryonic stem cell research, by a vote of 253-174, with eight members not voting. This represents a pickup of 18 votes from the House vote last year to override the President's veto of H.R. 810 (legislation identical to H.R. 3).

Thanks to all of the PAN advocates across the country who responded to our Action Alert and who contacted their members of Congress and asked for a vote in support of the bill. All of your efforts were worthwhile, and we are clearly moving in the right direction by picking up votes from last year.

After a few hours of debate on the House floor, opponents of H.R. 3 attempted to amend the bill via a parliamentary procedure known as a "motion to recommit;" this motion would have prevented universities or research institutions that are conducting somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT, or therapeutic cloning) from receiving federal funds to conduct embryonic stem cell research. Fortunately, the motion failed by a vote of 189-238.

The Senate is expected to debate and vote on its companion bill, S. 5, in the next few weeks. We, Parkinson Action Network (PAN) will be in contact with you soon regarding the Senate vote and how you can help secure the strongest possible vote.

Announcement from PAN: On **February 11-13, 2007**, the Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) will host the **2007 Research and Education & Public Policy Forum**, the Louis Fishman Advocacy Awards

Dinner in Washington, D.C., and a Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill.

The 2007 Forum will provide two-days of advocacy training leading up to a final day of lobbying members of congress on Capitol Hill. Forum attendees will learn about PAN's 2007 legislative agenda and see first-hand the power of advocacy and the issues important to the Parkinson's community. The Forum will provide a unique opportunity to educate attendees on the latest scientific advances in Parkinson's disease research, interact with others in the Parkinson's community and discover skills that you can take back with you to better convey the message that we will not stop fighting for a cure.

The annual gathering of our advocates and leaders in the Parkinson's community will give those new to PAN the chance to learn from those who are active in grassroots activities.

A block of rooms is reserved for Forum advocates at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C. Mention the Parkinson's Action Network Forum for discounted rates.

Hotel reservations should be made by calling 800.424.1140.

Washington Plaza Hotel
10 Thomas Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005
Toll free: 800.424.1140
www.washingtonplazahotel.com

May 12, 2007, Fourth Annual Sunnyvale Parkinson's Walk

When: May 12, 2007

Time: 9:00 AM

Where: **Washington Park in Sunnyvale** (corner of Washington and Pastoria)

The 3rd Annual Parkinson's Unity Walk was a success! About 60 walkers for the 4.2-mile walk began at 9:30. The organizers are still counting, but it looks like the walkers raised about \$17,000. **WAY TO WALK!**

<http://pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/deanp53/album?.dir=c167scd&.view=t>

Visit the PPSG website to learn about upcoming events, what's going on with the PD research, and many helpful ideas: www.ppsg.org

Greater Fresno

In January, Yolonda Reeves, an attorney with Central California Legal Services, talked with us about qualifying requirements of Medi-Cal, social security disability payments, and other public benefit programs. We will also take some time for sharing information on other topics and perhaps a caregivers' session. This program should be of interest whether or not you are in need of public benefits.

February, David Ira Margolin, M.D., Ph. D.

a board certified neurologist with over 25 years experience in treating patients with Parkinson's disease, will tell us about some new PD drugs, will tell us about some of the studies he is conducting, and we will have a question and answer session where you may ask your Parkinson's related questions. Dr. Margolin, as you may know, is the principal investigator at the Margolin Brain Institute in Fresno and has in the past been a highly-effective speaker at our meetings. Don't miss this meeting!

Power Pudding: Dr. Melanie Brandabur, a neurologist with The Parkinson Institute spoke to us in November. Among other things, she recommended "Power Pudding" for constipation that frequently plagues PD folk. Our member Marshall Mahr was at The Parkinson's Institute recently and came back with this recipe for it:

Mix equal parts of oat or wheat bran, prune juice, and apple sauce. Let the mixture set overnight. Take 2 to 3 tablespoons two or three times a day. Increase the dose as needed.

Sunnyvale

In December we had a grand Christmas Party at **Dr. Clement** and **Mrs. Sushih Butt**'s beautiful home. Sushih prepared a 19 lb turkey with many special dishes. Our members also brought delicious vegetarian dishes to share. Special thanks also to **Le Sotir** and **Tess Castro** who came over to help out in the kitchen. After the luncheon, Sushih and Clement challenged the members with an interesting "Name That Song" game and some members were rewarded with beautiful gifts from the hosts. Thank you very much, Clement and Sushih!

Also at this meeting, we were delighted to have **Janet** and **Frank Bank** join us for the party. For years, Janet had been calling our members to remind them of the meetings, but did not attend them due to her health conditions. It was great to see the two of them!

Maxine Voight, the hostess at our meetings, coordinated to secure our spots at the church for our future meetings. Thank you, Maxine!

Special thank you also to **Hazel Kuhl** and **Suzanna Sih**, our Communication Committee. The two ladies make phone calls every month to the group. Thank you also goes to **Tom Brennan**, our Sunshine Committee Chair. Tom is

in charge of sending out get-well cards to our members who are under the weather.

PPSG Support Groups 408.734.1593

NORTHERN AND EAST-BAY REGION

Berkeley 3rd Mon 10-12 North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Av, Roddy Raikow 510-231-1998 or Mitzi Cahn 510-527-9075 **Fremont** 4th Mon 7:00 pm Fremont Senior Center 40086 Paseo Padre Parkway, Lettie Webb 510-656-6393 or Bob Coon 510-794-7988 **Fremont Caregivers** Contact Nancy Rothschild, Caregiver Project Coordinator, 510-574-2035 **Marin County** 4th Tue most mo. 2-4 Redwoods Auditorium 40 Camino Alto, Mill Valley, Gloria Rashti 415-381-6680. Redwoods' 415-383-2741 **Mt. Diablo Parkinson's Network General Meetings** 2nd Sat 10-12, Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek, Nancy Walls, 510-236-7065, Philip Wheeler, 510-527-3588, or Ronalee Spear, 925-284-2189 **Oakland** 1st Thur 1:30-3:30 Easter Seals Bay Area, 180 Grand Av, Suite 300, Robert Lemon 510-526-2078 **Petaluma** Last Sat 1:30-3:30 Sunrise of Petaluma, 815 Wood Sorrel Dr. John & Mamie Strong 707.763.3522 **Pleasanton Tri-Valley** 2nd Sat 10-12, Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd, Norm & Jackie Bardsley, at 925-244-1231, or 925-831-9940 **Roseville** 1st Tues 1:30-3:00 Roseville Maidu Comm Ctr, 1550 Maidu Drive, Linda Krisa 916-261-1321 **San Leandro** 1st Thur (no meetings Jul & Aug) 10:00, San Lorenzo Community Church, 945 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo, Harry Santi 510-351-3224, Noma Zeff 510-663-6435 **Sonoma County** 1st Sat (not Jan, Jul, Sep) 1-3, First Congregational Ch, 2000 Humboldt St, Santa Rosa, Ron & Colleen Trowse 707-526-4373 **Vallejo** 3rd Mon (except 2nd Mon, Jan & Feb) 2:00 Kaiser Medical Center, 975 Sereno Drive, Evelyn Fox 707-644-3390

PENINSULA REGION

Daly City 1st Tue 3-4 Doelger Senior Center, 101 Lake Merced Blvd, Leonard Ke 415-587-1285 **Los Altos Young Parkinson's Support Group** 2nd Sat 10-12, United Methodist Ch/Los Altos, Foothill at Magdalena, Dean Prescott 408-738-2505 or dean53@yahoo.com **Magnolia-Peninsula** 2nd Thur 1:30 main conference room Magnolia Apart, 201 Chadbourne Av, Millbrae, Leon Rosenthal, 650-348-3480 **Palo Alto** 2nd Wed 2:00-3:30 Avenidas Senior Center dining room, 450 Bryant St, Linda Chen 650-254-0906, for directions call 650-289-5400 **Redwood City** 3rd Fri 1-2:30, (No meetings Aug, Nov, Dec) 749 Brewster Avenue, Sequoia Hospital health & Wellness Center, Tom Constantino or David Shein 650-367-5998 **NEW San Francisco Caregivers** Thur (varies) 12-1 VAMC Parkinson's Ctr conf room, Susan Heath & Aliza Benditsky RSVP 415-379-5530 **San Mateo Atypical Parkinsonism (PSP, LBD, MSA, CBD) Bay Area Caregivers** Sundays 5-7 about every 6 weeks, Mimi's Café 2208 Bridgepointe Parkway, San Mateo, Robin Riddle 650-233-9277 or riddle@stanfordalumni.org **San Mateo Caregivers** 1st Wed 2:30-4:30 Ellsworth Room 100 San Mateo Dr., Call Carol Hoffman, Mills Health Center 800-654-9966 **Sunnyvale** 2nd Wed 1-3 First United Methodist Ch, 535 Old San Francisco Rd, Phyllis & Henry Ng 408-733-5648 **YOPD** (Young Onset Parkinson's Disease) 2nd Tue 6:30-8:00, Board Room, Lucile Packard Child Hosp, 725 Welch Road, Palo Alto, Martha Gardner 866-250-2414

SOUTHERN REGION

Fresno, Greater 2nd Saturday, 10 am, Joaquin Valley Rehab Hospital, 7173 N. Sharon Ave; Max Robinson 599-226-2673

Hollister 1st Tue 1:30-3:30 First Presbyterian Ch, 2066 Cienega Road, Shirley Kennedy 831-637-3839 or John Skinner 831-637-

6755 **Merced** 4th Thur 10AM (Nov 17, Dec no meeting)
Mission Gardens 1450 E. 27th St., Amie Marchini 209-384-3300
Modesto 3rd Wed 1:30-3:00 Centenary United Methodist Ch,
Fireside Room 1911 Toyon Av, JoAnn & David Ryan 209-529-
5643/davejoann@sbcglobal.net **Monterey** 3rd Mon 2:30-4:00
SHARE Room, Monterey Adult School, 200 Coe Av,
Seaside, Helen Garrett 831-657-4241 or Kathy Warthan 831-372-
7510 **Pine Grove** 1st & 3rd Thurs 2-4 Calvary Chapel Patio Bldg,
18400 Ridge Road, Sarah Johnson 209-296-3522 **Salinas** 4th Wed
2:00-3:30 Salinas Adult School, 20 Sherwood Place, Sherry
Whitcomb, 831-796-6920 **San Jose-Berryessa** 1st Wed 1:00-
2:30 Berryessa Community Center, 3050 Berryessa Rd, Bob &
Jane Pomeroy 408-263-8485 **San Jose Caregivers** usually 4th
Wed 1:30-3:30 St Francis Episcopal Church, 1205 Pine Ave,
Charmaine Eng 408-723-8116 **San Jose-Willow Glen** 1st Fri 10-
12 St Francis Episcopal Church, 1205 Pine Ave, Joan Lorentson
408-997-7009 **Santa Cruz** 1st Wed 12:30-2:00 St. Stephen's
Lutheran Church, 2500 Soquel Ave, David Donahoe 831-479-
4485 **Saratoga** 3rd Tue 2-4 19449 Via Real, Lois McPherson
408-867-1807 **Tulare-Kings** 1st Fri 10:30 Visalia United
Methodist Church, 5200 W. Caldwell Av, Mary Dickerson 559-
622-9044, Church Office 559-627-1660 **(FORMING) Turlock**
Donald Jackson 209-606-9127.

Five Steps to Simpler Record-Keeping

Experts say you can organize your records in five simple steps. Here's what they recommend:

Step #1: Toss what you can.

Nearly all of your financial papers can be divided into three categories: records that you need to keep only for the calendar year or less, papers that you need to save for seven years (the typical window during which your tax return may be audited), and papers that you should hang onto indefinitely.

Step #2: Hang onto what you must.

You will, however, need to hold onto those final credit-card statements, along with your W-2s and 1099s, for at least three years and, preferably, for seven. The Internal Revenue Service has up to three years from the date you file your tax return to examine it for errors and as long as six years to conduct an audit if there's reason to suspect you underreported your gross income by 25 percent or more. (There is no statute of limitations for anyone who has deliberately committed fraud.) Indeed, you'll need to keep any paperwork that supports your return until that audit window closes. Among the additional documents you should retain: canceled checks and receipts for all deductible business expenses (such as those for entertainment, home-office equipment, and professional dues), retirement-account contributions, charitable donations, child-care bills, out-of-pocket medical expenses, alimony, and mortgage-interest and property-tax payments.

But don't throw out the actual tax returns or the year-end summaries of your investment accounts, even after the chances of an audit have all but vanished. These documents don't take up much space and can come in very handy for

future financial planning.

For insurance purposes, you'll also want to keep receipts for major purchases and receipts that show how much you've paid for home improvements indefinitely, both to satisfy potential buyers and to reduce possible capital-gains taxes when you sell your home. It is crucially important to keep the confirmation slips that show beneficiary designations and the purchase price of stocks, mutual funds, and any other investments you hold; hang onto these records indefinitely because some day, says Slott, "you or your heirs will have to know exactly how much you paid to determine the profit on your investment for tax purposes."

Step #3: Give your papers a home.

The number-one reason that people get overwhelmed by the paper in their lives, experts say, is that they have no set place to put it.

If you have a spare room or corner that you can designate as the place where you deal with paperwork, great; if not, a drawer, cabinet, or closet where you can store bills and current records, situated near a table on which you can write checks, will do.

Keep your will, birth and marriage certificates, insurance policies, property deeds, and other permanent records in a safe but accessible place near your other financial documents, so you and your heirs will always be able to get to them quickly, if they need to.

Step #4: Be systematic.

Have a plan for processing all paper. Pick a spot in your information area where you'll put the bills — say, a manila envelope, a drawer, or a plastic in-box or sorter— and toss in each envelope as it arrives in the mail. Then, when you sit down to write those checks each month, you'll have all the paperwork you need in one spot.

Now here's the key: Once you've paid the bill or checked the statement, **file** it immediately."

Again, a very rudimentary filing system is all you need. The simplest method is to throw everything that is **tax-related** into a single receptacle as soon as you're done with it— a drawer, a file cabinet, a paper accordion file, or even a shoebox will do. That way, when you're ready to fill out your tax return, you'll have all the paperwork you need at your fingertips. This may take more time initially, but, in the long run, it will save time.

Step #5: Tackle the backlog.

Once you have a system in place, you still have to deal with all the piles you've already accumulated. Start by sorting through a small stack at a time. You can allot half an hour a day to sift through old papers.

Written by Diane Harris; www.realsimple.com

Disclaimer

This document is published to promote a greater awareness of the problems caused by Parkinson's disease. Neither the Parkinson's Patients Support Groups, Inc., its members and employees, nor the individuals involved in its production make any warranty, express or implied, assume any liability or responsibility for accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information or represent that it will not infringe privately owned rights. Mention of any product, material, or service shall not, nor it is intended to imply approval, disapproval, or fitness for any particular use.

Thank you so much for your donations! Please use return address labels, to help us acknowledge your donations properly. Your generous contributions go to support newsletters, education and community awareness of Parkinson's disease.

Board Members

Chair:

Charmaine Eng

Vice Chair:

Dean Prescott

Secretary:

Carla Gwosden

Treasurer:

Allan Daily

Directors:

Solna Braude

Linda Chen

Bob Dens

Viola Mays

Phil McCrillis

Larry Naritomi

Phyllis Ng

Steven Russell



Parkinson's Patients Support Groups, Inc.
1170 Morse Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1605
408.734.1593

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

February/March 2007