

Parkinson's Patients Support Groups, Inc.

P. O. Box 60188, Sunnyvale, CA 94088 408.542.5610 www.ppsg.org

Summer Quarterly 2008

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Author to Speak to the Bay Area

Janet Edmunson, the author of *Finding Meaning with Charles: Caregiving with Love Through a Degenerative Disease*, is coming to the Bay Area for about a week in August. She will be the guest speaker at several PD support group meetings and at two special events. Her positive affirmations will benefit caregivers and those they care for. You are welcome to attend any of these free gatherings. Please RSVP, if requested. PPSG is co-hosting several of these events.

A special thank-you to **Robin Riddle**, the SG leader for the San Mateo Atypical Parkinsonism Bay Area Caregivers, who coordinated all the events. Thanks very much, Robin!

Wednesday 8/6

1-2:30pm, San Jose Berryessa PD Support Group, Berryessa Community Center. San Jose Caregivers and San Jose Willow Glen PD support group members are especially invited. This meeting is open to everyone. Please RSVP as space is limited. RSVP to Jane or Bob Pomeroy, preferably via email bpsg@prodigy.net or via phone 408/263-8485.

Thursday 8/7

1:30-3:30pm, Oakland PD Support Group. This meeting is open to everyone.

Tuesday 8/12

1:30-3pm, Special event at The Parkinson's Institute, 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale. This event is open to everyone. Please RSVP as space is limited and the organizers would like to have refreshments for all. RSVP to Gloria, The Parkinson's Institute, main phone 408/734-2800, or via email to Maria, MChavez@parkinsonsinstitute.org.

6:30-8pm, Palo Alto Young Onset PD Support Group meeting. Los Altos Young Onset PD support group members are especially invited. This meeting is open to those with young onset PD.

Wednesday 8/13

2-3:30pm, Palo Alto PD Support Group meeting, Avenidas. This meeting is open to everyone.

6:30-8pm, a special event for the Stanford PD community at Avenidas, 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto. (Main phone 650/289-5400.) This event is open to everyone. Please RSVP as space is limited and the organizers would like to have refreshments for all. RSVP to Robin, preferably via email riddle@stanfordalumni.org or via phone 650/233-9277. A free parking garage is across the street. **The events on this date are sponsored by APDA and Avenidas.**

For location information of the PD support group meetings, please see the Support Groups section of this newsletter or the www.ppsg.org website. For information on Janet's schedule while in the Bay Area, please contact Robin Riddle, email riddle@stanfordalumni.org, or phone 650/233-9277. For more information about Janet, see her website at www.findingmeaningwithcharles.com and the nearby article in this newsletter.

Disclaimer

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New Growth Factor Promotes New Neuron Growth in Mouse Model of Parkinson's Disease

Newswise — Mice induced to develop Parkinson's disease (PD) show an increase in the growth of new neurons after they are treated with a well known growth factor. The research, published May 16 in *The Journal of Neuroscience*, based on work by scientists at the Buck Institute, highlights a potential new therapy for this incurable, neurodegenerative disorder that affects 1.5 million Americans.

The mice, which developed Parkinson-like symptoms after they received the toxin MPTP (which causes PD in humans) were treated with fibroblast growth factor-2 (FGF-2), a naturally occurring protein that has been studied extensively for its neuroprotective properties. In the Buck study, the use of FGF-2 enhanced the neurogenesis, or growth of new neurons, that was already underway in the injured area of the brain. In addition, researchers began to see an increase in the cells that produce dopamine, the neurotransmitter implicated in PD.

"The fact that FGF-2 allowed these new neurons to develop in the principle site of cell loss in the disease is quite exciting," said Buck faculty member and lead scientist Julie Andersen, PhD. "This suggests that administration of growth factors might be used therapeutically to replace dead or damaged cells. The next step in our research is to see whether treatment with FGF-2 results in any symptomatic improvement in the mice."

Scientists at the Buck are currently researching FGF-2 as a potential treatment for Huntington's disease, a fatal hereditary brain disorder that affects approximately 30,000 Americans. In partnership with Neurobiological Technologies, Inc. (NASDAQ: NTII), Buck researchers are seeking to create a form of FGF-2 for human clinical trials. The protein shows particular promise because it is able to cross the blood-brain barrier.

For more information: www.buckinstitute.org.

Upcoming Retreat: The 2008 Young Onset Parkinson's West Coast Retreat will be on **Sat-Sun Sept 6-7**.

It will be held at Wonder Valley Ranch Resort in Sanger, CA and is for Young Onset PWP's and families. This is expected to be a sell-out event, so those interested should Contact the APDA Information & Referral Center for more information-- Best way to do that is via email to mgapda@stanford.edu and a brochure with the registration form mailed or e-mailed.

**This newsletter is assembled by The Morgan Center.
Thank you!**

Traveling by Air- How to Travel by Air

Today travel by air in the United States is covered by the Air Carriers Access Act of 1986 and the subsequent regulations published in March 1990. This law provides that no air carrier may discriminate against any otherwise qualified individual with a disability by reason of such disability in the provision of air transportation. For information about these regulations and also changes resulting from the American with Disabilities Act, the best source is a 33-page booklet from the Department of Transportation entitled *New Horizons for the Air Traveler With a Disability*. Topics include accessibility of airports and aircraft; requirements for advance notice, attendants, and medical certificates; handling of mobility aids and assistive devices; and much more, including how to file a complaint. Another useful federal publication is *Access Travel: Airports (#580Y)*, which provides details on handicapped facilities and services at 533 airports worldwide. These booklets are available free from S. James, Consumer Information Center 2-D, P. O. Box 100, Pueblo, CO 81002. A \$1.00 service fee is charged for up to 25 free booklets.

Travelers with disabilities can therefore expect to travel by air within the United States without unnecessary restriction. The same law applies to all U.S. carriers on international flights. IATA, the International Air Transport Association, also carries disabled passengers under similar rules, with one or two exceptions, since July 1994. For a copy of the specific IATA rules, contact IATA Publications Agent, 2000 Peel St., Montreal, Quebec H3A 2R4, Canada or other IATA offices outside North America.

So long as your disability is stable and not liable to deteriorate during travel (e.g., paraplegia, quadriplegia, post-polio, diabetes, mental handicaps, etc.), you can expect to be treated like any other passenger with special needs (e.g., those with special dietary requirements). Ask your travel agent to notify the airlines that you will travel with, under the code SSR (Special Service Request) or OSI (Other Service Information), of your status and the special services you will need. This must be done at least 48 hours prior to your departure.

In the event of a problem with airport or in flight personnel, you should require them to contact the Complaints Resolution Officer (CRO), who by law must always be available and willing to deal with your grievance. They cannot refuse. Passengers who require oxygen when traveling are subject to special safety regulations and require a doctor's prescription with specific information. They may be required to pay for the provision of equipment and cannot use their own, which must be empty and stored in the baggage compartment (carried free

of charge). See also the specific information sheet for your disability.

Additional Resources:

A growing number of American airlines publish travel information for handicapped passengers. America West Airlines has a 6-page booklet entitled, *Tips for Passengers With Special Needs*. For a free copy, call 800) 235-9292 or (800) 526-8077 (TDD). Northwest Airlines offers a 13-page brochure entitled *Air Travel for People With Disabilities*. It is available in a standard print format, as well as in Braille with large print and on audio cassette with Braille labeling. For free copies, call (800) 358-3100. American airports are also producing booklets about their facilities and services for handicapped travelers. Airports currently offering such guides include the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport, Logan Airport in Boston, and McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas.

www.sath.org: *Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality*

Maxine Voight forwarded this article. Maxine's husband, Duane, had PD. Maxine is the hostess at the Sunnyside SG and she takes care of all the table arrangements, beverages/refreshments, name tags, etc., just to name a few responsibilities she helps with. Thanks so much, Maxine!

Sleep: A Necessity, Not a Luxury

By Dennis Thompson, HealthDay Reporter

SUNDAY, June 8 (HealthDay News) -- The pace of life gets faster and faster, and people try to cram more and more into every minute of the day.

As things get more hectic, sleep tends to get short shrift. It's seen as wasted time, lost forever.

"For healthy people, there's a big temptation to voluntarily restrict sleep, to stay up an hour or two or get up an hour or two earlier," said Dr. Greg Belenky, director of the Sleep and Performance Research Center at Washington State University Spokane.

"But you're really reducing your productivity and exposing yourself to risk," Belenky added.

That's a message doctors are trying to spread to Americans, including the estimated 40 million people who struggle with some type of sleep disorder each year.

Before Thomas Edison invented the light bulb in 1880, people slept an average of 10 hours a night. These days, Americans average 6.9 hours of sleep on weeknights and

7.5 hours a night on weekends, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

"The group of people getting optimal sleep is getting smaller and smaller," said Dr. Chris Drake, senior scientist at the Henry Ford Hospital Sleep Disorders and Research Center in Detroit. "When a person's sleep drops to six hours or less, that's when a lot of things become very problematic."

While experts recommend seven to eight hours of sleep each night, the amount needed for an individual can vary. But lack of sleep affects a person in one of two ways, Belenky said. First, sleeplessness influences the day-to-day performance of tasks.

"The performance effects are seen immediately," he said. "You short-change yourself of sleep, and you see the effects immediately. You can make a bad decision. You can miss something. Have a moment's inattention, and you're off the road."

The longer-term effects of sleep deprivation involve a person's health. Doctors have linked lack of sleep to weight gain, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart problems, depression and substance abuse.

"Hormones that process appetite begin to get disorganized," said Drake, who's also an assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience at the Wayne State University School of Medicine. There's a decrease in the amount of leptin, an appetite-suppressing hormone, when a person gets too little sleep. At the same time, ghrelin -- a hormone that stimulates appetite -- increases with a lack of sleep.

Too little sleep also interferes with the body's ability to regulate glucose and can cause inflammation leading to heart problems and a rise in blood pressure. "There's a stress response to being in a sleep loss," Belenky said. The types of people not getting enough sleep also break down into two groups. First, there are those who make the conscious choice to go without enough sleep. "It's sort of part of the culture," Belenky said. "People pride themselves on getting little sleep. You'll hear people bragging, 'I only need six hours a night.' So there's a macho element here."

On the other hand, there are people who are suffering from sleep disorders. These disorders include: Insomnia, an inability to go to sleep or stay asleep. Sleep apnea, or breathing interruptions during sleep that cause people to wake up repeatedly. Restless legs syndrome, a tingling or prickly sensation in the legs that causes a person to need to move them, interrupting sleep.

Someone suffering from any of these problems should visit their doctor or see a sleep specialist, Belenky said.

Sleep apnea, the most prevalent sleep disorder, can have particularly serious long-term effects if left untreated.

"You're waking up out of sleep to breathe. You can't sleep and breathe at the same time," Drake said. "It's a risk factor for developing major cardiovascular health effects."

Some people who have trouble sleeping will resort to mild sedatives like Ambien and Lunesta.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently asked the makers of these sedative-hypnotic drugs to strengthen their warning labels. This action followed reports of dangerous allergic reactions, as well as a host of bizarre behavioral side effects that include sleep-driving, making phone calls, and preparing and eating food or having sex while asleep. Drake and Belenky both consider sleeping pills to be fine for the short term if taken properly.

"Sleeping pills are a temporary solution," Belenky said. "If you're upset about something or have situational insomnia, or you're trying to sleep at the wrong time of day because you've traveled across time zones, they are effective." But, both doctors noted the pills will do nothing to help a chronic sleep problem. "They don't address the pathology of their sleeplessness," Drake said.

The U.S. National Institutes of Health offers these tips for getting a good night's sleep:

Stick to a regular sleep schedule.

Avoid exercising closer than five or six hours before bedtime.

Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bed.

Avoid large meals and beverages late at night.

Don't take naps after 3 p.m.

Relax before bed, taking time to unwind with a hot bath, a good book or soothing music.

If you're still awake after more than 20 minutes in bed, get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy.

Anxiety over not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep.

www.yahoo.com

Gait and Balance Classes at the PI

The Gait and Balance Classes at the Parkinson's Institute are great and fun. Come check it out!

The Classes are held on **Wednesdays**. The **beginning classes** run from **10:30 -12 noon** and the **intermediate classes** run from **12:30 -2:30 pm**. A donation of **\$10.00 per session** is suggested. The classes are held at The Parkinson's Institute, at 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94085. Please call **408.734.2800** if you have any questions.

Identification of Dopamine 'Mother Cells' Could Lead To Future Parkinson's Treatments

ScienceDaily (Apr. 9, 2008) — 'Mother cells' which produce the neurons affected by Parkinson's disease have been identified by scientists, according to new research published in the journal *Glia*.

The new discovery could pave the way for future treatments for the disease, including the possibility of growing new neurons, and the cells which support them, in the lab. Scientists hope these could then be transplanted into patients to counteract the damage caused by Parkinson's.

The new study focuses on dopaminergic neurons -- brain cells which produce and use the chemical dopamine to communicate with surrounding neurons. The researchers found that these important neurons are created when a particular type of cell in the embryonic brain divides during the early stages of brain development in the womb.

If a person suffers from Parkinson's disease, it is the depletion of these dopaminergic neurons and the associated lack of dopamine in the body which causes chronic and progressive symptoms including tremors, stiff muscles and slow movement.

The international research team used mouse models in the laboratory to examine the early stages of brain formation. They discovered that dopaminergic neurons are formed by precursor cells identified as 'radial glia-like cells' by the scientists because of their similarity to radial glia cells which are already known to build other parts of the brain.

The scientists hope that this discovery could, in the future, lead to new therapies which would use these radial glia-like cells derived from patients' own stem cells to grow replacement neurons in the lab, which could then be transplanted into the brain to replace the neurons they have lost.

One of the authors of the paper, Dr Anita Hall from Imperial College London's Department of Life Sciences, explains the potential of the team's findings: "You could call these radial glia-like cells the stem cells of this part of the brain -- they contain all the information needed to create and support the young dopamine-producing neurons which are essential for important human functions including motor activity, cognition and some behaviours.

"Now that we understand how these neurons are produced, we hope that this knowledge can be used to develop novel therapies including techniques to create replacement neurons for people with Parkinson's which could be

implanted into the brain to bolster their vital supplies of dopamine."

Dr Hall adds, however, that more research is needed to work out how exactly these glia-like cells could be used: "Using these mother cells to grow new neurons in the lab which are fit to be transplanted into humans will be complicated, and extensive further research is needed before this becomes a clinical reality. For example, we're not yet sure whether the mother cells themselves would need to be transplanted too, in order to facilitate successful dopamine production in the brain of a Parkinson's patient," she said.

www.sciencedaily.com

PPSG SUPPORT GROUPS

---NORTHERN REGION---

Berkeley 3rd Wed 1-3 North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Av, Roddy Raikow 510.231.1998 or Irene Smythe 510.524.4847 **Fremont** 4th Mon 7PM Fremont Senior Center 40086 Paseo Padre Pkwy, Lettie Webb 510.656.6393 **Fremont Caregivers** 2nd Mon 1-2:30PM also 4th Mon 1-2:30PM Bldg B City Hall Large Conf Rm., 3300 Capitol Ave., Nancy Rothschild 510.574.2035 **Marin County** 4th Tue most mo., 1-3 Redwoods Auditorium 40 Camino Alto Mill Valley Eric Stoelting 415.383.5145 **Mt. Diablo Parkinson's Network General Mtgs.** 2nd Sat 10-12, Grace Presby. Ch., 2100 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek, Nancy Walls, 510.236.7065, Philip Wheeler, 510.527.3588, Margy Hansell, 925.939.4210, or Ronalee Spear, 925.284.2189 **Young Onset Group** 3rd Sat 10-12 Grace Presby. Ch., Walnut Creek Ronalee Spear 925.284.2189 **Oakland** 1st Thu 1:30-3:30 Easter Seals Bay Area, 180 Grand Av, Suite 300, Karen & Jim Eagan, 510.763.4492 **Petaluma** Last Sat 1:30-3:30 Sunrise of Petaluma, 815 Wood Sorrel Dr, Pearl Sorenson 707.795.4858 **Pleasanton Tri-Valley** 2nd Sat 10-12, Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Blvd, Norman & Jackie Bardsley 925.831.9940 inbard@pacbell.net **San Leandro** 1st Thu (except Jul & Aug) 10-11:30, San Lorenzo Community Church, 945 Paseo Grande, Norma Zeff, 510-663-6435 Harry Santi 510.351.3224 **Santa Rosa Caregivers** 2nd Wed 2-4, Sunrise Center, 4250 Chanate Rd, Amy Southwick 707.539.2646 **Sonoma County** 1st Sat (no meeting Jan, Jul, Sep, 2nd Sat in Aug and Dec) 1-3, Christ Church United Methodist Church 1717 Yulupa Ave. Santa Rosa, Ron & Colleen Trouse 707.526.4373

---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 deanp53@yahoo.com **Magnolia-Peninsula** 2nd Thu 1:30 main conference room Magnolia Apts, 201 Chadbourne Ave Millbrae Van Knight 323.804.2738 **Palo Alto** 2nd Wed 2:00-3:30 Avenidas Senior Ctr dining rm. 450 Bryant St, Charles Biton 650.529.2394 **Redwood City Positive People Against Parkinson's** 3rd Fri 1-2:30, (No mtgs. Aug, Nov, Dec) Sequoia Hosp. Health & Wellness Ctr, 749 Brewster Ave, Tom Constantino 650.366.7166 or David Shein, 650.367.5998 **San Francisco Caregivers** 1st Thu 12-12:50 Veterans Affairs Med Ctr, Parkinson's Ctr conf room, Bldg 203 Room 1B26A, Susan Heath 415.221.4810x2505 Call in 800.767.1750 access code 59930# **San Mateo Atypical Parkinsonism (PSP, LBD, MSA, CBD) Bay Area Caregivers** Sun 5-7 about every 6 weeks, Mimi's Café 2208 Bridgepointe Pkwy, San Mateo, Robin Riddle 650.233.9277 or rriddle@stanfordalumni.org **Sunnyvale** 2nd Wed 1-3 First United Meth. Ch, 535 Old San Francisco Rd, 408.733.5648 **YOPD** (Young Onset PD) 2nd Tue 6:30-8:00, Board Rm., Lucile Packard Child. Hosp, 725 Welch Rd. Palo Alto, Martha Gardner, 866.250.2414

---SOUTHERN REGION---

Hollister 1st Tue 1:30-3:30 First Presby. Ch, 2066 Cienega Road, Shirley Kennedy 831.637.3839 John Skinner 831.637.6755 **Monterey** 3rd Mon 2:30-4:00 SHARE Room, Hayes School, 200 Coe Av, Seaside. Helen Garrett 831.657.4241 Kathy Warthan 831.372.7510 **Salinas** 4th Wed 1:00-2:30 Salinas Adult Sch., 20 Sherwood Pl., Sherry Whitcomb, 831.663.5926 **San Jose/Berryessa** 1st Wed 1:00-2:30 Berryessa Comm. Ctr, 3050 Berryessa Rd, Bob & Jane Pomeroy 408.263.8485 **San Jose/Caregivers** 4th Wed 1:30-3:30 St Francis Episcopal Ch., 1205 Pine Ave, Charmaine Eng 408.723.8116 **San Jose/The Villages** 3rd Tue 2:00- Gate access pass required George Pratte 408.223.8033 **San Jose/Willow Glen** 1st Fri 10-12 St Francis Episcopal Ch, 1205 Pine Ave, Jane Fox 408.265.3991 Darrell McCleod 831.427.0966 **Santa Cruz** 1st Wed 12:30-2:30 St. Stephen's Lutheran Ch 2500 Soquel Ave, David Donohoe 831.479.4485; Darrell McCleod, 831.427.0966 **Saratoga** 3rd Tue 2-4 19449 Via Real, Lois McPherson 408.867.1807

---CENTRAL VALLEY REGION---

Fresno, Greater 2nd Sat 10-12 Bridge Evangelical Free Ch., 3438 E. Ashlan Ave., Max Robinson, 559.226.2673 Ellen Jablonski 559.298.4080 **Merced** 4th Thu 10AM (Dec no mtg) Mission Gardens 1450 E. 27th St, Amie Marchini

209.384.3300 **Modesto** 3rd Wed 1:30-3:00 Centenary United Meth. Ch, Fireside Rm., 1911 Toyon Ave, JoAnn & David Ryan 209.529.5643 or davejoann@sbcglobal.net **Pine Grove** 3rd Thu 10-12 Calvary Chapel Patio Bldg 18400 Ridge Rd, Sarah Johnson 209.296.2575 **Roseville** 1st Tue 1:30-3:00 Maidu Comm Ctr, 1550 Maidu Dr, John Springer 916.947.7235 **Sacramento-Parkinson's Assn of Northern CA** various venues throughout N. CA 916.489.0226 **San Andreas** 3rd Tue 10-12 San Andreas Sr. Ctr. 956 Mountain Ranch Rd., Sarah Johnson 209.296.2575 **Stockton** 2nd Wed 1:30-, O'Connor Woods Sr. Living, 3400 Wagner Heights Rd, Dr. David Freis 209.465.9761 **Stockton Young Onset** 3rd Thu 6:30-, Admin Bldg. Hospice of San Joaquin, 3888 Pacific Ave, Karen Frank 209.406.9317 **Tulare-Kings** 1st Fri 10:30 United Meth. Ch., 5200 W. Caldwell Ave, Visalia, Mary Dickerson 559.622.9044

EXERCISE CLASSES

Berkeley: North Berkeley Senior Center, Thursday, 10-11:30 Kay Ellyard 510.848.5143 **Berkeley:** Mon. 1030-1200 & Tues 1-230, John Argue 510.985.2645 JCC East Bay www.parkinsonsexercise.com **Daly City:** Tue./Wed/Thu 930-1130, Doelger Sr. Ctr. Gym John Pantazy 650.991.8012 **Gilroy:** Gavilan College, Dave Ellis, 408.848.4878 **Hayward:** Kaiser Permanente, Wed. 10-11:30, John Argue 510.985.2645 **Kensington:** Tue. 1:30-3:00, John Argue 510.985.2645 **Los Gatos:** 1st Tue 2-4 1st Fri 2-3 Community Hosp. of Los Gatos Rehabilitation Ctr. 355 Dardanelli Lane 408.378.6131x4182 **Los Gatos:** Mon 2PM/Thu 1PM Parkinson's Lifelong Useful Skills (PLLUS) balance, gait, posture and Tai Chi/Qi Gong The Terraces 8010 Blossom Hill Rd. Kujiweza Healing Arts Jane 408.315.1179 Kujiweza@sjyogataichi.com **Monterey:** Monterey Peninsula College, Mark Clements, 831.646.4231 **Palo Alto:** CAR, Aquatic Therapy, 650.494.1480 **Palo Alto:** Avenidas Sr. Ctr. 450 Bryant St. 650.289.5400 **Palo Alto:** Sat 10-1130 Tai Chi/Qi Gong for Parkinson's Atrium Stanford Hospital Kujiweza Healing Arts Jane 408.315.1179 Kujiweza@sjyogataichi.com **Redwood City:** Canada College, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd. Barbara McCarthy 650.306.3473 **Salinas:** Hartnell College, Melissa Stave, 831.755.6876 **Saratoga:** Mon. – Fri. 9-12; 1:30-3, West Valley Comm. Coll. Joan 408.741.2420 **San Bruno:** Mon/Wed 1:10-2:30, Tue/Thur. 12:35-1:50, Skyline College Bess 650.738.4286 **San Jose: Camden Community Ctr.** M/W 10:30-11:45 T/TH 10:00-11:15 Adapted Exercise M/W/F 1:00-3:30 Adapted Fitness 408.369.6438, **Houge Ctr.** Tue/Thur 10-11:45, **Easter Seals Comm Ctr.** Aquatic Exercise programs, 408.295.0228, **Evergreen Ctr.** Deanna, 408.369.6435, **Evergreen Valley College,** Rich Wagner, 408.274.7900 x 6447 **Southside Community Ctr.** M/W/F 1:00-1:45 Chair Exercises F 9:00-11:30 2:00-3:30 Tai Chi 408.629.3336 **The Villages:** Mon 11:30-12:30 Wed 11:15-12:15 Thu 11:30-12:30 Parkinson's Exercise Program(PEP) Kujiweza Healing Arts Jane 408.315.1179 Kujiweza@sjyogataichi.com **San Mateo:** College of San Mateo, 1700 W. Hillsdale Blvd., John Hogan, 650.574.6469 **San Rafael:** Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael. 415.444.8000 **Santa Rosa:** 151 Sotoyome Street Rehab. Gym

Tue 12:30-1:20 Balance Class Linda 707.543.2570 **Santa Rosa:** 151 Sotoyome Street Rehab. Gym Mon/Thu 12:30-1:20 Parkinson's Exercise Class Linda 707.543.2570 **Sunnyvale:** Tue/Thu 9-10, Sr. Ctr. 550 Remington Dr., Ruth Hanes 408.864.8873 **Sunnyvale:** Wed. 10-12 Beginning and Intermediate Wed 12-2 Intensive The Parkinson's Institute, 675 Almanor Ave., Marilyn Basham 408.542.5685 **Sunnyvale:** 1st and 3rd Thu 12-1 Shakin not Stirred vocal exercise group, the Parkinson's Institute, 675 Almanor Ave., Randy Hoffman 408.542.5658 **Walnut Creek/Mt Diablo:** Thu 1-3 Tremble Clefs vocal exercise group, United Methodist Church, 1543 Sunnyvale Ave., Elsie Chapman 925.682.0809 Joan Hodgkin 925.943.7393

In Memory

PPSG recently received gift donations in memory of the following individuals: Boyd Allen, Melvin Gerber, MD., Betty Havens, Howard Hearn, Carol Johnson, Art Kezer, Albert Maurer, Donald Nelson, Lynne Quintero, Alice Anne Roberts, Gus Sotir, Mary Ellen Stenehjem, Jerry Swezea, and Judith A. Trivedi.

In Honor

PPSG recently received gift donations in honor of the following individuals: Bernice Sarina.

Thank you so much for your donations! Please use return address labels, to help us acknowledge your donation properly. Your generous contributions go to support newsletters, education and community awareness of Parkinson's disease. **Please mail your donations to: P.O. Box 60188, Sunnyvale, CA 94088. Thank you!**

PPSG Board Meetings

You are welcome to drop by our board meetings and share ideas with us! We meet on the **3rd Monday** of the month between **1:30 and 3:30 PM** at the Parkinson's Institute, at 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94085. To confirm meeting dates and time, please call us at **408.542.5610**. If you are planning to attend, please call Charmaine Eng at 408.723.8116 (dial *82 before the number).

Visit our PPSG website: www.ppsg.org for the following:

[What's New](#)
[Articles](#)
[About Parkinson's](#)
[Support Groups](#)
[Exercise Classes](#)
[Events](#)
[Newsletters](#)
[Caregivers](#)
[Links](#)
[You Can Help](#)
[Contact Us](#)

Parkinson's Tie to Impulsiveness Studied

-Brain Implant That Stops Tremors of Parkinson's disease May Block Impulse-Control Signal

By Lauran Neergaard, AP Medical Writer

Your brain is supposed to fire a "hold your horses" signal when faced with a tough choice. But a brain implant that stops the tremors of Parkinson's disease may block that signal a new explanation for why some Parkinson's patients become hugely impulsive.

Scientists have long known that anti-Parkinson medications occasionally spark compulsions like pathological gambling.

Research published Thursday found another treatment, a pacemaker-like brain implant, can trigger a completely different kind of impulsiveness. How different? The drugs leave a subset of patients unlikely to learn from bad experiences, like a losing poker hand.

The brain implant doesn't hinder learning. In contrast, those patients can make hasty decisions as the brain loses its automatic tendency to hesitate when faced with conflict, University of Arizona researchers reported online in the journal *Science*.

In fact, the first patient they studied displayed an alarming example when he saw something across the room he wanted and tried to dash over without his wheelchair. Neuroscientist Michael Frank had to catch the man before he fell.

"Deep brain stimulation," or DBS, involves placing electrodes into a small region called the subthalamic nucleus, an area important for controlling movement. But it also is where scientists believe the brain yells: "Stop, weigh your options!"

Frank's theory: When electrodes fire to disrupt excessive movement, they also may block that signal.

"It makes a lot of sense," said Dr. Valerie Voon, a psychiatrist with the National Institutes of Health's neurology center, after reviewing the research. The study doesn't offer easy solutions. But it could affect how neurologists counsel Parkinson's patients after DBS surgery.

"Because they don't have those brakes in place, you need to teach someone to slow down" when faced with certain decisions, Voon said.

At least 1 million Americans have Parkinson's, suffering increasingly severe tremors and periodically stiff or frozen

limbs as brain cells quit producing dopamine, a chemical crucial for movement. Standard treatments include medications to stimulate dopamine and, once those fail, DBS surgery to control tremors.

www.absnews.go.com

Bright Light Improves Dementia Symptoms

-Study Shows Brighter Daytime Lighting Brings Improvement in Mood, Behavior

By Kelli Miller Stacy
WebMD Health News

June 10, 2008 -- Turning up the lights during the daytime may boost mood and improve behavior in elderly adults with dementia, according to a new study.

Mood swings, sleep problems, and behavioral issues frequently affect those with dementia-related cognitive decline. Such disturbances can increase the person's risk of being admitted to an assisted living facility, according to background information in the journal article.

Environmental light affects the body's 24-hour biological clock, also known as the circadian rhythm. Too little light exposure can throw off the sensitive balance of the circadian timing system. Disturbances in circadian rhythm can lead to sleep woes. A hormone called melatonin also plays an important role in the maintaining the system's circadian rhythm.

Rixt F. Riemersma-van der Lek, MD, of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam, and colleagues wanted to see how bright light with or without melatonin supplements would affect symptoms of dementia and sleep disturbances.

Their study is published in the June 11 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The study included 189 adults about 86 years old on average, mostly female, at 12 elder care facilities in the Netherlands. Most participants had dementia. Researchers randomly assigned the participants to a daily dose of melatonin or placebo (fake pill). The patients took the study medicine every night for an average of 15 months.

The facilities kept their lights on each day from about 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; half of the facilities increased the intensity of their ceiling-mounted lights. The researchers learned that bright light resulted in a modest improvement in dementia symptoms. Specifically, the use of bright daytime lighting:

- Reduced cognitive scores on a mental status exam by a relative 5%.
- Cut depression symptoms by a relative 19%.
- Calmed slow increases in functional limitations by slightly more than half (53%).

Adding melatonin helped patients fall asleep about eight minutes faster and sleep longer by 27 minutes. The researchers recommend melatonin supplements only in combination with light. Melatonin combined with brighter lighting cut agitated behavior by 9%.

"The simple measure of increasing the illumination level in group care facilities [improved] symptoms of disturbed cognition, mood, behavior, functional abilities, and sleep," the researchers write. "The long-term application of whole-day bright light did not have adverse effects ... and could be considered for use in care facilities for elderly individuals with dementia."

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