



Capital Area Parkinson's Society

May 2014 Newsletter

P.O. Box 27565, Austin, Texas 78755-2565

www.capitalareaparkinsons.org

New Formulation of Levodopa May Ease Parkinson's Symptoms with Fewer Pills

Parkinson's Disease Foundation, Science News, March 20, 2014

People with Parkinson's disease (PD) who took a new formulation of levodopa tablets three times a day had more constant levels of the drug in their systems than those who took standard immediate-release levodopa four or five times a day, according to a new study in the journal *Movement Disorders*. The study also found that the new drug worked equally as well as optimized doses of levodopa.

Recently, scientists developed a novel form of sustained-release levodopa, which they hope may reduce fluctuations in levodopa levels. Compared with standard levodopa, the new form called XP21279 is absorbed throughout the intestines (instead of only in the upper part of the small intestines) and is a "slow release" formulation, meaning it is absorbed into the body from the intestines over a longer period of time instead of all at once. This means it could be taken only three times daily instead of four or more.

Researchers led by Peter LeWitt, M.D., at Henry Ford Hospital and Wayne State University School of Medicine, in Michigan, compared effects of XP21279 with those of standard immediate-release levodopa in a double-blinded study. At the end of each two-week period, Dr. LeWitt and his colleagues compared the average "off time" for each group with off times at the beginning of the study (baseline) and examined how levels of the drugs in the blood fluctuated throughout the day.

Results

Participants reported that off time was cut in half just by improving the way they took standard levodopa (adjusting timing and dosages). This means that before the study, many participants were undertreated and may have benefitted during the trial, from seeing experts in the field of Parkinson's, called movement disorder specialists.

When participants took the new formulation of levodopa, they experienced a very similar reduction in off time as with

optimized standard levodopa, but were able to achieve this taking fewer doses.

In both groups, blood levels of levodopa were much more consistent throughout the day with the newer formulation of levodopa.

What Does It Mean?

Levodopa treatment is still the gold-standard treatment for PD. However, over time, people with PD who take the drug may experience off times, which can be very frustrating. Therefore, scientists are actively searching for new forms of levodopa or other drugs that can reduce off time. Evidence suggests that stabilizing the levels of levodopa in a person's blood could be one way of doing so.

Compared with standard release levodopa, XP21279 did provide more continuous levels of levodopa in the bloodstream. Contrary to the researchers' expectations, however, this did not result in significantly reduced off times. This may be because four people in the study failed to follow the directions about taking their medication with food, and subsequently had very poor results. Because the study is small, such problems can have large effects on the data. Thus, more research will be needed to

establish whether or not the new drug can actually help reduce off times and if it can be approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of PD.

Learn More

Find answers about medications or a PD specialist near you by calling (800)457-6676, visiting info@pdf.org or using our free resources below.

[Read about Medications for Parkinson's](#)

[Download Fact Sheet: Seeing a PD Specialist](#)

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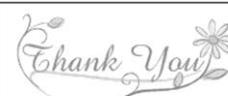
Accouncing CAPS Cares

We are introducing a new CAPS program to our CAPS members to provide them with free Social Services they otherwise may not have available to them. We aim to provide the resources and guidance they may need to manage the demands dictated by their disease. CAPS Cares seeks to provide Licensed Social Workers and trained staff that will be available for phone consultations, in-office visits, as well as home visits when needed.

Services provided include: facilitation of family meetings, client and family education, client and family consultations, recommendations housing, prescription assistance resources, transportation needs, community program resources, government program assistance, food assistance resources, home safety evaluations and advanced directive assistance.

To apply for assistance, please contact CAPS at 512-993-6830, P.O.Box 277565, Austin, Texas 78755 or apply online at www.CapitalAreaParkinsons.org.

CAPS Cares



A special thank you to Margaret Burnett for the lovely table decorations at our Parkinson's Awareness April meeting.



A Winning Success!

The **5th Annual Cars for Parkinson's & Dystonia** was an overwhelming success! Our annual fundraiser for Power for Parkinson's drew 115 cars, 500 attendees and raised **\$35,000**, \$8,000 more than last year! Keep an eye out as new classes will be forming over the coming months.



A special thank you to our sponsors and our Pit Crew - we couldn't have done it without them.

Gold - Austin Radiological Association

Checkered Flag - BZ Motors, WellMed, Dr. & Mrs. Bernard Friedberg, Central Texas Neurology Consultants, Teva Pharmaceuticals, HDI Plastics, Inc., Neurology Solutions, Colvin Automotive, Plastic Surgery Center of Austin, Stahl, Bernal, Davies and Kruger Jewelry Co.

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Green Flag - Accolade Home Care, Austin Neurologic Clinic, Devere M.D., Shari Fish Wellness, Epstein, First Texas Honda, Gellman, Hartzell, Healthsouth Rehabilitation Hospital, Krumholz, Lights Fantastic, Lyon, Newberg, Reliant Rehab, Osherow, Patel, Peebles Family, Plains Capital Bank, Rhea, Saiken, Stahl, Stahl, Suzanne Newberg/ Carol Dochen Realtors and The Zidel Family.



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May Membership Meeting

Saturday, May 17, 2014 ■ 2:00 p.m.



Dr. Robert M. Izor, MD, MS, a Board-Certified neurologist, joins us again this May for a special presentation at our monthly membership meeting. A long-time friend of CAPS, Dr. Izor will present an NSC Parkinson's Disease Update.

Medical Office Building, St. David's Medical Center,
5th Floor Conference Room, 3000 N. IH-35

Lunch will be provided by Teva Pharmaceutical.