



Capital Area Parkinson's Society

July 2015 Newsletter

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

www.capitalareaparkinsons.org

Diet and Parkinson's Disease

The Michael J. Fox Foundation

No singular diet can treat Parkinson's disease or its symptoms, but a healthy and balanced diet can improve general well-being. Eating fruits and vegetables may help keep you energized and hydrated. Fiber-rich foods and fluids may ease symptoms of constipation or low blood pressure. Your medication regimen may impact your diet, too. Adjusting the timing and composition of meals might allow medications to work better, and you may need to avoid specific foods to prevent side effects. Work with your physician or a dietitian to design a diet that fits your needs.

SHOULD YOU AVOID ANY FOODS OR SUPPLEMENTS?

The medication levodopa (Sinemet) is a protein building block so it competes for absorption with other proteins. Eating a very proteinic meal reduces the likelihood of effectively absorbing levodopa, so you may want to leave meat, fish and cheese for dinner and eat more carbohydrates and vegetables during the day. Taking medication on an empty stomach—30 minutes before or 60 minutes after a meal—allows the drug to reach the small intestine and absorb faster. However, a carbohydrate snack (crackers, toast, oatmeal) with the medication may be necessary to prevent nausea.

Dopamine agonists (pramipexole and ropinirole) do not require any dietary adjustment. Those who take MAO-B inhibitors (rasagiline or selegiline) should eat with moderation—but not eliminate—foods that contain high concentrations of tyramine. MAO-B inhibitors increase tyramine, and the combination could elevate blood pressure. Avoid foods such as: cured, fermented or air-dried meats or fish, aged cheeses: aged cheddar or Swiss, blue cheeses, Camembert, fermented cabbage: sauerkraut, kimchi, soybean products, including soy sauce, and red wine and tap beer.

Iron supplements can also decrease absorption of levodopa so they should be separated from medications by at least two hours.

WHAT DIETARY CHANGES CAN EASE PARKINSON'S SYMPTOMS?

Constipation is common in Parkinson's disease. Increased fluid and fiber consumption can help maintain regularity. Aim to drink six to eight 8 ounce glasses of water per day. Warm liquids, especially in the morning, can stimulate bowel movements. Dietary sources of fiber consist of fruits (with the peel), vegetables, legumes, whole grain breads and cereals. Most of these are high in antioxidants as well.

Low blood pressure is a symptom of Parkinson's and a side effect of some medications. Raising fluid and salt intake will boost blood pressure, but talk with your physician, especially if you have heart or kidney problems. Increase cold fluids—water, Gatorade, V8 juice—to five 8 ounce glasses per half day. Limit caffeinated beverages, hot liquids and alcohol as these encourage dehydration and low blood pressure. Eating frequent, small meals can also smooth blood pressure fluctuations.

Swallowing problems can present as coughing, choking or a sensation of food feeling “stuck.” A speech therapist can prescribe appropriate, individualized dietary modifications and adaptive strategies. These may include adding foods with increased “sensory input” (e.g., seasoned, cold, sour or carbonated items) or altering the consistency of solids and/or liquids. In addition, you might be asked to sit up straight, take smaller bites at a slower pace and allow for longer mealtimes.

Some people with Parkinson's experience painful muscle cramping, especially at night and as medication wears off. Eating yellow mustard, which contains the spice turmeric, or drinking tonic water, which contains quinine, may help. Others endorse salt, vinegar or pickle juice. Maintaining adequate hydration may prevent or limit cramping.

WHAT ARE ANTIOXIDANTS AND WHAT FOODS CONTAIN THEM?

Antioxidants are one of those “good for you” things you hear about all the time. They're molecules that clear out free radicals—toxic substances formed from stresses like air pollution, sunlight, cigarette smoke and even the process of converting food to energy. Oxidative stress is a biological condition caused by too many free radicals. It's associated with aging and Parkinson's disease, so a diet high in antioxidants may offset oxidative stress and cellular damage.

Antioxidants are present in vegetables: artichokes, okra, kale, bell peppers, potatoes; fruits: berries, pears, apples, grapes; grains, eggs, legumes: kidney beans, edamame, lentils; nuts: pecans, walnuts, hazelnuts; dark chocolate, and some beverages such as red wine, coffee and tea.

***NOTE:** The medical information contained in this article is for general information purposes only. Please consult with a physician or other qualified medical professional regarding your treatment decisions. ■

Capital Area Parkinson's Society
1st Annual
Summer Bash
Night of
Dancing and Celebration
Thursday, August 13, 2015 • 6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Balcones Country Club • 8600 Balcones Club Drive
Tickets: \$75 - May be purchased at
www.capitalareaparkinsons.org/summerbash
General and Table Sponsorships available
For more information, contact Lina at 512-517-0621
or summerbash@capitalareaparkinsons.org
*All proceeds go to the Capital Area Parkinson's Society
www.capitalareaparkinsons.org*

Save the Date
Thursday, August 13, 2015

Bee Gees Songbook

Attire: Summer Disco (Optional)

Invitation to Follow

Reminder!



Lakeway Area Support Group

Meetings: 1st Tuesday of each month
Vibra Rehabilitation Hospital of Lake Travis
2000 Medical Drive, Lakeway, Texas 78734
Phone: 512-263-4500
Contact: Tereasa Ford, LBSW at 512-364-3336

Round Rock Support Group

Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month
Wyoming Springs Assisted Living
7230 Wyoming Springs Drive, Round Rock, Texas 78681
(near the Round Rock Hospital)
Contact: Donna Hohm at 512-765-7733 or
dhohm@seniorcarecentersltc.com

Support • Outreach • Resources • Education • Information



to Amy's for
always providing
the delicious ice
cream for our summer
socials. We appreciate you!

Do you, or someone you know, have the diagnosis
of Multiple System Atrophy (MSA)?

We have had requests from members seeking others
with this diagnosis.

If you do, please contact Shirley Uzzell at
sauzzell2@gmail.com.

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July Membership Meeting

Saturday, July 18 ■ 2:00 p.m.
Medical Office Building, St. David's Medical Center
5th Floor Conference Room, 3000 N. IH-35

Shelly Carver, from Accolade Home Care, will be speaking on "Speech and Swallowing Issues" common in Parkinson's disease and the "Benefits and Techniques of LSVT Loud Therapy." Shelly has a degree in Communication Disorders and a Master's of Science in Speech Language Pathology. She has been LSVT Loud certified since 2011 and has been instrumental in both working with the local Parkinson's community and raising awareness in the local medical community. She is currently training with the SpeechVive device which focuses on hypokinetic dysarthria.



No potluck this month. **ICE CREAM SOCIAL** immediately following our meeting.