



# Capital Area Parkinson's Society

Newsletter/December 2018

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

512-371-3733

capitalareaparkinsons.org

## Solutions for Parkinson's Effects on Patients' Handwriting

[www.Parkinson.org](http://www.Parkinson.org)

Handwriting can change as you age, especially if you have stiff hands or fingers, from arthritis or another condition, or if you have poor vision. However, small, cramped handwriting – called micrographia – is characteristic of Parkinson's and is frequently one of the early symptoms. In addition to words being generally small and crowded together, the size of handwriting might get smaller as you continue to write.

Micrographia is caused by the same processes in the brain that lead to other movement symptoms of the disease. In addition, those symptoms – slowness of movement, tremor, rigidity – can all make it harder to write.

**Medications to control movement symptoms may slightly improve micrographia. There are also some strategies that can make writing more comfortable for you and legible for your readers.**

- Practice! Write one page every day.
- Use a weighted pen or a pen with a thick grip.
- Use lined paper.
- Sit upright in a comfortable chair, and write on a table.
- Write during "on" time when medication is working best.
- Take breaks as needed.

If writing becomes too difficult for you or too hard to read, try typing. If motor control makes that too hard also, try dictation software. There are programs for your phone and computer that can help.

(Editor's note: A new interactive workbook designed to help improve the small handwriting symptom found in those living with Parkinson's disease has been developed by the Smile Through Art organization. The workbook is \$20 and is available on their website (<https://smilethroughart.com/micrographia>) as well as through Amazon and Barnes & Noble). ■



*Happy Holidays!*

*Please consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation to CAPS. In addition to the operational expenses, your donations will help support our education and outreach programs for the Parkinson's community in the Central Texas area.*

*Thank you!*

**Contact Us**

if your email, phone number or address has changed. Please call the CAPS office at 512-371-3373 so you don't miss receiving any important CAPS information.

Your input is so valuable to our efforts to meet the needs of all CAPS members. If you have ideas and/or suggestions about topics you'd like to cover next year, please let us know!

**Ideas?**

Contact  
Mary Jackman  
at 512-371-3373  
or [info@capitalareaparkinsons.org](mailto:info@capitalareaparkinsons.org)  
We want to stay in touch!

**board of Directors**

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## Area Outreach Support Groups

**Brookdale, Northwest Hills –  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 3pm**  
5715 Mesa Drive  
Austin, TX 78731

**Burnet – 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday @ 2pm**  
Seton Highland Lakes Hospital,  
Conference Room  
309 Industrial Blvd. (Behind Hospital)  
Burnet, TX 78611

**Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) –  
3<sup>rd</sup> Friday @ 2pm**  
Neurology Solutions Office  
12345 N. Lamar Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78753

**Lakeway – 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday @ 2pm**  
Vibra Rehabilitation Hospital of Lake Travis  
2000 Medical Drive  
Lakeway, TX 78734

**Simultaneous Care Partner and Patient –  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday @ 10:15am**  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
3003 Northland Drive  
Austin TX 78757

**Young Onset Parkinson's Disease (under 55)  
Dates and Locations Will Vary**  
Austin TX 78756  
Contact: Bob Sahm at 512-914-2132  
or [rsahm99@gmail.com](mailto:rsahm99@gmail.com)

For more information, visit [www.capitalareaparkinsons.org](http://www.capitalareaparkinsons.org).

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## December Membership Meeting

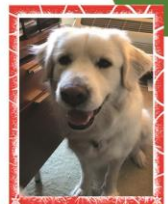
Please join us for our

holiday  
**PARTY**

Ornament gift  
for each member  
who attends  
(1 per family)

Saturday, December 15 • 2:00-4:00 p.m.  
Medical Office Building, St. David's Medical Center  
3000 N. IH-35, 5th Floor Conference Room

Sit-down Holiday Lunch  
Hot Chocolate/Espresso Bar • Dessert Bar  
Games • Door Prizes • Ornament Exchange  
Ugly Sweater Contest • Photo Booth Selfie Station  
Dance Performance by the *Art Beat Dance Group*  
Visit from the CAPS Mascot "Lexi"



*Please RSVP, if possible, for a food headcount. If not, please come anyway!*