



Capital Area Parkinson's Society

Newsletter/January 2020

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Vitamins and Parkinson's Disease

Brain & Life, December 2019/January 2020

Levodopa, the gold standard treatment for Parkinson's disease, may deplete reserves of B6, B12, and folate, says Rodolfo Savica, MD, PhD, associate professor of neurology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. "This could increase the risk for nerve damage that causes numbness and tingling in feet and hands, as well as walking problems."

In a 2019 *Journal of Movement Disorders* study that tracked 1,741 people with Parkinson's disease for three years, those who took a multivitamin plus a B12 supplement had a slightly lower risk for developing sensory symptoms such as numbness, tingling, aching, and pain than those who didn't take these supplements. B12 supplements had no effect on other symptoms like freezing while walking, falls, instability, or cognitive problems that were rated on the Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale prior to the study and again after three years. The researchers note that the results were "secondary"; the study's primary aim was to test creatine supplements as an add-on therapy in early Parkinson's disease. When creatine proved ineffective, the study was halted. The multivitamin and B12 results were seen in a small group of people and should be considered preliminary. Experts agree further study to confirm the finding is warranted.

What to know: If you have Parkinson's disease, ask your doctor if you should be tested for B6, B12, and folate deficiencies. "If you have deficiencies and your doctor

rules out other causes, consider taking supplements," says Dr. Savica. He prescribes 25 milligrams of B6, 2 mg of B12, and 2.5 mg of folate. Supplements may help with sensory symptoms such as numbness, tingling, aching, and pain, he says. "But don't take megadoses, especially of vitamin B6," Dr. Savica warns. "They can be toxic." ■

In Loving Memory

CAPS is fortunate to have a tremendous group of volunteers who devote their time to help us throughout the year. Just recently, we lost one of those extraordinary volunteers, Shirley Uzzell.



After retiring as a neuro nurse for many years at St. David's and Brackenridge Hospitals, Shirley served for 20 years in several roles including Board President, office manager where she responded to requests for information and resources, and board advisor for CAPS. Countless numbers of our members have benefited from Shirley's words of encouragement and her knowledge of Parkinson's disease. Thank you Shirley! We will miss you!

Shirley Uzzell

2020 CAPS Dues Are Now Being Accepted!

Thanks to our members, CAPS is able to offer support and assistance to so many individuals. We appreciate your support! The annual membership dues for 2020 are now due. These funds allow us to provide CAPS members with the many programs that we offer. Individual dues are \$25 and \$40 for a family. Thank you!



2020

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