

Happy Birthday to the Parkinson's Exercise Program - PEP!

On Friday, April 2, 2004, PEP celebrated its 8th anniversary with a potluck lunch and birthday cake. About 25 PEPsters, including co-founders Henry Tseng and Wally Fischmann, relatives and caregivers, gathered after exercise class for the celebration, taking turns telling jokes and singing songs. We also admired 97 year-young Henry for his limber yoga abilities. He is able to bring his legs over his head while on his back and to touch his toes while bending over in a stand up position! He is an inspiring advocate for maintaining a regular exercise regimen. With the enthusiastic support of our instructor Rachel McCoy-Bedford and the staff of the Westside Family YMCA, and the commitment of PEP members, the program will surely have many more anniversaries in the years to come.



Science and Medicine

By Dr. Gail Kang & Dr. Jeff Bronstein

In the past, there were few options for medication choices for patients with Parkinson's disease. However, several new medications for Parkinson's disease have become available in recent years.

Because of this increasing number of Parkinson's disease medications, it can be confusing for patients and

caregivers to understand the reasons for their practitioners choosing a particular medication. Likewise, it can be difficult to remember what the intended effect and potential side effects are of a given medication. In this brief

A Review of Medications Commonly Used in Parkinson's Disease

review, we will attempt to highlight some of the main characteristics of the medications most commonly used in Parkinson's disease.

Carbidopa/Levodopa (Sinemet) – Levodopa was initially used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease in the 1940's. Levodopa is converted in the brain to dopamine which is the deficient neurotransmitter in the brains of individuals with Parkinson's disease. It has remained an excellent therapeutic option in the treatment of the motoric symptoms of tremor, stiffness and slowness which commonly occur in Parkinson's disease. In more recent years, levodopa has been combined with carbidopa in a tablet form and is referred to as Sinemet. The carbidopa functions to decrease the potential side effects of levodopa on the gastrointestinal system such as nausea and abdominal cramping. Sinemet is available in a short-acting form in dosage strengths of 10/100, 25/100 and 25/250. Sinemet's effect on the motor symptoms typically takes 15-30 minutes to begin working and lasts for approximately 4 hours. Sinemet is also available in a longer-lasting formulation referred to as CR (controlled

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Visit our Current Programs

We are happy to list PLLUS/PEP programs, with contact information for those interested in participating:

Mid Valley YMCA in Van Nuys, California, started PLLUS in 1998 and is going strong. Contact Lupita Rangel, (818) 989-3800.

Mission Valley YMCA in San Diego, California, began their program in 2003 with help from their local Parkinson's chapter. Contact Carolyn Wisdom, (619) 298-3576 ext. 215.

Westside Family YMCA in West Los Angeles, California, began their program in 1998 and is still growing and going strong. Contact Ernie Sacco, (310) 477-1511 ext. 7597.

Singapore hosts the first international PEP. Visit <http://www.dpa.org.sg/PARKINSON/index.html>.

In Honor of Howard Siskel, PLLUS Program Member and Support Group Participant Westside Family YMCA

In April, PLLUS lost one of its founding members Howard Siskel, a fellow Rotarian and PLLUS board member for whom I have fond memories. I would like to share a few thoughts with all PEPsters about this multi-faceted, generous, and steadfast supporter, who himself had Parkinson's disease.

Howard owned a construction bonding company and obtained a law degree from USC. He was a proud alumnus, a decorated WWII veteran, and an accomplished violinist, whose love of music will carry on through a recent USC music scholarship established in his name. In addition to PLLUS and Rotary, Howard and his wife, Eloise, actively supported many charities, served as school trustees, and without fanfare, gave unselfishly to better our community and the less fortunate. Howard had a quiet, dignified demeanor and a gentle, witty sense of humor that Parkinson's did not diminish. My memories of Howard are related to the personal support he gave me when I was president of the Westwood Village Rotary Club and the times he would call to say, "let's have lunch!" in a friendly and cheerful voice. I also recall, with much appreciation and gratitude, Howard's leadership of a committee whose efforts resulted in the video entitled "PLLUS... There's Exercise!" for Parkinson's patients who cannot attend an exercise class on a regular basis. The video has been distributed worldwide and I believe it is his lasting contribution

and personal legacy. Finally, I want all PEPsters to know that PLLUS was named by his beloved wife Eloise as a beneficiary of donations and to date, \$17,000 has been received in Howard's name. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Eloise and to the many generous people who respected, loved, and wanted to remember our special friend.

PLLUS has been extremely fortunate to have supporters from the very beginning who believed that Parkinsonians can enjoy a quality of life with appropriate exercise and the fellowship of group members. With this brief tribute, we honor Howard Siskel as one of our first supporters and commit ourselves anew in his memory to the goal of expanding exercise programs to Parkinsonians at home by video or in a class wherever they are in California, the U.S., or elsewhere in the world.

Contribution provided by friend, fellow Rotarian, and PLLUS member, George Dea.

Start your own Parkinson's Exercise Program (PEP)!

The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) has provided limited resources to help you and your organization start PEP in your area! Rachel McCoy-Bedford and/or Ernie Sacco from the pilot program at the Westside Family YMCA are available to train your exercise instructors and provide music, informational materials, and answers to your questions. They will also tell you how you can take a leadership role in obtaining additional program support.

For information, call (310) 477-1511 ext. 7597, or email erniesacco@ymcala.org

Meet , a PLLUS Member at Mid Valley Family YMCA

At the Mid Valley Family YMCA, the PLLUS class has been in full swing for the past four years. It is a class that provides a good source of exercise and fun for the members who participate. Everyone's enthusiasm and energy are transmitted throughout the room, and we all feel a family atmosphere.

My wish for this class is to maintain and increase the number of participants. It's a goal for this class to provide more energy, strength, and overall a great source of self-esteem. It is a great satisfaction for me to see the participants We also have Bob, who is always making faces to keep everyone with a grin. When they do not show up for a class, we truly miss them– we are a big family.

I just want to say thank you to the Mid Valley Family YMCA for giving me the opportunity to teach this class with such wonderful people.

Parkinson's Resource Organization (PRO) Open Meeting Schedule

West Los Angeles/Brentwood (resumes October 21, 2004) - meets every 3rd Thursday of the month at the Community Room, Citibank, 12001 San Vicente Blvd. 310-476-7030.

Long Beach (resumes October 6, 2004) - meets 1st Wednesday of the month at Bixby Knolls Towers, 3737 Atlantic Ave. 877-775-4111.

Glendora (resumes October 13, 2004) - meets 2nd Wednesday of the month at 74-090 El Paseo, Suite 102. 877-775-4111.

Newport Beach (resumes October 14, 2004) - meets 2nd Thursday of the month at Room 3, Oasis Senior Center, 800 Marguerite, Corona Del Mar. 949-645-3352.

San Diego (resumes October 20, 2004) - meets 3rd Wednesday of the month at Scripps Mende Well Being, 4305 La Jolla Village Drive. 877-775-4111.

Palm Desert - meets the 4th Wednesday of every month at Joslyn Senior Center, 73-750 Catalina Way. 760-773-5628.

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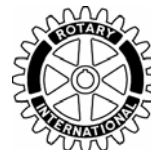
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Westwood Village
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