

OCTOBER 2008

WHEN IT RAINS -- IT POURS !

Everyone at HAPS hopes that you were safe during the hurricane and by the time you receive this newsletter, your life will be back to "normal." Life with Parkinson's disease can be demanding enough without having the *emotional stress* of waiting and preparing for a major hurricane, the anxiety of not knowing how many days you will be without power, and then, dealing with the *physical stress* involved with the aftermath of cleanup.

Up to 90 percent of doctor visits can be attributed to stress-related maladies, which makes stress among America's top health problems. Stress is known to aggravate Parkinson's disease (especially tremor and mobility) so this seems to be an appropriate time for a few hints on how to manage, not only your hurricane stress, but some of the everyday stresses that occur from daily life tasks, events, problems and fatigue, as well as the anxiety and frustration of dealing with the limitations and life adjustments that Parkinson's often creates.

It is easier to calm down when a stressful event is over if you have done something to cope with it. The key to successful stress management is practice, so find the technique that works best for you and practice, practice, practice...

Meditation: HAPS recently began a 6-week meditation course. If you missed this one and are interested in taking it at the beginning of the year, call the office (713-626-7114) for details.

Tai Chi: Tai Chi has been called "meditation in motion" so if you haven't tried HAPS Tai Chi groups yet, now is the time! You get three benefits for one low price (free): meditation, exercise and balance skills.

Deep Breathing: Take slow, deep breaths from your diaphragm. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Count to five as you breathe in and five as you breathe out. Do this several times until you begin to feel more relaxed.

Progressive Relaxation: Get in a comfortable position, close your eyes and slowly focus on relaxing different parts of your body, one at a time. Start from your head and work down to your feet.

Relaxation Tapes/CDs/Books: There are many different relaxation materials available in bookstores and over the Internet. Music stores usually have a section on relaxation.

Massage: Massage can be very helpful in relieving muscle tightness, and is also extremely relaxing to body and mind.

Biofeedback: Biofeedback works by training you to relax and modify your behavior.

And, last but not least, just allow yourself some time to **rest!**

HELP HAPS HELP!

Please note that due to Hurricane Ike, the date of our Polo for Parkinson's event has been changed to Sunday, November 9, 2008.

The funds generated by this event help make it possible for HAPS to provide vital services, education and advocacy on which so many rely. In the wake of Hurricane Ike, your support is more important today than ever before.

Another way you can "help HAPS help" is to support HAPS Marathon team by making a general donation for those participating or fundraise yourself. Send in a check or credit card information or go to our website www.hapsonline.org and support those who are working/walking/running for you!

An example of what can be done is shown by the email below that was sent to family and friends.

CHANGE THE DATE

Sunday 11.9.08



3 pm polo match at the Houston Polo Club

HAPS Artists' Collaborative
silent auction and raffle

Dinner following at the Bayou Club

For more information call 713-313-1640 or

Hi,

My name is Alyssa Karpas. I am twelve years old and I am going to walk the 5K in the Marathon for my Aunt Nina, who can't.

I've read that Parkinson's is a neurological disease that is progressive, debilitating and incurable.

Although my Aunt Nina has lived with Parkinson's twice as long as I have lived, I have watched her disease progress. Though the years, the number of days that she had "Camp Evergreen" at her house for all my cousins and me became shorter and shorter until she was no longer able to do it at all.

My mother walked with her in the 2003 5K to raise money for HAPS and now my aunt spends a good deal of her time on a scooter because there are times she can't walk 5 steps. While I have witnessed that progression, my aunt has not let it become debilitating. She works hard for people who have Parkinson's and I want to help her. I am not a scientist so I can't do anything about the "incurable" part, but I *can* help raise money for HAPS, which offers a better quality of life to people who live daily with this disease.

Please make a pledge to support my walk in honor of my aunt, or better yet, get your friends and maybe even a Girl or Boy Scout troop or your special group to join me! It would be really neat to see lots of kids out there walking or running for those who can't!

(If you are not able to make the walk with me, you can still be a "virtual runner" and create your own Fundraising Team and set up a page like I did on the Marathon website! If you get confused, the HAPS office will be happy to help!)

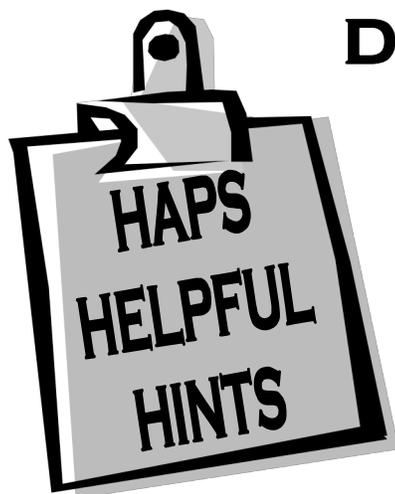


NO TRICK...JUST A TREAT

According to The American Institute for Cancer Research in Washington, D.C. just because a food is rich, tasty and maybe sweet doesn't automatically mean it's unhealthy. Some treats just may surprise you with the antioxidants they offer and how nutritious they really are. So, enjoy...

- ☺ Blueberry pancakes
- ☺ Guacamole
- ☺ Fig Newtons
- ☺ Peanut butter and honey sandwich
- ☺ Red wine
- ☺ Frozen yogurt
- ☺ Cheese pizza
- ☺ Fruit smoothies

DEALING WITH YOUR MEDS



- Your medication will take effect faster if you drink a lot of water with them.
- Purchase a pillbox with an alarm or use a separate alarm to keep yourself on schedule.
- If possible, ask your neurologist to prescribe different-looking medications to help tell them apart at a glance.
- If taking medication in the middle of the night, buy two plastic toddler 'sippy' cups with tops that can't come off or spill. If you drop a cup, nothing spills and you don't even have to look for it until morning.



- To keep better track of your last dose and not worry with counting out pills from hard-to-open pill bottles, get a weekly pill container separated into daily compartments.
- Use a plastic box with compartments meant for small sewing supplies to sort a month's supply of pills.
- When traveling, never pack your medication in a suitcase. Take all you need for the duration of the trip plus one extra week. Pack the original containers or the original label from the bottle. If you are hospitalized, having these with you can be invaluable.
- Keep a no-spill container of water with a straw in your car for those "have pills, must travel" times.
- Create a written list of all your medications. Keep one in your wallet and one with your meds at all times.
- For easier access, put your medications in your pocket or buy a waist pouch.



Nina Brown

Millions of Americans are uninsured or underinsured because of rising medical costs: 46 million Americans lack health insurance with no signs of this trend slowing down. Health insurance premiums have risen 4 times faster than wages over the past 6 years. Health care costs are skyrocketing. Too little is spent on prevention and public health.

Over 133 million Americans have at least one chronic (incurable) disease and these chronic conditions cost our country a staggering \$1.7 trillion a year. An estimated 75% of all medical expenditures go to paying the medical expenses of the chronically ill.

According to the National Parkinson's Foundation, each person with Parkinson's spends an average of \$2,500 a year for medications. Estimates of costs of medical care, disability payments and lost income exceed \$5.6 million annually. This does not include the effect on caregivers and family.

Although the vast majority of those affected by Parkinson's are over age 65, Parkinson's strikes an increasing number of younger persons, when its victims are in the prime of their working careers. And, as the baby boomers reach 65, the numbers needing help will escalate.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "There were 49.7 million people with some type of lasting condition or disability living in the U.S. in 2000 or nearly one person in five."

In 2000, the American Association of People with Disabilities said there were 3,272,295 disabled voters in Texas, which is 21.9%. It is reasonable to assume the numbers would be greater now, considering the disproportionate increase in our aging population.

If all of these people spoke up with their vote, we might be closer to an answer to these problems and possibly cures or better treatments for a multitude of diseases and conditions.

Elections can be determined by a few votes. You owe it to yourself to take time to learn the issues. Whatever your position is on the war in Iraq, health care, stem cells, taxes, social security, Medicare, Medicaid, the energy crisis, or the economy, your vote is one way you can do something to make your thoughts known.

If you are not registered to vote...do so. If you are 65 or over or have a physical disability, you can vote by mail. Simply request an application for a ballot from the Texas Secretary of State's office to be mailed to you. They can also help you with any voting questions. Or, if you prefer, go to their website: <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/>. The completed ballot must be submitted before the close of business on the 7th day before Election Day, which is 28th of this month.

If you are not qualified to vote by mail, you can still vote early. You can cast your ballot at your convenience in person at any early voting site convenient to you.

For voter information in Texas, call 800-252-VOTE (8683.)

If you are interested in serving on HAPS Advocacy Committee, call 713-218-8888.

**BE PATIENT AND ACHIEVE ALL THINGS.
BE IMPATIENT AND ACHIEVE ALL THINGS FASTER.**

CONTRIBUTIONS

Your donation is much appreciated. Your thoughtfulness helps HAPS continue to provide much needed services to people with Parkinson's and their families.

GIFTS

Robert and Paula Beck
Ron Tintner and Kathleen Smalky
Nelda and Jerry West
Nancy and David Bell
Gary L. Sizenbach
Thomas Capo
Myra and Leonard Drury

Rita and Walter Adamson
Wilhelmina Smith
Jo Rae Crofton
Sharon and George Puig
Valeria and Richard Winterhoff
Anita and Howard Selle

IN HONOR OF

In honor of George A. Bourgeois, III
Mr. and Mrs. George A. Bourgeois, Jr.

In honor of the Missouri City Exercise Class
Carolyn and Michael Carroll

IN MEMORY OF

In memory of Donnie Allen Carlisle
Patricia and Philip Schlageter

In memory of Bill Copeland
Sheryl and Wayne Huebner
Patricia Valentine
Harriet and Jim Hamblin
Doris and Alvin Kohut
Debi and Chris Labay
Nelda and Jerry West

In memory of Anne Minkes
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Adamson

In memory of Mary Lee Thomas
Mr. and Mrs. Demo Kouzounis

In memory of Jean De Vaney
Jo Rae Crofton

In memory of A. Vener
Marcelyn Freed Vener

In memory of F.V. Swinnea
Linda Williams

In memory of Arnold Garret Sauter
James Hensley
Kathleen and Robert J. Hensley

In memory of Don Weikman
Dana Gray
Scott E. Rozzell
Virginia Criss
Mr. and Mrs. Tod P. Harding

In memory of Sally Rascoe
Marilyn Weaver
Ana Martinez
Catherine Coleman
Margaret and Stuart McDonald

In memory of Gerald P. Furr
Anne Thobae

Donations are tax deductible



Generic Parcopa Available Soon

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved a generic version of Parcopa, which is the form of Carbidopa and Levodopa that dissolves in your mouth. Check with your doctor to find when it is available.

HAPS HAPPENINGS

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Ellin Grossman, Ed.D
Vice President/Secretary: Nina P. Brown
Vice President/Treasurer: M. Sneed Lary
Assistant Treasurer: Liz Lary

Ron Bernell
Joe A. Brown
Robert Casey
Meredith Cullen
Frank Donnelly
Ted Gilbreath

Kathy Grady
Dick Gregg
Mary Hart
Eugene C. Lai, M.D., Ph.D.
Dan Lauck
Anne Martin

Quin McWhirter
Marti McWhirter
George Puig
Ruth "Binky" Stephenson
John Strom

ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman: Aubrey Calvin

Chris Bell
M. Louis Bernell
June Bowen
Leanne Burnett, M.D.
Roy H. Cullen
Robert Cruikshank
Virginia Elverson

John E. Hankey
Harriet Hart
Harriet Latimer
Robert A. Martone
W. O. Neuhaus, III
Malcolm Pettigrew
Jeff Rosenberg

Marion Rosenwald
Terry Satterwhite, M.D.
Ambassador Arthur Schechter
Joyce Proler Schechter
Koyne D. Smith
Patricia Temple

STAFF

Anne Thobae, Executive Director
Kathleen Crist, LMSW, Director of Social Services
Alfonso Hernandez, Director of Therapeutic Services
Celeste Guerrero, LMSW, Social Worker

HAPS HAPPENINGS is published monthly by **Houston Area Parkinson Society** Editor: **Nina P. Brown**

HAPS does not provide diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or pharmacist with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or drug interactions.

