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BREAKTHROUGHS IN HEALTH & MEDICINE



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In This Week's Issue...

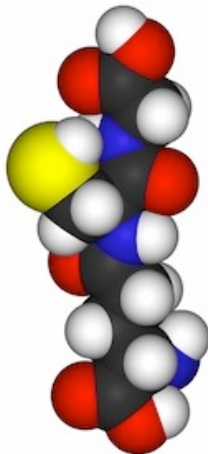
- This Week's Breakthrough: **PART II: The Latest Treatments for Parkinson's**
- Member's Area Updates: **Get the scoop on the most recent additions to the Member's Area.**

This Week's Breakthrough

Part II: The Latest Treatments for Parkinson's

IV Glutathione

Composed of the three amino acids cysteine, glycine and glutamic acid, *glutathione* is one of the body's master detoxifiers and antioxidants. As a detoxifier, it helps convert fat-soluble toxic chemicals (such as pesticides and solvents) and heavy metals (such as lead, mercury, and aluminum) into water-soluble forms that can then be excreted in the urine and bile. As one of the brain's most active antioxidants, glutathione neutralizes harmful free radicals that are highly implicated in the development of Parkinson's. Although there are several means of increasing glutathione levels using glutathione precursors such as the oral supplements vitamin C, lipoic acid, and N-acetylcysteine, PD patients require therapeutic doses of glutathione that often can be obtained only through intravenous administration.



In a 1996 study (1) by Italian researchers, 600 mg of IV glutathione was administered to PD patients twice daily for 30 days. Patient progress was assessed once a month over the next six months. The researchers reported a striking improvement in all of the patients receiving glutathione, with a 42% decline in disability. Following the 30 day treatment regimen, the benefits lasted from two to four months without further treatment.

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World-renowned alternative medical practitioner Dr. Julian Whitaker highly recommends the technique for treating PD, has had many successes in treating his PD patients, and believes it should be the treatment of choice for PD. To locate a practitioner in your area who administers this treatment, contact the American College for Advancement in Medicine at (800)530-1982, or visit their web site at www.acam.org.

Enhanced External Counter Pulsation (EECP)

A technique effective in treating various aspects of cardiovascular disease has recently shown promise in treating the symptoms of PD. EECP is a non-surgical treatment that uses a unique set of mechanical equipment to inflate and deflate a series of pneumatic compressive cuffs around the calves and lower and upper thighs. The cuffs inflate and deflate in a particular sequence which is correlated to the heart beat. The overall effect is to increase the oxygen supply of the heart, while decreasing its oxygen demand. Many experts believe PD may be associated with vascular problems. EECP's success in treating PD supports this view.



Several years ago Arkansas cardiologist Dr. Charles Fitzgerald serendipitously discovered that EECP treatment, in addition to helping his cardiac patients, also provided significant improvements in the symptoms of his Parkinson's patients, including ease of walking, mood enhancement, and increased facial expression. Fitzgerald believes the beneficial effects are probably the result of increased blood flow to the portion of the brain that produces dopamine, the *substantia nigra pars compacta*. (2)

Medicare covers EECP treatments only for angina. As more research demonstrates its effectiveness in relieving PD symptoms, insurance coverage could be expanded. To learn more about the technique, visit the website of its manufacturer Vasomedical at www.vasomedical.com, or call them at (800)455-3327.

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)

Also known as ubiquinone, CoQ10 has antioxidant properties similar to vitamin E, although unlike vitamin E it can be manufactured by the body. CoQ10 is a lipid which is present in the energy-producing mitochondria of every cell in the body, and is found most abundantly in areas of the body requiring the most energy, such as the heart. It is a powerful antioxidant that increases stamina, may slow the aging process, and is helpful to the body in myriad other ways.

One of those ways was recently documented by researchers at the University of California, San Diego. In a 2002 article published in the *Archives of Neurology* (3), the UC researchers reported the results of a 16 month study involving 80 patients with early Parkinson's. The patients were randomly assigned to one of four groups: 300 mg, 600 mg, or 1,200 mg daily, or a placebo. Symptoms of the





patients in each of the CoQ10 groups progressed much more slowly compared to the placebo group taking no Q10. The most pronounced effect was in the 1,200 mg/day group which experienced a 44%

reduction in symptom worsening.

A good CoQ10 product will contain either an oil (such as borage, flax, etc.) or an advanced delivery system to aid in absorption. Two such products are oil-based Vitaline CoQ10 and Q-Sorb® by Jarrow Formulas, which have proprietary liposomal delivery systems. Both are available in health food stores and on the internet. Perhaps the best CoQ10 product is known as Ubiquinol, a reduced and more bioavailable form of the substance, which is also available online and in health food stores.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin of critical importance in the treatment and prevention of a number of medical conditions. The generic term vitamin E includes at least eight forms of tocopherol produced from plants, of which d-alpha tocopherol is believed to have the highest potency. In a 2002 study published in *Archives of Neurology* (4), the mental decline of 3,000 men and women aged 65-102 was followed over a seven year period. Those participants whose dietary or supplemental vitamin E consumption was in the highest quintile (one fifth) experienced a 36% reduction in worsening of symptoms compared to those in the lowest quintile.



Both the natural (d-alpha tocopherol, d-alpha tocopheryl acetate, and d-alpha tocopheryl succinate) and synthetic forms (dl-alpha tocopherol, dl-alpha tocopheryl acetate, and dl-alpha tocopheryl succinate) of vitamin E are commercially available as a pill-form supplement.

Natural vitamin E is isolated from vegetable oils, whereas synthetic vitamin E is produced from petrochemicals. Natural vitamin E is significantly more biologically active and more present in various organs, blood and muscle tissue compared to its synthetic counterpart. When supplementing with vitamin E, be sure to select the natural version—“d,” not “dl.”

Mucuna Beans

Previous to the advent of synthetic L-dopa—the typical form currently obtained by prescription—various cultures throughout the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, have treated PD with cooked fava beans (*Vicia faba*). Although those who used the beans for this purpose had no knowledge of their chemical composition, they nevertheless noted the beans helped relieve PD symptoms.

In Brazil and India, traditional healers have used mucuna beans (*Mucuna pruriens*) to treat PD. Ancient Indian medical texts describe its use 4,500 years ago. In 1936, two Indian researchers isolated L-dopa from the mucuna bean, although its connection to Parkinson's wasn't made until the 1960s.

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A leading producer of Ayurvedic medicines, Zandu Pharmaceutical Works of Bombay, India, currently markets a mucuna bean product for the treatment of PD called



Zandopa (HP-200). One clinical trial of the herbal preparation, reported in the *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine* (5) in 1995, was conducted at the Texas A&M Medical School in Temple, Texas. Sixty Stage 2.5 (Stage 5 is the worst) PD patients averaging 59 years of age were given daily doses of Zandopa containing 1,250-1,750 mg of natural L-dopa. Following three months of treatment all of the participants improved significantly, averaging almost one stage of improvement. The study concluded that Zandopa is highly beneficial in the treatment of PD. No toxicity was noted and side-effects were mild, mostly relating to stomach upset.

Animal studies have shown that, dose for dose, mucuna is 2-3 times more effective than equivalent amounts of synthetic L-dopa. (6) This has led researchers to postulate there are other active constituents in the mucuna bean that help account for its relative effectiveness in comparison to the same amount of synthetic L-dopa. In addition to being a possible substitute for its synthetic counterpart, scientists hope to isolate the other compounds that may be helping the mucuna bean product achieve its effectiveness.

Zandopa is marketed in India, but is currently undergoing clinical trials in the U.S. Although self treatment for Parkinson's is not recommended, there are mucuna powder products available as nutritional (anti-aging) supplements. The product L-dopa is a mucuna-based formulation marketed by International Supplements.com. It can be purchased by calling (800) 476-1720 or (702) 405-8371, or by visiting www.internationalsupplements.com.

Stay tuned for next week's newsletter where more natural treatments offer additional hope to those suffering from Parkinson's.

1. Sechi, G., et al. "Reduced intravenous glutathione in the treatment of early Parkinson's disease." *Progress in Neuropsychopharmacology & Biological Psychiatry*. 20(7):1159-1170, Oct. 1996.
2. www.wjla.com/news/stories/0504/147299.html
3. Shults, C.W., et al. "Effects of coenzyme Q10 in early Parkinson's disease: evidence of slowing of the functional decline." *Archives of Neurol.*, 59(10):1541-1550, 2002.
4. Rosenberg, R.N. "Mitochondrial therapy for Parkinson's disease." *Archives of Neurology*, 59:1523, 2002.
5. HP-200 in Parkinson's Disease Study Group. "An alternative treatment for Parkinson's disease: Results of a multi-center clinical trial." *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine*, 1(3):249-255, 1995.
6. Ibid.

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