



Resourceful Thinking

Vol 20 No 3
May - June 2015

PROGRAMS ADDED TO SCHEDULE; ALZHEIMER'S INFORMATION

PROGRAMS ADDED TO OUR SCHEDULE

There is an insert in this newsletter that lists the four programs we have coming up in May and June. Three are free and open to the public, and one is a continuing education program that offers CE credits to WV Social Workers and Registered Professional Nurses, and has a small fee. We hope you will join us for these timely and informative programs!

ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA IN THE NEWS

ULTRA SOUND TREATMENT

Ultrasound technology may offer a breakthrough in Alzheimer's treatment. The development and progression of Alzheimer's is associated with the accumulation of a toxic protein in the brain known as Amyloid peptide. Researchers at the University of Queensland in Australia claim to have restored memory function in the brain of a mouse that had the plaque deposited on its brain and was displaying Alzheimer's-like

symptoms by using a form of ultra sound therapy. High-frequency ultrasound waves activate microglial cells (a main defense for the central nervous system) which then consume the plaques. More research is planned with the researchers scaling up to treatment therapy on larger animals before beginning human trials which are estimated to be at least two years away.
[Source: "World", April 18, 2015, 'Remembering Again?']

DIET & DEMENTIA

The Wall Street Journal reported on the MIND diet, a special diet that appears to reduce the risk for developing Alzheimer's disease. WSJ reports, "The study is part of a small body of research investigating how nutrition can improve brain health and stave off the cognitive decline and memory impairment that comes with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Experts say there is growing awareness that lifestyle factors—not just genetics—play a prominent role in the development of

Alzheimer's, and researchers hope to come up with an optimal diet that will lessen the chances of developing the disease. An estimated 5.1 million people in the U.S. have Alzheimer's, a number expected to grow to 7.1 million by 2025, according to the Alzheimer's Association." The diet borrows from the heart-healthy Mediterranean diet and the DASH diet used to control high blood pressure. The MIND diet emphasizes "brain healthy" foods such as leafy green vegetables and berries. The study conducted by Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, found strict adherence to any of the three diets lessened the chances of getting Alzheimer's but only the MIND diet seemed to help counter the disease even when people followed only some of the diet's recommendations. The research was observational, not randomized or controlled, and therefore isn't evidence that the MIND diet caused a reduced risk, instead it shows an association between the two.
[Source: "Wall Street Journal", April 21, 2015, 'A

Diet Might Cut the Risk of Developing Alzheimer's']

DEPRESSION AND DEMENTIA: THE LINK

“Dropping activities and interests, being more likely to stay at home than to go out and do things, and lack of energy were the three depressive features that were more likely to develop in people who were later diagnosed with early dementia,” states study author John C. Morris, MD, director of the Knight Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center at Washington University in St. Louis. Research has not proven that people with depression are more likely to develop dementia, but many studies have found a link between the two conditions. A paper published in 2013 in the British Journal of Psychiatry, found that those with depression were more likely to develop AD and more than twice as likely to develop vascular dementia – as adults were who not depressed. There may be a connection with the higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which can damage the hippocampus, a part of the brain involved in learning, mood and memory that becomes impaired early in AD.

[Source: “Neurology Now”, April/May 2015, ‘When Does Depression Signal Dementia?’]

FORMER VP WALTER MONDALE

The lead article speaks to former Vice President Walter Mondale’s journey through Lewy Body disease with his wife, Joan. Like many family members, Mr. Mondale wasn’t sure

when the first signs of his wife’s illness began. But as symptoms worsened, the Mondales sought treatment at the Mayo Clinic. After about 2 years – in 2010 – Joan was diagnosed with LBD with parkinsonism and dementia. Joan died in 2014 at the age of 83. Dedicating himself to fighting neurological illnesses, Mr. Mondale is now the honorary chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Brain Foundation in Minneapolis MN, which raises funds for brain disease research. Their website is americanbrainfoundation.org.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF DEMENTIA

Have YOU ever heard of Lewy body dementia? About 1.3 million Americans have Lewy body dementia (LBD) compared to about 5.5 million with Alzheimer’s disease (AD). Lewy bodies are abnormal clumps of a protein called alpha-synuclein that form inside nerve cells in the brain – those that control memory and movement. “The disease is tricky”, states Dr. James E. Galvin, MD, a professor of neurology at New York University’s Langone Medical Center. “It’s not a classic 1-2-3 presentation of symptoms, which means people can have difficulty getting a diagnosis.” There are no typical signs on an imaging scan, and the MRI of a person with LBD looks similar to that of a person with AD. As with other dementias, it is important to get an accurate diagnosis since not all treatments for one disease are appropriate for another. An example cited by the

article’s author notes that antipsychotic medications used to help ease the distress and aggression of Alzheimer’s may cause serious side effects such as confusion, delusions and impaired swallowing in people with LBD. No specific treatments exist for LBD although there are treatments for symptoms. Two resources are the Lewy Body Dementia Association (lbda.org) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke information page at bit.ly/NINDS-Lewy.

IS IT LEWY BODY OR ALZHEIMER’S?

Early on, Lewy Body (LBD) and Alzheimer’s disease (AD) and/or Lewy Body and Parkinson’s may be confused. Often, people who have LBD may also have either AD or Parkinson’s. John C. Morris, MD, Director of the Knight Alzheimer Disease Research Center at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis states, “More than 2/3 of patients with this disorder also have Alzheimer’s disease” and “That’s why it’s not uncommon for patients to be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s first, as they express the signs and symptoms of that disease as well.”

So – how does LBD differ from AD?

*Patients tend to be younger (early to mid-70’s for LBD, as opposed to late 70’s to early 80’s for AD), according to Dr. James Galvin.

*Memory may be more intact. “In LBD, memory is better preserved, relatively speaking....peopel have more problems with staying focused and

planning and carrying out tasks”, states Dr. Galvin.

*Vision is affected. Patients initially think they have a problem with their eyes. Researchers suspect a disruption in visual pathways in the brain with LBD.

*More motor symptoms. Patients experience rigidity or stiffness, balance problems, difficult initiating movements and foot shuffling.

*Hallucinations start earlier and are sharper. Fairly early on in the disease, people may see things that aren't there or visually misperceive objects, according to Dr. Galvin. Dr. Galvin goes on to say that these hallucinations are well-formed and frequently “take on the shape of a childish or elfish person or a fuzzy animal, and are not frightening”.

*Alertness, attention, and concentration can change spontaneously. People with LBD may come across as sleepy or lethargic. Their train of thought may come across as illogical and incoherent but at other times, they may be very lucid and able to function well.

*Sleep disturbances are common. Patients may ‘act out’ their dreams which means they may punch, kick or shout during sleep.

*More symptoms affect involuntary processes. Patients may lose their sense of smell or have constipation or urinary problems. Some

experience orthostatic hypotension (a sudden drop in blood pressure upon standing).

[Source: “Neurology Now”, April / May 2015, ‘A Leader Takes on Brain Disease’, ‘A Different Kind of Dementia’ and ‘Is it Lewy

Body or Alzheimer’s Disease?’]

2015 WALK TO END ALZHEIMER’S

The Wheeling Walk to End Alzheimer’s is scheduled for Saturday, October 10 at Wheeling Park. Registration begins at 8:30 am and the Walk event begins at 9:45 am. You can go to www.alz.org/wv and follow the links for the Walk to End Alzheimer’s to register. Start a team! Join a team! CATCH THE PASSION and join us at the Walk! We will have door prizes, food and silent auction items.

FUNDRAISERS:

We have a few fundraisers coming up:

July 25, Annual Yard Sale at Garden Park in Warwood, 8am - ? Come and check out the treasures!

August 22, Peg’s Run organized by the Elm Grove Charity Riders starting at the Elm Grove Eagles. Sign-ups start at noon and the run starts at 1:00 pm. For those who don’t ride, come about 4 and enjoy food and fun for a great cause!

Contact Ann for information on the fundraisers or the WV Alzheimer’s Association at 800 272-3900 for more information on the Walk! If you live outside the Wheeling area, go to www.alz.org and find a Walk close to you! Walks are held across the United States and in many countries! You can locate the Walk that is in your area, and support the cause! OR – you can donate to our team and the funds will go toward our Wheeling Walk!

BELMONT COUNTY CAREGIVER DINNER

The 5th Annual Belmont County Caregiver Dinner will be held on September 15, 2015 at Undo’s in St Clairsville Ohio. (Please note the date has changed!) The dinner will run from 6pm – 8pm with registration beginning at 5:15 pm. The Area Agency on Aging Reg 9 is taking nominations for Caregiver of the Year (non-professional caregivers). For more information on the dinner and/or to nominate a caregiver, contact Laurel DuBeck at 800 945-4250. Exhibits are available for participants and entertainment is provided.

CAN WE HELP YOU?

We at Altenheim Resource & Referral Services serve anyone in need of assistance with aging and caregiving issues, regardless of location. Consultation, information and referrals are provided without charge and remain confidential. We offer programs that are free for the community and also offer inexpensive workshops for professionals. You may need to leave a message since there are just two of us to cover the office but our phone system is not complicated! If you need to leave a message, you just speak after the tone. Call us. We’d be happy to help you!

ONCE AGAIN...

Thank you for your support.

Let us be your Gateway to Senior Care!