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UPCOMING EVENTS

Chocolate and Beer Tasting

Sunday, February 8, 2015 - 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Lamplighter Public House | 92 Water Street, Vancouver ([map](#))

Join BJCP Master Beer Judge, Julian Zelazny, and Becks D'Angelo of Take a Fancy Chocolate for a journey through pairing chocolate and beer.

Tickets: 1 for \$50 | 2 for \$80

Registration: www.parkinson.bc.ca/events

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Voice and Swallow Seminar - Victoria

Presented in association with HeadWay, Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson's Centre

February 19 & 20, 2015 - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Comfort Inn & Suites | 3020 Blanshard Street, Victoria ([map](#))

This two-day seminar will focus on the voice and swallowing challenges faced by people living with Parkinson's. It will be an interactive and participatory format and all levels of voice and swallow disorder will be included.

Facilitator: Sherri Zelazny, Registered Speech Language Pathologist and Certified LSVT Practitioner

Fee: \$40 Members | \$50 Non-members (total for both dates)

Registration: www.parkinson.bc.ca/events

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Surrey Regional Conference

Saturday, March 28, 2015 - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Comfort Inn & Suites | 8255 - 166 Street, Surrey ([map](#))

Parkinson's is a journey of different stages and challenges. Learn from leading experts in the field to help you live well at every stage.

Information: www.parkinson.bc.ca/events

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Save the Date! PSBC's 2015 Annual General Meeting

Saturday, April 11, 2015

Broadway Church | 2700 East Broadway, Vancouver ([map](#))

More details available at www.parkinson.bc.ca soon!

DISCUSSION TOPIC: BALANCE & FALLING

Introduce the topic by asking these questions:

1. What problems have you had with balance?
2. What strategies do you use to manage your balance issues?

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Suggestions on Coping with Balance Problems

Parkinson's disease (PD) affects the parts of the brain controlling balance and coordination. As a result, balance and coordination adjustments that were once automatic now require conscious effort. As well, some drugs used to treat PD can lower blood pressure, causing a feeling of faintness when getting up from a sitting or lying position. Difficulty with balance and/or low blood pressure can increase the risk for falling and fractures, both of which can be serious. Here are a few suggestions for coping with problems with balance:

- Have your blood pressure checked to ensure that it is not too low.
- Remove throw rugs and low-lying obstacles from pathways inside and outside your home.
- Avoid using stepladders and stools.
- Never stand still when you can sit down, particularly after exercise.
- Don't get up from a meal or out of bed too quickly.
- Use a cane with a large base or walker with brakes.
- Get professional advice before you make a major purchase.
- When walking, stand as straight as you can and walk with your feet a little wider apart than normal.
- Wear comfortable shoes with good arch supports. If you shuffle, avoid shoes with rubber or crepe soles.
- Pay careful attention to changes in ground surfaces (e.g. curb to pavement or carpet to bare floor).
- Consult a physiotherapist. A therapist can assess your overall safety and mobility and also teach you and your partner what to do if you fall.

Resources:

Help Sheets "Non-Medical Management of Orthostatic Hypotension" (call PSBC for resource)

["In-Home Safety Check"](#)

Booklet ["Stay on your feet! Understanding and reducing the risk of falling for people with Parkinson's"](#)

Source: *Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre, University of British Columbia*

RESEARCH

RESEARCH DISCLAIMER

Our monthly updates are a collection of recent articles that we have found on the Internet and in publications. They are offered solely on an informational basis. PSBC does not research or investigate the articles further and we do not provide additional follow up to verify that they are anything other than interesting. We urge you to do your own follow up on any of the information found in the articles presented. ***If you have any questions or concerns about the information contained in the articles ALWAYS check with your doctor.***

Research Profile: Dr. Mark Carpenter *Balance and the Brain*

Research Project: A novel fMRI approach to investigating the pathophysiology of postural instability in Parkinson's disease.

Pilot Project Grant: \$45,000

Project Description:

"We hope we'll be able to identify the unique areas of the brain that are involved in balance and might be affected by Parkinson's disease."

Balance problems that result in falls are a major problem for people with Parkinson's disease – a problem unresolved by medication or surgery that relieves other motor symptoms.

At the University of British Columbia, neuroscientist Mark Carpenter investigates the causes of balance instability and falls, as well as why this symptom of Parkinson's doesn't respond to current treatments.

Carpenter wonders whether balance is controlled by other areas of the brain than the regions that control other motor functions. He's also considering the possibility that people with Parkinson's disease are unable to detect where their limbs are in space, a phenomenon called proprioception. Using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) to scan the brains of people with Parkinson's disease while they perform a balancing task, Carpenter will try to determine what structures in the brain control balance and where they are located.

"If we can understand which areas of the brain are controlling balance, and if there's evidence that Parkinson's disease affects those areas, then we have new targets for treatment or new ways of trying to understand the causes of falls," Carpenter says.

Carpenter and his team are developing a balance simulator that people can control while they are lying in the brain imaging machine, by balancing an inverted pendulum with their ankles. The simulator will engage some of the same muscles and feedback systems the brain uses while balancing, allowing the researchers to capture more accurate images of the regions in the brain that are involved in balance. Comparing the images captured during the balance task, with images from non-balance tasks, like returning their ankle to a neutral position, helps determine how proprioception may contribute to the balance problems in people with Parkinson's.

Ultimately, by understanding what areas of the brain are directly involved in balance, Carpenter hopes to open up a new treatment avenue that targets these additional regions of the brain, to reduce the balance problems and falls that people with Parkinson's disease experience.

RESEARCH

(continued)



Biography:

Dr. Mark Carpenter is an Associate professor, and Tier II Canada Research Chair in Physical Activity and Health in the School of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia. After receiving his PhD in Kinesiology at the University of Waterloo in 2001, he completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, before beginning his position at the University of British Columbia in 2005.

His research aims to identify the physiological and psychological factors that contribute to balance deficits and falls associated with age, vestibular loss and neurological disorders, such as Parkinson's disease, and to help develop optimal exercise, training and treatment strategies to improve age and disease-specific balance deficits and reduce the occurrence and impact of falls. Dr. Carpenter has authored more than 80 peer-reviewed journal articles on the topics of balance, falls and the neural control of posture and movement.

CAREPARTNER'S CORNER

An App for Carepartners

Are you hoping to get more organized in 2015? It can be really difficult to keep track of appointments, medications, important paperwork, and all the different responsibilities -- especially if you're sharing responsibilities with a friend or family member. Being a carepartner requires planning, a well-maintained schedule, and constant communication. Easier said than done!

In the past few years, some great new technologies have been created to support carepartners. Today we are taking a look at CareZone, a free app that can be downloaded onto an iPhone, iPad, or Android device. You can also use it online at www.carezone.com. All you need to create an account is an email address. Once you've logged in, you are directed to a list of the following tools:

- **News & Offers** — Select your personal 'interests' and you will receive articles on those topics, plus CareZone tips from other CareZone users.
- **Journal** — Record your thoughts and observations, as often as you like.
- **Contact List** — Store all of your health and carepartner contacts in one place - and easily share information with them from within the app!
- **Medications** — Use your tablet or phone to scan medications (there is a video offering instructions on how to do this) and add them to the list. (You can also enter them manually at carezone.com.) This list can be accessed from any mobile device or even a browser at a clinic in an emergency situation.
- **Calendar** — Keep track of appointments and share them with selected contacts. You can also share this calendar with other calendars (Outlook, Google, etc.) to keep everything in sync.
- **To-Dos** — Remind yourself (and selected contacts) about what needs to be done.
- **Notes** — Store insurance numbers, instructions, and other information you need to keep handy.
- **Photos & Files** — Securely store important files, or images of social insurance cards, birth certificates, etc.
- **Broadcast** — Send a voice message to selected family and friends (up to 100 recipients) all at once!
- **Sharing** — Invite others to use the application to keep everyone in the loop. You choose what tools you want to share with people.

In the News & Offers section, CareZone shares tips based on carepartners' feedback. One user reports that she finds the app helpful to record any behavioural and physical changes that occur so they can be shared with the doctor at a later date. Another finds that the app has allowed her to connect with family members and coordinate carepartner tasks: "CareZone has improved the level of communication and spurred everyone on to improve the help we are able to provide our parents. I'm going down to visit them today as it was communicated that mum needed to go to the doctor's and also that there was some ironing to be done. This detail would have previously been lost, as my eldest sister would be reluctant to 'bother anyone.' We have been able to re-assure her, via CareZone, that these daily tasks can easily be delegated and assigned using to-dos."

The program is free, secure, and appears to be easy to use. Plus, when someone from your carepartner's circle adds an item to the calendar or to-do list, you will immediately receive a notification on your tablet, phone, or via email. Pretty neat stuff!

Source: Adapted from "[CareZone: An App for Family Caregivers](#)" by Hannele Kivinen, Caregiver Exchange

NEWS

Champions FOR PARKINSON'S

Do you want to help fund research, grow support networks and improve quality of life for those living with Parkinson's? **Become a Champion for Parkinson's and plan your own independent community fundraising event!**

From bake sales, birthday parties and pub nights, to yard sales, sports tournaments and car shows, no event is too big or too small. Take the lead, get creative, build awareness, raise funds and don't forget to have fun!

We are here to help you plan a successful event. We provide:

- Friendly support
- Step-by-step planning
- Website & social media support
- Event kits

Your actions have an impact. Start planning your event today!

For more information:

Contact Betty Hum | bhum@parkinson.bc.ca

604 662 3240 | 1 800 668 3330

www.parkinson.bc.ca/Champions

SUPPORT OUR FEATURE CHAMPION!

Cozy up at home on Valentine's Day with your loved ones by purchasing a Sweetheart pizza from Me-n-Ed's. For every pizza sold, \$1 will be donated to Parkinson Society British Columbia!

Go to www.me-n-eds.ca to find a location near you.





Step by Step Program

NOW RECRUITING TEAM LEADERS!



PSBC is proud to introduce a new 12 week walking program designed to support and motivate those with Parkinson's by combating symptoms of the disease. Get fit and have fun with members of your community!

During the first week of the program you'll track how many steps you take and then set weekly goals to increase your exercise by 5-20%! Team leaders will organize group walks for the opportunity to meet with others and foster encouraging connections.

To make this new program possible, the **PSBC is in need of team leaders** in communities around BC.

As a team leader you would be responsible for organizing a weekly walk, selecting walking locations and motivating your team! Interested? Contact Caroline at the details below.

For more information on the Step by Step Program, contact Caroline Wiggins at: cwiggins@parkinson.bc.ca 604-662-3240 or toll free 1-800-668-3330

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