Formerly known as Hands Feet & Heart

Yes! We changed our name. While our founding name showed we understood the symptoms that neuropathy patients feel, we felt we needed a new name that told people who we are and what we do. We believe that “Neuropathy Alliance of Texas” does just that!

New Neuropathy Awareness Video!

Neuropathy Alliance of Texas is proud to announce our Neuropathy Awareness Video that features several of our dedicated members! While 1 in 15 people in the U.S. have neuropathy, it is not very well understood. We hope this video educated viewers and rallies them together as we continue to strive to provide hope and support. We encourage you to watch and share this video with your family and friends so that many more can learn about this chronic illness that affects over 20 million individuals in the United States alone.

To view the video, please go online and visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JpBasqUW4E or go to www.facebook.com and type in Neuropathy Alliance of Texas into the search bar at the top of the screen.

August Meeting Schedule

- **August 8th**
  - Location: Austin West
  - Acupuncture for Neuropathy
  - Speaker: Michael Martin, MD

- **August 10th**
  - Location: Georgetown
  - Tai Chi for Neuropathy
  - Speakers: Don Mulvey and Norman Gill

- **August 24th**
  - Location: Northwest Hills
  - Create an Effective Relationship with your Doctor
  - Speakers: Derrick Garcia, MD & Erica Garcia, RN

“Attending meetings has helped me realize that we can all help each other, and that we are not alone.”
Research: Vitamin D and Painful Diabetic Neuropathy

The Study: A recent study conducted by Dinesh Selvarajah, MD, of the University of Sheffield reports that painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy is likely associated with significantly reduced vitamin D levels, independent of sunlight exposure. This study is the first to demonstrate a relationship between low vitamin D and neuropathy while carefully controlling factors such as seasonal differences in vitamin D or activity variations.

The study focused on 45 patients with type 2 diabetes – 17 with painful neuropathy, 14 with painless neuropathy, and 14 with no neuropathy - along with 14 healthy volunteers. Each had vitamin D levels measured between May and September and answered questionnaires to assess sunlight exposure and neuropathy symptoms. The results of the study found that vitamin D levels were significantly lower in the painful neuropathy group at 34.34 nmol/L while painless neuropathy rested at 53.22 nmol/L, 50.00 for no neuropathy, and 64.95 for the healthy volunteers.

What it Means: Data shows that low vitamin D levels predispose one to developing type 2 diabetes. While there is no definitive evidence for diabetic neuropathy or prediabetic neuropathy, it’s highly likely that if low vitamin D levels predispose patients to developing diabetes, it is probably affecting neuropathy as well. Dr. Russell explains that while randomized data aren’t yet available, there’s no harm in supplementing now and there could be benefit. Ask your doctor to test your Vitamin D level and ask how increased supplements of Vitamin D may help your painful neuropathy.


Meeting Highlight: Pain Management

Pain is a large part of neuropathy for many patients. On June 18, 2015, local pain management expert Gus Lowry, MD from Balcones Pain Consultants spoke with Austin West Group on chronic pain treatment options currently available. Treatments reviewed included different types of medications, physical therapy, intrathecal injections and spinal cord stimulation. For more information, visit our website at www.neuropathyalliancetx.org and follow the link to Resources. Dr. Lowry’s presentation can be found under Presentations & Articles.
Donor Spotlight

This month, we recognize and thank Joe Castelli of Wichita Falls, TX for his continued dedication to the organization since 2012. Joe contributes to the Neuropathy Alliance of Texas as well as national neuropathy organizations in order to do his part to encourage research for a cure. As a long time sufferer of chronic neuropathic pain, Joe believes it’s important to do the best he can on behalf of all neuropathy patients.

Tip: From the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy

Pain and numbness from peripheral neuropathy often make driving a car difficult or even worse, dangerous. But there may be alternatives to giving up driving and losing your independence. The mobility equipment industry is made up of organizations and corporations dedicated to helping people with disabilities adapt their cars and to train and educate them on the use of the equipment safely. Go to www.nmeda.com for ideas on how to adapt your car from the National Mobility Equipment Dealers website.

Help Us Serve You

This newsletter is available in digital form. If you’d prefer to receive it on-line, just send us an email at info@neuropathyalliancetx.org and let us know. Emails about upcoming meetings and newsletter will come from us via iContact and may end up in your spam or promotions boxes so be on the lookout.

Our work is supported by membership contributions, individual donations, and a few corporate sponsorships. All contributions are important and we need your support. You can donate by sending at check to P.O. Box 40874, Austin, TX 78704 or on-line with your credit card at www.neuropathyalliancetx.org/contribute.html.

Tips: Traveling Soon?

Quick Tips

1. Test the boundaries of your comfort zone by taking a staycation in a neighboring town.
2. Take a two- to three-day cruise where ship lines go above and beyond the accessibility requirements.
3. Not all cities were created accessible, so do your research before finalizing a destination. Cities that have hosted the Olympics tend to host the Paralympics soon after, and regulations require that those cities accommodate disabled travelers.
4. Carry a portable ramp and post handling instructions on your wheelchair.
5. Choose American chain hotels because they will follow the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.

Travel Scoot

At a recent meeting, one member mentioned the Travel Scoot: a light and compact electric mobility scooter. It is not cheap, but it may be right for you to enable you to continue to travel with your neuropathy. The Travel Scoot folds up easily and quickly and is ideal for air, rail, ship, and public transport.
Research: Local Clinical Trial Opportunity

The University of Kansas is hosting a clinical trial to measure the relative effectiveness of currently approved medications: Lyrica, Cymbalta, Nortriptyline, and Mexiletine. Neuropathy Alliance of TX Medical Director Dr. Sara Austin is heading up a clinical trial in Austin. There is still time to participate for those over 18 years of age who are afflicted with sensory neuropathy.

For more details on qualifications, experience, and registration, please visit our homepage www.neuropathyalliancetx.org or contact Shellie at Dr. Austin’s office.

Email: shellie.draustinsoffice@gmail.com
Phone: 512-637-5854.

Please do not send personal medical information via email.

Sara Austin, MD
EMG, Neurology, and Neuropathy

Our vision is that anyone in Texas afflicted with or affected by neuropathy receives the support and education they need to more effectively handle neuropathy and live to their fullest potential.