Neuropathy Alliance of Texas Partners with Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy

By Nancy Herlin, Executive Director

When we first started our non-profit in 2011, we looked to the Neuropathy Association, the largest neuropathy awareness and advocacy organization for help and advice. We believed our affiliation with them would give our members access to the latest information and support so we began as one of their chapters.

In December 2014, the Neuropathy Association closed its doors and passed the torch to The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy (FPN) to continue to lead the way in the fight to increase awareness, provide education and support to patients and work toward research for a cure for neuropathy. The mission of FPN is to dramatically improve the lives of people living with peripheral neuropathy. This organization sponsors a promising Peripheral Neuropathy Research Registry and a biennial International Research Symposium bringing together some of the most brilliant minds in neuroscience to tackle neuropathy research.

Since December, we have developed a strong working relationship with the FPN and I have chosen to join their Board of Directors. Why? Because the need for help and hope for each individual with neuropathy here in Texas needs to be communicated and connected to the work that is occurring on the national level. I look toward the future where local and national efforts are better connected and aligned to bring the awareness, help and hope that each one of us with neuropathy desires. Stay tuned for more!

November Meeting Schedule

November 14th:
Location: Austin West
Massage for Neuropathy
Speaker: Pete Deckinga, LMT, MSSW, M.Div.

November 9th:
Location: Georgetown
Nutrition for Neuropathy
Speakers: Tarie Beldin, RD

November 23rd:
Location: Northwest Hills
Gratefulness in the Midst of Neuropathy
Speakers: TBA

See our website for meeting details: www.neuropathyalliancetx.org

“Attending meetings has helped me realize that we can all help each other, and that we are not alone.”
**Chemo-Induced Neuropathy: Diagnosis Research and Acupuncture Treatment**

**The Study:** As many as 50% of patients undergoing chemotherapy for cancer experience chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy, but most cases go undiagnosed. Noah A. Kolb, MD, of the University of Utah studied the frequency of chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy and other neuropathy codes in three databases. Overall, 30-50% of patients who received neurotoxic chemotherapy had chemotherapy-induced neuropathy, however only 13% received a neuropathy code temporarily related to their chemotherapy. The study concluded that chemo-induced neuropathy is under-coded by oncologists.

**Where to Turn:** When asked about the success of acupuncture as a form of pain management for chemo-induced neuropathy, local Acupuncturist, Jimmy Yen L.Ac. says that his success in reversing the neuropathy depends on a number of factors. Success is dependent on the duration and dosage of chemo, the time frame of when all the chemo treatments were completed, the condition of the person's immune system, when they had the chemo, and if the person is willing to make dietary and lifestyle modifications. Dr. Yen explains that if a patient were to start their acupuncture treatment while still undergoing chemotherapy, there is a higher chance of reversing greater than 90% of the patient’s neuropathy. The key is not to wait. The longer a patient waits, the more difficult it will be to reverse the neuropathic symptoms. While this does not mean that acupuncture will be unable to help if they wait too long, patients are recommended to schedule an appointment as early as possible.


Jimmy Yen is a Licensed Acupuncturist and Herbalist at Achieve Integrative Health in Cedar Park. You can visit his website: [http://www.achieveintegrativehealth.com](http://www.achieveintegrativehealth.com) for more information.

---

**Meeting Highlight: Tai Chi Class Begins in Georgetown**

Beginning on November 5th, we will offer a weekly Tai Chi class designed to help people with neuropathy as well as family and friends. The results of several clinical studies suggest that regular participation in Tai Chi helps with balance, circulation, muscle strength, and stress release. Based on your feedback, we have lined up Norm Gill, a Tai Chi instructor with over 25 years of experience, to teach the class on Thursday mornings from 10:30-12:00 PM at Georgetown Health Foundation Community Room A.

For more information and to register for this class or to learn about the class we are developing in Austin, email info@neuropathyalliancetx.org or call 512-784-2627.
Meeting Highlights: Missed a Meeting? Watch a Video!

Since June, we’ve covered many topics in our monthly meetings. Dr. Horvit and Dr. Hussain each gave general presentations on diagnosis and treatment of neuropathy followed by many questions and answers. We learned about Tai Chi as an exercise program, how to handle our varying emotional states and how to create an effective relationship with our doctors. While there is no substitute for hearing about these topics and interacting with fellow neuropathy patients in person, we know schedules are busy so we’ve started videotaping some of our meetings. You can find the videos at http://www.neuropathyalliancetx.org/Videos.html

Good Sleep Hygiene May Help Our Peripheral Neuropathy

By H. Keith Mephodie Sterzing

Why we need sleep is still largely a mystery, but it is believed necessary for routine maintenance so repairs to the body functions can be made, and to keep the components of our immune system functioning optimally. Sleep has been shown to increase the production of myelin, the insulating material on our nerve cells which allows electrical impulses to move rapidly from one cell to the next. Emerging research indicates that toxic molecules involved in various neurodegenerative disorders—such as Alzheimer's—are cleansed from the brain during sleep. Getting a good eight hours of sleep every night with regular bed times and awake times is critical for good health.

Brain Discovery May Lead to New Treatment for Peripheral Neuropathy

Professor Phillipe Seguela and colleagues discovered new information about a channel that controls the transmission of pain signals to the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC). The ACC is a region of the brain that is thought to be the most consistently involved in pain processing. Based on lab tests on rats, the scientists found that blocking the hyperpolarization-activated cyclic nucleotide-gated (HCN) channels reduced over-stimulation of the ACC and dramatically decreased feelings of pain. More recently, researchers have also discovered that emotional, psychological, and cognitive factors can influence pain perception in neuropathic pain. These findings give us new perspectives on therapeutic strategies that could target the HCN channels to help relieve chronic pain.


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.