



CELEBRATING OUR STARS...

THE PARKINSON STAR AWARDS IS BACK FOR A SEVENTH RUN, AND WE'RE ONCE AGAIN LOOKING FOR OUR HEROES.

Parkinson Society Singapore would like to invite all healthcare professionals, friends, patients and volunteers to nominate a Person with Parkinson (PwP) or a caregiver who has shown exceptional courage and strength in their battle against Parkinson.

Nominations should be made on official forms in not more than 200 words, describing the background of the PwP or caregiver; the efforts taken to overcome the obstacles and the positive attitude towards life even after being diagnosed with Parkinson. Help pen down his/her story so that it can serve as a beacon of inspiration for those who are coping with Parkinson. Judges will select the top three entries and the Parkinson Star Awards will be presented to three most courageous and inspiring person with Parkinson or caregivers.

7TH PARKINSON STAR AWARDS

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Nominee should be a member of PSS
- The judges' decision is final.
- The winners will be invited to attend the PSS Year End Party to receive the awards.



NOMINATION FORM
can be collected at the respective hospitals' (NNI/TTSH, NUH, KTPH, SGH and CGH) neuroscience clinic or the Parkinson Centre.

The form is also downloadable from the website:
www.parkinson.org.sg

Please submit your nomination to:

Parkinson Star Awards
The Parkinson Centre
Blk 191 Bishan Street 13
#01-415 Singapore 570191

You can also email your nomination to:

info@parkinson.org.sg

Closing Date: 11th November 2014

LEND A HELPING HAND!

PSS is totally dependent on donations for its work. We can only continue supporting individuals affected by Parkinson with your help. Consider making a donation in memory of or in honour of someone you love.

WAYS YOU CAN DONATE:

1 DONATE ONLINE VIA SG GIVES <small>www.sgives.org</small>	2 DONATE ONLINE VIA GIVEASIA <small>www.giveasia.org</small>	3 DONATE BY CHEQUE / POST <small>Cheques made payable to "PARKINSON SOCIETY SINGAPORE"</small>
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To make a donation to us by post, please mail your cheque to:

Parkinson Society Singapore
Blk 191 Bishan Street 13, #01-415, Singapore 570191

All donations \$50 and above are entitled to tax deductions. Kindly include full name, NRIC No. and contact number on reverse side of cheque.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to sponsors at "Tee To Beat Parkinson", PSS' charity golf event.

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Parkinson News

SEPTEMBER 2014 / MICA(P) 130/04/2014



Parkinson Society Singapore



Many people with Parkinson report some decline in their thinking abilities. This is because research has found that over 50% of people with Parkinson experience some form of cognitive deficits.

In the early stages of illness, most people with Parkinson will complain of difficulties with attention and task completion, also known as working memory skills. For example, they may complain of

- Being easily distracted
- Losing their train of thought
- Getting easily 'knocked off track' when performing a task

In the later stages of illness, difficulties with decision-making, problem-solving, memory and word-finding may become more apparent in day-to-day activities.

Research has shown that appropriate exercise and mental activity increases blood flow to the brain, helping it to become more alert and efficient. Keeping the brain active also keep our mind alert and increases awareness to the changes surrounding us and within ourselves.

Max Mind is a specially tailored cognitive program in Singapore, designed by Occupational Therapists, for people with Parkinson. Max Mind focuses on developing and continuously practicing different cognitive skills and strategies to function successfully in daily living activities. Max Mind is aimed to equip participants with the skills to enhance participation in daily living activities.

Sessions are conducted mainly in simple English and Mandarin, and last for 1 hour each. Max Mind is suitable for all participants who want to put their cognitive abilities to a challenge.

Group A
This class is designed to allow participants who are facing higher cognitive difficulties to practise their cognitive skills in activities of daily living so as to function successfully at home. Topics include making new friends; categorization of daily objects; sequencing steps in daily activities e.g dressing; planning daily schedule; basic money management; planning own meals for the week; and problem solving of common home scenarios.

Group B
This class is designed to allow participants to continuously learn cognitive strategies and practise their cognitive abilities so as to function successfully in the community. Topics include making new friends; maintaining conversation; planning weekly schedule; budgeting; remembering grocery list; grocery shopping; planning travelling route; and problem solving of life scenarios.

COURSE DETAILS

Dates: Oct 29, Nov 5, 12, 19, 26, Dec 3, 10, 17 (Every Wednesday)

Time: Group A - 2pm to 3.00pm
Group B - 3.15pm to 4.15pm

Fees: PSS Member - \$80, Non-PSS Member - \$100

To register, call 6353 5338 by 15 October.

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP CALENDAR 2014

At Singapore General Hospital (SGH) and Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH)

AT SGH

Monday, 13 October
11:00am-1:00pm
Nutrition for People with Parkinson
by Dietitian

Monday, 3 November
11:00am-1:00pm
Movement Strategies in Parkinson II: Walking
by Physiotherapist

Monday, 1 December
Year End Party

Sessions at SGH will be held at the Medical Student Centre [Block 1 Level 3]; contact Nurse Usanee at 9295 3331 or email neurocare@sgh.com.sg.

AT TTSH

Thursday, 11 September
2:30pm-4:30pm
Parkinson Treatment Update (Mandarin)
by Associate Professor Au Wing Lok
Senior Consultant, National Neuroscience Institute

Thursday, 9 October
2:30pm-4:30pm
Parkinson Treatment Update (English)
by Dr Tay Kay Yaw
Consultant, National Neuroscience Institute

Saturday, 29 November
11:00am-1:00pm
Year End Party

Sessions held at TTSH will be held at the Neuroscience Clinic [Level 1], except the Year End Party; call 63577138 or 97842810.

Information correct at the time of printing.



Parkinson And Its Symptoms

DR TAN SIOK BEE

In a normal ageing process, our gait can become slower, and we may have swallowing and eating difficulties. These are also some of the symptoms of Parkinsonism which can be due to normal physiological ageing, drugs, stroke and other causes. Parkinson is only one of the many causes of Parkinsonism.

Parkinson is a chronic, usually slowly progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects movement (motor) and non-movement (non-motor) functions due to a breakdown of messages in the brain. People with Parkinson have low levels of a brain chemical called dopamine, which helps to control the body muscles and movement.

Symptoms of Parkinson

Parkinson develops gradually, sometimes starting with a barely noticeable tremor in just one hand. Unlike other tremors, these tremors are typically present when the person is at rest. However approximately 30 percent or more of people with Parkinson do not experience tremors. But while a tremor may be the most well-known sign of Parkinson, the disorder also commonly causes stiffness or slowing of movement. In the early stages of Parkinson, the face may show little or no expression or it may reduce swing of the arm on one side when walking. Speech may also become soft or slurred.

Parkinson symptoms worsen as the condition progresses over time. Muscles in the leg, neck or face may look or feel stiff. People with Parkinson

may sometimes feel so stiff and frozen and unable to move. Movement can be slow and people may take small steps or shuffle when walking. Minor movements such as engaging in writing, typing, shaving or buttoning up clothes may be difficult.

Early symptoms of Parkinson may include non-motor symptoms such as loss of sense of smell, constipation, acting out dreams and mood disorders (depression, anxiety).

As the disease progresses, one may experience difficulty speaking or swallowing and may also have balancing problems or difficulty standing up straight. Patients may experience walking difficulties such as walking with short, shuffling steps, and having trouble starting to walk or coming to an involuntary stop. Factors such as poor balance, walking difficulties and muscle weakness as well as some medications can increase the likelihood of falls which results in anxiety and concern to people with Parkinson and their caregivers.

Other symptoms unrelated to movement (non-motor symptoms) include anxiety and apathy, tiredness or exhaustion, sadness or depression and problems doing more than one task at a time. Some may also experience slowness of thinking, difficulty concentrating, visual hallucinations or sleep disorders (waking up frequently at night, excessive sleepiness during the day, dream-enacting behaviours). Others may be disturbed by pain or tingling or cold sensation, lightheadedness on standing, urinary difficulties and excessive sweating. These non-motor symptoms affect the quality of life more than the motor-related symptoms.

What causes Parkinson?

The causes of Parkinson are unknown. We believe Parkinson occurs as a result of the interaction of age-related changes, genetics and environmental factors.

Environmental factors include taking water from Subterranean well, exposure to pesticides and synthetic narcotic use. Ongoing exposure to herbicides and pesticides may pose a slightly increased risk of Parkinson.

How many people does it impact here in Singapore ?

In Singapore, three out of every 1000 individuals aged 50 years and above have Parkinson. People usually develop the disease around age 60 or older but it may also occur in people under 50 though it is less common. Parkinson occurs in roughly the same proportion in both men and women although there may be a slight preponderance of affected men.

There are effective treatments available to control the symptoms and improve daily function, albeit there is no cure for the disease currently. Treatment has to be individualised and medications that are suitable for one patient may not be ideal for another. Another important point to remember is that the symptoms of Parkinson, most prominently tremor, may be aggravated temporarily by stress or stressful situations.

Dr Tan Siok Bee is an advanced practice nurse. She is a graduate from the University of Sydney and National University Singapore. She obtained her PhD from The Melbourne University and her research focus was on coping and well-being of caregivers of people with Parkinson.

The Adventures of a Caregiver

BY TAN LAY KHIM

By 2009, my husband's Parkinson condition dictated the need to use the Handicap Parking Lot for our car.

We had no inkling these lots were (and still are) a hot bed of abuses by able-bodied drivers of delivery vehicles and private cars.

Excitedly, we displayed our Class 2 Yellow Parking Label and drove our way to many rude encounters with inconsiderate individuals who blatantly misused these very spacious, very convenient and very limited lots.

One such encounter took place in the carpark of a big mall. We were confronted by a egg delivery Guy. For his own convenience, he parked his delivery truck full of eggs in the Handicap Parking Lot instead of the generously assigned lots for delivery vehicles, just round the corner.

When I politely reminded him not to misuse the lot, he ignored me and

continued to unload the cartons of eggs onto his big trolley. I innocently thought he did not hear me. By the second reminder, he began to loudly spew vulgarities at me. Shocked and dazed, I could only retort, "Same to you in English!" This however made him carry on louder with the verbal assault.

When the car park security officers arrived in response to my phone call for help, he played the victim and proceeded to accuse me of being unreasonable.

This was despite the fact that a Good Samaritan ("GS") had come to my rescue just minutes before the security officers arrived.

The delivery guy was visibly stunned into silence when GS informed him that using abusive language in public at another person and causing alarm/distress to that person was an offence punishable by law. GS threatened to call the police. He also chastised the

delivery guy for misusing the Handicap Lot for delivery and using vulgarities on a lady.

Needless to say, the delivery guy's pathetic attempt in a monologue to paint me as "The Villain" failed miserably. Without shame nor remorse, he left with one of the security officers to park his truck in the delivery lot.

Before GS left, I thanked him and found out he was Mr. Lim, a Junior College Teacher.

I was so grateful he stood up for us. I wrote a letter to The Straits Times Forum to thank him and the letter was published on Saturday, 7 November 2009.

Some time later, I researched and discovered Section 13A and 13B of The Miscellaneous Offences (Public Order and Nuisance) Act. I understand it protects everyone from harassment, alarm or distress by another person. A person found guilty of the offence, shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 (Section 13A) and \$2,000 (Section 13B).

The delivery guy should consider himself lucky that we did not lodge a police report and press charges for verbal assault /distress that afternoon. On hindsight, perhaps we should have. He would learn to be circumspect in his choice of parking lots and choice of words in public.

Tan Lay Khim is a caregiver to her husband who was diagnosed with Parkinson in 1996, when he was 38. They share their lives with five eccentric cats rescued from the streets.



Parking lots designated for handicapped users are a hot bed of abuse by able-bodied drivers. (Picture taken from bringingdadout.wordpress.com, used for illustrative purposes only)