

PN News

Yolo County

VOL. 15, No. 2

FEBRUARY 2019

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WNA



This newsletter is designed for educational and informational purposes only. **The information contained herein is not intended to substitute for informed medical advice. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting a qualified health care provider.** The Western Neuropathy Association (WNA) and the Yolo Neuropathy Groups (*PN News*) do not endorse any treatments, medications, articles, abstracts or products discussed herein.

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no help at all.

Dale Carnegie

DAVIS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Davis Senior Center

646 A Street, Davis, 95616

Contact: Mary Sprifke (530) 756-5102

SACRAMENTO

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Program: Yoga and Tai Chi teacher, Vicki Denman will address Fall Prevention.

Northminster Presbyterian Church

3235 Pope Avenue, Sacramento

Contact: Charles Moore 916-485-7723



MEETING RECAPS



DAVIS JANUARY NOTES

By Mary Sprifke

No meeting was held in January due to health issues. Our normal meeting schedule resumes in February.

SACRAMENTO JANUARY NOTES

By Charles Moore

The group viewed and discussed a DVD available from the Western Neuropathy Association (WNA).

The following notes have been formerly published covering this presentation in the *June 2016 PN News*, by Mary Sprifke.

In our group, we call this 'PN 101.' It is down to earth, and full of detail about symptoms, treatments and how to best talk to our doctors.

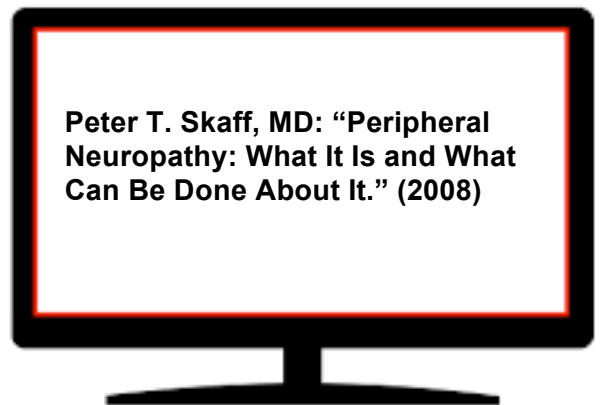
First, concerning how our bodies are 'wired:' *Peripheral* refers to nerves away from the center, which start in the spine and go down legs and arms. We have three types of nerves: motor, sensory and autonomic (e.g., lungs, heart, blood pressure, intestines).

Peripheral nerves are like a long wire, with insulation around it called "myelin" and axons inside. Damage to one or both can cause neuropathy.

Symptoms: Altered sensations, e.g., numb feet and/or hands, tingling, pins & needles, creepy-crawly feelings. **Pain** may present as burning, stinging, or electrical stabbing. **Imbalance** may lead to unsteady walking, less steadiness or dizziness. **Weakness or atrophy** of muscles. **Organ system dysfunction**, e.g., bowel, bladder, sexual organs.

Causes:

- Diabetes and pre-diabetes cause 50% of PN
- Alcoholism is 2nd most common cause in the USA
- Vitamin deficiency, e.g., B12, B6 and folate
- Medications such as Amidorone, Chemo, Nitrofurantoin
- Metabolic dysfunction e.g., thyroid, kidney, high triglycerides
- Carpel Tunnel or Radiculopathy, pinched nerves
- Infections – acute, chronic and/or post-infection e.g., HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, Lyme disease, GBS or Shingles.
- Cancer
- Vasculitis
- Amyloidosis



I KNOW EVERYTHING
HAPPENS FOR A
REASON, BUT
SOMETIMES I WISH
I KNEW WHAT THAT
REASON WAS.

The Doctor Visit

A **clinical history** will be taken and a physical exam performed.

Lab tests for blood and urine, including a 2-hour glucose tolerance test. Thyroid and B12 levels are checked.

Other tests:

- EMG/NCV (Electromyography and Nerve Conduction Velocity) help locate where the PN is located.
- Imaging Studies – may find pinched nerves near the spine (Radiculopathy).
- Lumbar Puncture
- Muscle or nerve (or skin) biopsy

TREATING PN

First treat the underlying cause and remove the insult to the nerve to aid healing.

Second, treat the symptoms:

- Improve functions
- Healthy diet
- Exercise regimen
- Normalize blood sugar
- Wear protective footwear
- Self-exam legs and feet daily
- Maintain a healthy body weight

Normal pain medications, nociceptive, traditional include NSAIDS (Ibuprophen, Voltaren); Tylenol; Opiates (Vicadin, Norco, Hydrocodone); Topical Analgesics (Lidocaine patch or cream)

PN pain medications for injured nerves must change the way the body processes pain signals. They often take 2-4 weeks to kick in. Anti-depressants (older class)

- Paraproteinemia

tricyclic can start at 10-25 mg, checking tolerance.

Newer class **antidepressants** (SNRI) are Cymbalta (Duloxetine), Venlafaxine (Effexor). These may have side effects such as nausea, dry mouth, constipation, diarrhea, fatigue, drowsiness, difficulty sleeping, loss of appetite, and dizziness.

Anti-convulsants include Gabapentin (Neurontin) and Pre-Gabalin (Lyrica). Their side effects are listed online and commonly include dizziness, nausea and blurred vision.

Anti-hypertensives may also be considered: They are a class of drugs that are used to treat hypertension. Antihypertensive therapy seeks to prevent the complications of high blood pressure, such as stroke and myocardial infarction.

Non-RX Approaches:

- Physical Therapy – very important to address balance issues
- Balance and gait training
- Physical conditioning
- Electrical stimulation
- Adaptive devices: cane, walker, wheelchair, walking sticks
- Surgery for pinched nerve or arthritis in the spine
- Radiculopathy and Entrapment PN – need to relieve pressure
- Nerve blocks –can numb specific areas of pain
- Join a support group
- Massage
- Acupuncture

BE PREPARED FOR A DIAGNOSIS



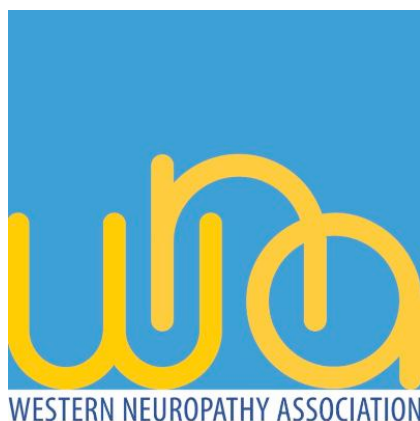
Write down your own description of your symptoms: what, where, how long, come and go, worse in the morning, or at night? Provide a complete list of all medications and supplements and their dosages; list all doctors who treat you.

Relax and be honest – the doctor wants to help you!

Those with persistent problems should see their doctor.

End Notes from DVD audience Q/A.

- Blood sugar levels for diabetes should be under 110 fasting,
- and under 140 for a 2-hour glucose test
- A fasting level of 110-140 indicates pre-diabetes; a 2-hour test score of 140-200 indicates diabetes.
- Peripheral neuropathy is often a first signal of pre-diabetes, or diabetes.
- With circulation issues, a good history and physical exam can tell the difference between PN and other problems.



2019 ANNUAL MEDICAL CONFERENCE

JOIN US IN MODESTO - FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2019

A look at one of our PN Resources

A glance into **John Senneff's** book, ***Numb Toes and Aching Soles: Coping with Peripheral Neuropathy*** (1999) revealed an extensive section labeled "**Alternative Treatments.**"

I quote his **Overview** from page 114:

There are dozens of alternative therapies that people are now using for various ailments. Some seem rather far-fetched. In this chapter I've included pretty much whatever I could find which has been tried for the treatment of neuropathic pain. (The next chapter covers vitamins, herbs and other nutritional supplements, which also are considered alternative approaches to dealing with PN.) You the reader can then decide which you may wish to investigate further. My reason for such a broad coverage? What some medical professionals may regard as quackery, in fact,

appears to work for some people. The bottom line with any PN treatment is whether it gives relief to the individual who's trying it."

He continues, "... the treatments in this chapter are discussed in a descending order of 'apparent medical acceptance'. The ranking is based solely on my own perceptions of how doctors feel about them. From what I've seen, medical judgments are usually determined in the first instance by how scientific a particular procedure seems to practitioners based on clinical reports and 'the literature.' These judgments appear to be frequently tempered and modified by feed-back received from their patients – if the doctors have open minds."

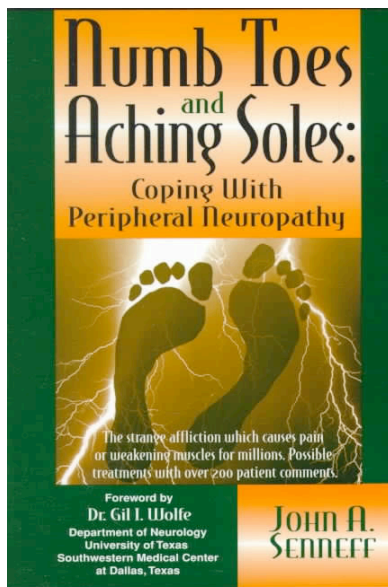
Senneff's alternative treatments list includes:

- Physical Therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Relaxation and Meditation Training
- Biofeedback
- Self-Hypnosis
- Prayer
- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Massage
- Reflexology
- Reiki
- Qigong
- Magnets

He recommends two books on alternative treatments:

- 1) *Alternative Medicine: What Works* by Adriane Fugh-Berman M.D.
- 2) *The Alternative Medicine Handbook* by Barrie R. Callileth, Ph.D

While the book is slightly dated, the information presented is still valid and worth consideration in 2019.
Editor



It's To Laugh . . .



Kick my seat one more time and I'm telling TSA I smell drugs in your carry-on.

@HeroesVestFund

Just bought a book from IKEA



"I've crunched the numbers in your retirement account. It's time to figure out who will be wearing the mask and who will be driving the getaway car."





Dear Friends:

I would like to share a personal experience with my friends about drinking and driving. This might save you the cost and embarrassment of being arrested for DUI.

As you know, people have been known to have unexpected brushes with the authorities from time to time, often on the way home after a "social session" with family or friends.

Well, this year, it happened to me. I was out for the evening to a party and had more than a couple of margaritas. The party was held at a great Mexican restaurant. Although relaxed, I still had the common sense to know I was slightly over the limit. That's when I did something I've never done before...I took a taxi home.

On the way home there was a police roadblock, but since it was a taxi they waved it past and I arrived home safely without incident. These roadblocks can be anywhere and I realized how lucky I was to have chosen to take a taxi.

The real surprise to me was I had never driven a taxi before. I don't know where I got it, and now that it's in my garage I don't know what to do with it. If you want to borrow it, give me a call.



2nd Tuesday, March 12, 3:30 p.m.
Davis Senior Center, 246 A Street
(Mary Sprifke 530-756-5102)



SACRAMENTO

3rd Tuesday March 19, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Northminster Presbyterian Church
3235 Pope Avenue, Sacramento
(Charles Moore 916-485-7723)

The mission of the Yolo Neuropathy Groups is to ensure that through information, empowerment and mutual support, all may have hope and that no one will face their peripheral neuropathy alone.

RESOURCES:

1. Norman Latov M.D., Ph.D. – ***Peripheral Neuropathy: When the Numbness, Weakness and Pain Won't Stop***
2. Harry J. Gould, III, M.D., and Ph.D. – ***Understanding Pain: What It Is, Why it Happens and How It's Managed***
3. Alexander McLellan N.D. and Marc Spitz D.P.M. – ***The Numb Foot Book – check Amazon.com -- Out of Print***
4. Mims Cushing & Norman Latov, MD – ***You CAN Cope With Peripheral Neuropathy 365 Days a Year***
5. John Senneff – ***Numb Toes and Aching Soles: Coping with Peripheral Neuropathy***
6. John Senneff – ***Numb Toes and Other Woes: More of Peripheral Neuropathy***
7. John Senneff – ***Nutrients for Neuropathy: How to use natural supplements to treat the severe pain of PN***
8. Dr. Valerie Monteiro & Dr. John Coppola: ***Defeat Neuropathy Now ... In Spite of Your Doctor***
9. Todd Levine, M.D., ***Neuropathy Hope? Small Nerves, Big Problems***
10. **The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy- www.foundationforpn.org (a national organization)**
11. **Western Neuropathy Association (WNA) – www.pnhelp.org or toll-free (877) 662-6298**
12. **www.diabetes.org**
13. **www.neuropathyjournal.org**
14. **www.neuropathysupportnetwork.org**
15. Eugene B Richardson MDiv, MSM, EdM, MS, Patient Educator: DVD “Coping with Chronic Neuropathy”
16. DVD's: “Forks Over Knives” and “What the Health?”

To send *PN News* to others or if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please contact (530) 756-5102.

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