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CLINICAL TRIALS OFFER HOPE

Research is a key component of the Movement Disorders Program at University of California, Irvine Medical Center.

Dr. Neal Hermanowicz and his team are members of the Parkinson's Study Group, a nonprofit consortium of institutions in the United States and Canada conducting clinical trials into new treatments and methods for diagnosing neurological movement disorders. Participants in the study group are selected for their experience and research performance.

In addition to the Parkinson's Study Group research, UC Irvine's Movement Disorders Program is involved in a number of other clinical investigations. One area of research is in the use of novel medications to reduce the fluctuation of Parkinson's disease symptoms.

Another study is focusing on how various Parkinson's treatments affect patients' quality of life. Yet another research project is seeking siblings with Parkinson's disease to study a possible genetic connection.

To learn more about clinical trials involving treatments for movement disorders, call 949-824-8116 or visit www.ucihealth.com/trials.

Treating Movement Disorders

The hands shake uncontrollably, spilling coffee over the side of the mug. The feet shuffle along the floor. The handwriting is less legible, the result of a loss of finger dexterity. The voice has changed—it is not as clear as it used to be.

These are not normal consequences of aging, but signs that a neurological movement disorder such as Parkinson's disease or essential tremor (ET) might be the cause. ET affects as many as 10 million people in the United States, making it among the most common movement disorders. Parkinson's is believed to affect about 1 million Americans.

"Although a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease or essential tremor is not a happy occasion, each is a treatable disorder," says Dr. Neal Hermanowicz, director of the Movement Disorders Program at University of California, Irvine Medical Center. "We can make people better."

Determining the cause of the symptoms requires a thorough clinical evaluation by a physician who is trained and experienced in the area of movement disorders. No blood tests, brain scans or other technologies aid in diagnosis. Also, symptoms vary widely from patient to patient.

Proper treatment depends on diagnosing the exact disorder. "They require different medical therapies," says Hermanowicz, who is fellowship-trained in movement disorders. "A Parkinson's patient might also have sleep disturbances or bowel and bladder dysfunctions that need to be treated. An ET patient has different needs."

While Parkinson's, ET and other movement disorders typically become more prevalent with age, they most commonly are diagnosed when patients are in their 50s and 60s. Symptoms usually progress gradually, causing the condition to go unrecognized in some cases.



SAVE THE DATE

REGISTER NOW!

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

**8th Annual Taking Charge of
Your Health Care Conference**

Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove

Reserve your place at Orange County's largest senior health care event. Look inside this issue for details about speakers, topics and free registration.

UCIrvine



Spring Into Action

The new season is the perfect time to start that exercise program you've been considering. Walking 30 minutes a day is a wonderful way to get into shape and improve your spirits while you enjoy the birds, trees and flowers. With any new exercise, start slowly and consult your physician if there are any concerns.

Treating Movement Disorders (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Once diagnosed properly, a patient with a neurological movement disorder can receive a full range of care at UC Irvine Medical Center. This includes patient and caregiver education, speech and physical rehabilitation therapies, the latest drug therapies, and state-of-the-art surgical treatment.

The Movement Disorders Program also is active in clinical research and developing new treatments for Parkinson's.

"We represent the cutting edge in clinical care delivered with personalized attention," Hermanowicz says. "We offer very

experienced people in the management of all areas of movement disorders, and these people are dedicated to their patients. That is a high standard, and it's what makes UC Irvine a standout in this area."

To learn more about movement disorders, hear Hermanowicz speak at UC Irvine Medical Center's annual senior event on May 22 at the Crystal Cathedral. See the registration form in this issue.

To make an appointment with a UC Irvine physician, call 877-UCI-DOCS.