

## **Complementary and Alternative (CAM) Therapies for PD**

### ***Select Complementary and Alternative (CAM) therapies for PD***

#### **Coenzyme Q10: Cells need energy to survive and function.**

- They contain mitochondria, which are “batteries” that produce energy.
- In Parkinson's disease, there seems to be a disturbance in the function of these batteries.
- Coenzyme Q10 seems to affect this energy-generating mechanism in cells, although the exact mechanism remains a mystery.
- A recent study suggested that treatment with 1200mg/day of coenzyme Q10 resulted in improvements in measure of motor function over the fixed of the study when compared to lower doses of the same compound or to a placebo compound.
- Coenzyme Q-10 was also found to be safe in this trial.
- A larger trail sponsored by NIH and the Parkinson Study Group is underway which will test 1200mg or 2400mg versus a placebo compound.

#### **Green Tea Polyphenols (GTPs)**

- GTPs have antioxidants and free radical scavenging activities.
- There have been some studies suggesting that these compounds have a neuroprotective effect and possibly even a treatment effect in PD.
- The Chinese Ministry of Health and The Michael J. Fox Foundation, with the assistance of Dr. Caroline Tanner of the Parkinson's Institute and Clinical Center in Sunnyvale, CA ( NPF Center of Excellence) are currently studying whether GTPs can slow the progression of PD in a large, placebo-controlled study.

#### **Caution:**

- Green tea products do contain caffeine, which should be taken into consideration when using them.



### Ginkgo Biloba

- Ginkgo research in the U.S. has been limited to stroke recovery and Alzheimer's disease, but Dr. James A. Duke, author of *The Green Pharmacy*, suggests that it might be helpful in PD because it improves blood circulation through the brain, possibly delivering more levodopa.
- While Dr. Duke suggests that significantly higher doses might be helpful in people with PD, doses higher than 240 mg per day may cause diarrhea.
- Ginkgo also has some "alerting" properties and therefore may be helpful in combating daytime sleepiness – a common side effect of levodopa/carbidopa.

### Caution:

- Ginkgo may raise blood pressure when taken with thiazide diuretic such as hydrochlorothiazide.
- Caution should be used when taking Ginkgo with PD medications as some may have harmful interactions.
- In addition, it tends to have an anti-clotting effect. Therefore, if you are taking any other anti-clotting medication such as aspirin or warfarin (Coumadin), you should not take Ginkgo without consulting your health care provider.
- Do not confuse ginkgo biloba with ginseng may be overstimulation in older adults.

*Excerpt from NPF website page on CAM*

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