

May 5, 2015
RPSG Meeting Minutes

Our guest for the May 5th meeting was Dr. Ehsan Hadi, a neurologist with Dignity Health Sacramento. The doctor gave a general overview of Parkinson's Disease, its possible causes and symptoms. He said PD is the second most diagnosed neurological disorder in the world. While there is no certainty, it is believed the three main causes are genetics, environmental exposure to pesticides and sustaining a traumatic head injury. PD is characterized by the brain losing dopamine thus causing slowness of movement, instability on your feet and a tremor in your hands. There are a number of symptoms that PD patients may experience not noted here. Dr. Hadi said the research community is working on a bio-marker that would enable PD to be diagnosed at an earlier stage. Using data from thousands of PD patients they hope to discover symptoms such as loss of smell or constipation that may have never signaled a possible PD diagnosis before. The doctor stressed the need for patients to keep a log or diary. With neurologists having limited time for an office visit if you can provide notes on how your meds are working or how long your "off-time " seems to be the doctor can be more efficient in your treatment. He also suggested taking a friend or family member with you to the doctor visit so they can take notes or provide information as your caregiver. With exercise being so important for PD he gave a few examples such as tai-chi for balance, cycling and dancing to combat muscle rigidity. Finally the doctor spoke about Rytary, a new PD med released by the FDA in January which is a longer acting dopamine that extends your "on-time.

Shelly Butler
Secretary RPSG