Speech and Swallowing in Parkinson’s

Practical Tips and Information

John M Dean, MA CCC-SLP
Where do speech and swallowing issues fit within Parkinson’s?

There are a number of well-recognized movement-related issues:

- Slowness
- Smaller movement
- Balance and walking
- Tremor*

* Tremor is indicated by an asterisk.
This spills over to other areas

Whatever is occurring “externally” (i.e. visibly) is also occurring in places you can’t see as well…
What does this look like day to day?

**Communication**
- Quiet speech
- Facial Masking
- Posture and eye contact
- Changes in speech production
- Language-related changes

**Eating**
- Less energy/power
- Timing issues
- Saliva production (+/-)
- Digestive issues
  - Slow digestion
  - Reflux
  - Constipation
What can you do about it?

Add a speech language pathologist to your team!

– Speech and swallow issues are common
– May appear earlier than you realize
  • Monitor and track changes
Not just any SLP

• Someone with experience in treating Parkinson’s

• Ask them
  – "Do you have specialized training?"
  – "How many people with Parkinson’s have you worked with?"
  • "Do you have anyone on your caseload right now?"
Exercise your voice

- Exercises from your SLP
- Videos
  - Search for “Parkinson’s speech (or voice) exercise”
    - Other voice exercises – theater, singing
  - Webinar series in partnership with the AARP of Colorado

http://www.davisphinneyfoundation.org/aarp-webinar
Take Advantage of Technologies
Apps specific to PD

• "Speak Up for Parkinson's
  - iPad only…

• "Speech Tool"
  - iOS

• Android?
  - Voice Analyst?
  • Lite Version…
Take Advantage of Other Technologies

- **Karaoke Apps**
  - Other singing tools
    - “Amazing Slow Downer”
- **Already on your smartphone**
  - Speech recognition
  - Video camera
  - My “go to” for “facial masking”
Standalone Technologies

- **SpeechVive ®**

- **Portable Voice Amplifiers**
Moving Beyond Tech

• Choirs and other live opportunities
  – Incl. Tremble Clefs ®
• Singing lessons
• Theater
• Public Speaking
  – Toastmasters ®
• Incorporate into PT and OT routines
  – Dual task training
Transitioning to swallowing

- Just as with speech/voice, many things happening that are difficult to visualize...
  - Movement of food along the way
    - Can interfere with timing
    - Reflux, constipation and other issues
  - Changes in sensation
    - Including taste
Indicators of a swallowing prob.

- **Drooling**: Associated with a higher risk of swallowing issues
- **Weight loss**: Could be an indication of difficulties at mealtimes
- **Coughing**: Your body's protective/early warning system at work
- **Unexplained fever**: Could be the result of "aspiration"
What Can You Do About It?

Add speech language pathology to your team!

Even more important now

Aspiration pneumonia
Weight loss
Social implications
Practical tips - “Finger Foods”

- Sandwiches
  - Cut down to size
- Hot dogs and sausages
- Hamburgers
- Ribs
- Pieces of cheese
- Pieces of fruit
- Olives
- Chips and dip
- Vegetables and dips
Consider prepared food*

- Pulled pork, shredded chicken
- Other prepared meat
  - Rotisserie chicken
  - Meatloaf
  - Pot roasts
  - Chicken tenders
  - Sausages

*be sure to keep track of sugar and more importantly, salt content
Slow Cookers

- Stews and thick soups*
- Beans
- Meats
- Pasta?

* Thicken with potato flakes
Easy Recipe - Slow cooker ribs

- Slab of ribs, cut in half
  - 3/4 cup sauce
  - 1/2 cup of orange juice
  - 3/4 of brown sugar (optional)

- Cook on low for about 6-8 hours (baby back ribs)
Precut Fruit and Vegetables

- Carrots
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Squash and sweet potato
- Melon
- Pineapple
- Grapes and berries
Easy Recipe

Oven Roasted Vegetables

Fill a 9”X 12” glass dish with

- Potatoes – cut to manageable size
- Other vegetables
  - Cauliflower
  - Broccoli
  - Brussels sprouts
- Root vegetables
- Whole cloves of garlic

Coat with Olive Oil
Salt, Pepper, Thyme?
Bake at 350 until soft and browned
Don’t Neglect Condiments

- Traditional condiments
  - Catchup/mustard/mayo
  - Barbecue sauce
  - Hot sauce
  - Something more exotic
- Spreads
  - Guacamole
  - Hummus
  - Other dips and spreads

Plain old olive oil and balsamic vinegar
Advice for Pills

• Pills with water can be challenging
  – “Mixed consistency” – solid + liquid
• Consider using a “puree” like applesauce instead
  – Watch protein-rich purees like cottage cheese and yogurt
**Action Steps**

- Develop a relationship with an SLP with Parkinson's experience
- Find opportunities to exercise your voice
  - Videos
  - Apps
  - Local classes and choirs
- Get creative at mealtimes
  - Finger foods
  - Slow cookers
Questions?

Jdean@davisphinneyfoundation.org

720-399-1998

These slides are available for download at www.davisphinneyfoundation.org