

PROGRAM SUMMARY: Sept 11, 2011

“Post-Polio Syndrome Update”

By Dr. Bruce Wolosky, DPM, PA (Podiatry Services of Florida)

This is a summary of the North Central Florida Post Polio Support Group meeting, September 11, 2011. Steve McMahan introduced Bruce Wolosky, DPM, whose topic was “Post Polio Syndrome Update.”

Dr. Wolosky began the program by showing a power point presentation representing different surgeries of the lower extremities and explaining the similarities between Post Polio Syndrome in the lower extremities and peripheral neuropathy from diabetes.

The pathology and treatment options for both have common signs, including muscle and joint weakness and pain, general fatigue and exhaustion with minimal activity, muscle atrophy, breathing or swallowing problems, sleep disorders and decreased tolerance of cold temperatures.

It is important for patients with PPS to be screened for osteoporosis, scoliosis and osteoarthritis. Therapy for these conditions include frequent rest periods, assistive devices and ways to breathe to conserve energy.

If you can't exercise, it takes longer to “recharge your batteries.” The reality is that it is important to be positive, a good attitude is essential. You need to accept that you are no longer what you used to be. Using an assistive device is a smarter way to deal with illness, it is not giving in to the illness.

It is also important to regulate your environmental temperature, avoid falls by not having obstructions in your living area such as loose throw rugs or obstacles to go around, get enough sleep and protect your lungs by getting treatment for an infection promptly.

The cause of Post Polio Syndrome is nerve degeneration due to the polio virus hiding in the anterior horn cells and many scientists and doctors believe it does not die. It is believed that as post polio syndrome progresses, the virus attacks nerves that were not previously affected by the disease resulting in further weakness. PPS has a slow and progressive course. It cannot be prevented once it starts.

Using steroids to treat PPS is not viable due to the side effects being more severe than the small amount of benefit to the condition.

Dr. Wolosky explained that surgery for several different foot deformities is not advised unless there is pain involved. Surgery can sometimes help, but can also cause severe pain and should be the last resort. For people with PPS, it takes a long time to recuperate from this type of surgery and it can result in the patient being immobilized for months at a time causing further difficulty in the future. So, as Dr. Wolosky says “IF IT DOESN'T HURT, DON'T FIX IT”.

The program concluded with Dr. Wolosky answering questions from our group. We would like to thank him and his daughter, Megan, who graciously operated the power

point presentation for us. This was one of the most intelligent, informative and researched programs our group has had the privilege to attend.

Summary, Polio Post News, Sept. 11, 2011 by Sharon Daszczyński