



# Parkinson's Association of Orange County

Volume 1, Issue 1



The Parkinson's Association of Orange County (PAOC) provides support for people with Parkinson's in Orange County, and their families/caregivers. We believe in a unified effort to raise funds for research for a cure as well as helpful programs for those living with the effects of Parkinson's on a daily basis.

## Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter! We'll be sharing information that we hope you'll find interesting and helpful. Feel free to contact Janet Buell or Diane Davani with any feedback or for topics you'd like to see here! We'd love to hear from you!



<http://www.wpc2016.org>



[www.facebook.com/PAOCinc](http://www.facebook.com/PAOCinc)

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## Orange County Tremble Clefs

The Tremble Clefs Program is a singing group, sharing in a joyful activity with therapeutic results. This group meets **every Monday morning at 9:30am** at the **Florence Sylvester Senior Center**

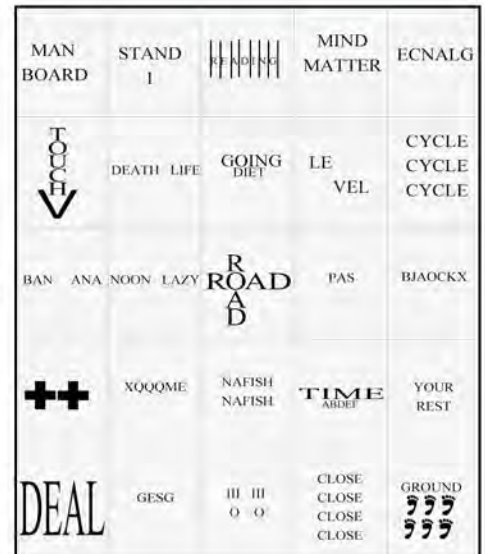
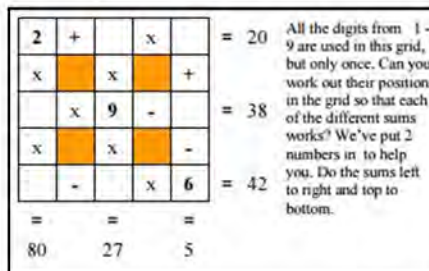
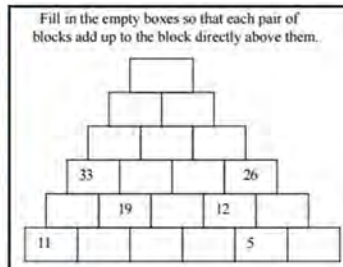
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/OCTrembleClefs](http://www.facebook.com/OCTrembleClefs)  
Please call Karen Skipper at (949) 496-1756 for more information!

## PEP4U GYM

**100% FREE "PD Specific" Exercise!**

This group meets on various days throughout the week in Aliso Viejo.

Visit [www.pep4uwellness.org](http://www.pep4uwellness.org) for class schedules.  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PEP4UWellness](http://www.facebook.com/PEP4UWellness)  
Please call Jacquie Grossman at (949) 272-5609 for more information!



## Duopa:

### **A New Therapeutic Alternative for Patients with Advanced Parkinson's Disease**

By Rajeev Kumar, MD & Victoria Segro, MSNC-ANP

As Parkinson's disease becomes advanced, wearing off of the clinical effect of medications between doses occurs and patients develop excessive involuntary movements (dyskinesia). Until now, the main option for patients who had substantial disability from these motor complications, despite optimal medical therapy, has been deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery which can markedly reduce the severity and duration of wearing off and dyskinesias.

A recently approved alternative for such patients is Duopa therapy. This requires implantation of a tube into the small intestine via the stomach during an outpatient surgery. The pump is programmed by a neurologist, typically over 3-4 days, to deliver an optimal dose of a gel formulation of levodopa/carbidopa continuously through the tube. The pump is started each morning by the patient upon awakening (or by care partners before the patient awakens) and usually the patient has a good effect within 30 minutes. The continuous infusion markedly improves wearing off and dyskinesia by eliminating the peaks and troughs which occur with oral medications. The long-term efficacy of Duopa therapy is fairly comparable to DBS. The pump and medication cassette is approximately 8"x4"x2". Patients wear a holster or fanny pack during the day to hold the device. Patients disconnect the pump at bedtime.

Most patients can discontinue their other Parkinson's disease medications, although some patients may take an oral dose of levodopa at bedtime. The most common side effects of Duopa therapy include infection or pain from the surgical procedure or mechanical problems such as dislodging, kinking or clogging of the tube. Side effects of the levodopa/carbidopa gel are the same as oral levodopa/carbidopa (Sinemet).

In contrast, side effects of DBS include a 1-2% risk of brain hemorrhage (stroke) with permanent disability or death, suboptimal placement of the electrodes in the brain target, potential worsening of cognition especially in patients with pre-existing cognitive impairment or dementia, worsening of verbal fluency and/or speech and infection or breakage of the implanted hardware. DBS is a fully internal system while Duopa patients wear an external pump. Unlike the DBS hardware, removing the tube is a relatively simple procedure for patients who wish to discontinue Duopa therapy. Either therapy may be appropriate for many patients who may choose which one they prefer based on the different risks and lifestyle issues (with having an external or internal device). However, Duopa therapy is likely a lower risk option for the more than 50% of Parkinson's disease patients who eventually develop dementia, which can often be worsened by DBS.



Do you have a BIRTHDAY coming up or any other SPECIAL OCCASION?

Ask us how you can include PAOC in your special day!  
Please contact Janet Buell, Board President ([willjanbuell@att.net](mailto:willjanbuell@att.net)) or  
Diane Davani, Marketing Director ([dianedavani@aol.com](mailto:dianedavani@aol.com))  
for more details! Thank you!