

Holistic approach to treatment of a patient with Parkinson's disease

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Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that occurs due to damage in substantia nigra which results in dopamine deficiency. The etiology is unknown, although it is probably a combination of genetic and environmental factors such as viruses, toxins and vitamin E. Clinical picture is dominated by rigidity, akinetic tremor and bradykinesia with postural instability, and the diagnosis is confirmed by the positive response to levodopa treatment. A very important part of the treatment, aside from pharmacotherapy are physiotherapy and exercise, adequate nutrition and psychotherapy. Physical activity significantly decreases the progression of disease and psychotherapy has positive effects on maintaining social activities and reduction of depression, which is an often comorbidity of the condition. Case report: 60 year old patient, a seaman, came with symptoms such as double vision, urinary difficulties and occasional weakness in arms and legs six years ago. He gradually started having mood changes, loss of energy and interest, difficulties with sleeping and swallowing, dizziness and difficulties in maintaining balance. Physical status initially did not show typical symptoms: resting tremor, bradykinesia and muscular rigidity. The differential diagnosis included tumor of the central nervous system, unclear neurological disorder, cervicobrachial syndrome with radiculopathy, prostate adenoma and other. After extended diagnostic procedure for suspected Parkinson's disease a specific therapy was applied, as well as the therapy for the concomitant depressive disorder. The patient performs daily physical therapy, regularly swims, once or twice a year is stationary treated in a special rehabilitation hospital, maintains a balanced nutrition and conducts occupational activities. Family physician regularly carries out supportive psychotherapy with the patient and his family. Today, the patient is in a good general condition, with satisfactory weight and is independently mobile with preserved speech and social contacts.

Conclusion: With a holistic approach that includes pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy, physical therapy, a balanced diet and occupational therapy it is possible to considerably ease the symptoms of the disease, delay the onset of complications and maintain a better quality of life in patient with Parkinson's disease and his family.

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