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Fighting Parkinson's with Exercise • January 20, 2015 • Issue #782

EDITOR'S PEN

Gary Barg, Editor-in-Chief

An Interview with Olympia Dukakis and Louis Zorich

Olympia Dukakis and Louis Zorich have been married since 1962 and are both accomplished stage, film and television actors. They joined Gary to talk about their lives after Louis' diagnoses with Stage 2 diabetes and the importance of taking advantage of Medicare's free Diabetes screening benefit for all caregivers.

Gary: I know you were with both recently screened for diabetes; and you found out that Louis has type II diabetes?

Louis: That is right. When the doctor told me, I did not believe him. All of my brothers and sisters have diabetes and I thought I am free; it is not going to hit me. But then all of a sudden, he said "Yes, you have it" and there you are; I am dealing with it.

Gary: Well what does it mean that you have it and why is it important to even know your status?

Louis: Well, I certainly have changed some things about how I eat. Whenever Olympia and I have a choice of foods, she always goes towards salty things and I naturally gravitate toward something sweet. I said, is it possible that I have been eating too many sweets? So I have been trying to cut down on that and a few other things. I have always watched my diet, but now it is almost like I am a detective. I look at everything I eat and I write down what I eat, too—I

am very, very careful ...more

IN THIS ISSUE

An Interview with Olympia Dukakis and Louis Zorich

Parkinson's Disease with Dementia—Special Challenges

Wake Up and Fight Parkinson's with Exercise

Free Tax Return Preparation for Seniors by Volunteers

CareNotes

FEATURED ARTICLE

Parkinson's Disease with Dementia Special Challenges

By Sandra Fuson, Staff Writer

In the U.S. today there are more than one million people with Parkinson's Disease (PD). Approximately 50,000 new cases are diagnosed annually. PD is a progressive movement disorder that affects the central nervous system. Its causes are unknown, and while physicians can manage some symptoms of the disease, there is no known cure ...more

GUEST ARTICLE

Wake Up and Fight Parkinson's with Exercise

By Jackie Russell, RN

Parkinson's disease (PD) remains, for the most part, a mystery of medical science. For reasons unknown, certain brain cells stop producing a substance called dopamine. The lack of dopamine affects an individual's movement, strength and balance. PD causes a slow, yet progressive deterioration in function, taking many years to run its course. When the diagnosis of PD is made, you experience a life-altering event. It is not a condition you would desire, but PD does have the capacity to cause you to reassess your priorities and make lifestyle choices that can affect the course of the disease ...[more](#)

CARETIPS

Free Tax Return Preparation for Seniors by Volunteers

The IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Programs offer free tax help for taxpayers who qualify ...[more](#)

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CARENOTES

Greetings from a (Willing) Caregiver:

My sister and I are both providing care for our 90-year-old mother, who is still wanting to live in her own home. While we see, hear and know many of our seniors want to do this; in reality, this idea of living "independently" serves largely the wishes of the elderly parent.

What I am seeing and experiencing with my sister (who currently lives with me and my 88-year-old husband) is that we are running two households. I'm witnessing our mother living very comfortably with the "arrangement" of being cared for by her two daughters in the fullest sense, taking care of all the details of her needs including meals, shopping and transportation.

While we love each other deeply in our family, I'm also witnessing the unfolding "lopsided" aspect of caring for what one family member needs at the expense of multiple others. Our mother is doing well financially, meeting her home's monthly expenses and building specific investments, while I'm seeing my sister's and my own financial future looking more bleak and our ability to secure employment and build our own futures while still "young" (70 and 67) becoming more out of reach. My sister is a widow and she's serving our mother's needs without pay, since we've come to understand that you care for your parents with no thought of income for yourself.

Something seems out of balance here, and yet I feel guilty if I talk about our futures "out loud." All this to ask your input, advice, or some level of wisdom to help me and my sister move forward, still honoring our seniors, yet also begin to see a better future for our own lives.

Thank you for your help.

Linda

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