

# NEUROLOGY

ASSOCIATES, P.A.

## NOGGIN NEWS

Summer 2010  
Volume 2, Issue 3

## Meet Our Newest NogginDoc



Ryan S.  
Conrad, MD

Neurology Associates is pleased to announce the return of Dr. Ryan S. Conrad to the practice as of May 2010. Dr. Conrad is Board Certified in Neurology, Psychiatry and Sleep Medicine and brings to the practice expertise in the areas of general Neurology, Sleep Disorders, EMG/Nerve Conduction and other neurological procedures.

Dr. Conrad earned his MD and completed both his Medical and his Neurology residencies at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis. For the past three years, he has been a well respected physician in the Charlotte, NC area.

Dr. Conrad is available for patient care from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Tuesdays and Fridays at Neurology Associates' main office on Tate Boulevard in the First Plaza building in Hickory.

### Neurology Associates Opens Lincolnton Office

Patient appointments are also available with Dr. Conrad at Neurology Associates' newly opened satellite clinic in the Lincolnton Medical Specialists Building located at 1470 Gaston Street, Suite 600 in Lincolnton. Regular office hours for this clinic are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

As a leader of neurological services in the Hickory area for the past 24 years, Neurology Associates is committed to enhancing the health, well-being, and quality of life of our patients by providing comprehensive neurological services in partnership with community physicians and hospitals. We believe that the addition of Dr. Ryan Conrad will continue to strengthen this commitment and help us better serve the increase in patient volume that we are experiencing.

Neurology Associates is one of the premier neurology practices in the area specializing in adult and pediatric neurological conditions including sleep disorders, headaches, migraines, seizures, dementia, stroke, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, dizziness and nerve disorders.

Physician referrals are welcome. Call 828-485-2476 to schedule patient appointments for both the Lincolnton and Hickory locations. For more information visit our website at

[www.noggindocs.com](http://www.noggindocs.com) or contact Amanda Huffman, Office Administrator at 828-485-2510.



# Alzheimer's Disease— What you Need to Know

Alzheimer's disease was first described in 1906 by a German physician named Alois Alzheimer. Alzheimer's disease affects 5.3 million people a year. It is a progressive brain disease that is the most common form of dementia.



Rita G. Katz, PA-C  
Physician Assistant at  
Neurology Associates

The Alzheimer's Association lists 10 signs and symptoms of the disease that include 1) recent memory loss that may disrupt life, 2) difficulty planning and organizing, 3) difficulty remembering how to do certain tasks/skills, 4) confusion with time and/or place, 5) trouble understanding visual images, 6) problems with words when writing or speaking, 7) misplacing items and inability to retrace steps, 8) decreased or poor judgment, 9) withdrawal from social and work activities, and 10) change in mood and personality.

With the above changes, the patient or family members will seek treatment for the disease. There is no cure! However, there are drugs and non-drug therapies to slow down the progression of the disease. These treatments may assist the patient to stay active longer, live life fuller, and delay the need for additional caretakers for the patient.

The first treatments may be common supplements. Research is being performed on supplements such as fish oil with DHA, vitamin E, Coenzyme Q10, and other antioxidants. Regular exercise has been shown to actually break down the neurofibrillary tangles and plaques that form in the brain in Alzheimer's disease. Good "brain hygiene" includes keeping the brain active with crossword puzzles, word searches, interaction with friends and family, and learning new skills all may slow the degeneration of the brain down. Learning a foreign language or a new musical instrument are two of the best activities to strengthen new brain cells.

Traditional medications such as cholinesterase inhibitors have been shown to slow the progression also. These medications can be taken in pill form or skin patches. The names

include Aricept, Exelon, and Razadyne. Other medications such as Namenda may be used alone or in combination with cholinesterase inhibitors. Behaviors such as agitation, hallucinations, sleep disturbances, and paranoia may be treated with a variety of medications.

Finally I would like to mention the idea of pet therapy for these patients. As reported in the article "Paws for a Cause" by Brenda S. Parris, a French physician, Dr. Elisabeth Krucsek, studied the effects of pets on Alzheimer's patients and reported that "contact with pets can spontaneously induce extended periods of calm and occasionally even permitting reduction in the amount of sedative therapy required" for the patients.

There are many reports in nursing homes where pet therapy has affected the lives and decisions of the residents there for the better. I personally had a beloved friend who loved the visits of a very large Golden Retriever to her hospital bed. Many elderly people live alone in the early stages of the disease and may get great comfort from a pet cat or dog in the home. Even watching fish in an aquarium can be relaxing. In Dan Buettner's book entitled The Blue Zones, he reports that it is very important to have a "plan de vida" or a strong sense of purpose in life to live a long life. Having a pet to love can very well be a lonely person's purpose in life! And just remember the words of Willa Cather, "where there is great love there are always miracles."

## Neurology Associates' Neuroimaging Center

Neurology Associates schedules patients for MRI procedures every Monday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm in our mobile MRI unit located on the ground level of our Hickory office at 1985 Tate Boulevard.

All MRI scans performed at Neurology Associates are read by Dr. Catherine Weymann, our Medical Director of Neuroimaging.



Catherine A. Weymann, MD



# Neurology Associates Cares!



Neurology Associates, P.A.  
First Plaza Building  
1985 Tate Blvd. SE Suite 600  
Hickory, NC 28602

Dear Neurology Associates:

The 2010 Forrest Hunt Midnight Basketball Camp would like to thank your practice for your generous monetary donation this year. Without donations like yours, Forrest Hunt Midnight Basketball Camp would not be able to provide the leadership that is needed in the community. Also, more of our youth might be influenced to join gangs, experiment with drugs (using drugs or selling them). This donation has helped to provide equipment and supplies needed to maintain a program that was created to encourage youth in the processes of growing, learning, and character building with emphasis on faith, trust, respect, positive attitudes, and discipline. These are characteristics that will allow our youth to gain some of the attributes that will be needed to become positive and respectable members of society and will decrease the number of youth who simply accept the negative statistics that seem to dictate their futures.

The Forrest Hunt Midnight Basketball Camp has distinguished itself because it goes beyond the athletic experience by providing a stable, positive, secure, and highly disciplined environment. The phrase "Be All That You Can Be" is certainly evident in this program. The camp is organized and run by parents, business leaders in the community, and other responsible adults who are committed to the success of our youth. These adults constantly give of their time and are more than willing and able to provide the support that is needed in all areas.

*Steve O. Hunt*  
Steve O. Hunt  
Board of Directors  
Forrest Hunt Midnight Basketball

Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Institution  
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www.ccc.edu



Hickory Sunrise Rotary Club  
P.O. Box 275  
Hickory, NC 28603  
828.634.5144

July 1, 2010

Dr. Robert Yagumdich  
Neurology Associates, P.A.  
1985 Tate Blvd., SE, Suite 600  
Hickory, NC 28602

Dear Dr. Yagumdich,

On behalf of the Hickory Sunrise Rotary Club, we would like to thank Neurology Associates, P.A. for their generous sponsorship in support of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Car Show.

Attendance at the event on June 19, 2006 was great and we were able to offer the community a chance to fellowship and have fun while helping others.

A portion of the money collected from this event will be given to Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC in an effort to put food on the tables of local communities in need.

Again, we appreciate your willingness to participate in this event and make a difference!

Sincerely,

Diana Dula  
President, Hickory Sunrise Rotary

cc:  
David Staff  
Phil Trick

## Employees of the Month

Neurology Associates recognizes the importance of our employees and their dedication to our patients, medical providers and co-workers. Each month all employees of the practice vote on an Employee of the Month (EOM).



April -  
**Dale A. Menard, MD**  
Physician



May -  
**David Skaff,**  
Practice  
Administrator



June -  
**Rita G. Katz, PA-C**  
Physician  
Assistant

# Clinical Research Corner

## Clinical Trial Opportunities for Patients

Neurology Associates partners with many major pharmaceutical companies and local research centers to offer specialized clinical research and drug study opportunities to our patients and community.

We are currently recruiting patients for the following Clinical Trials:

- Osteoarthritis
- Restless Leg Syndrome
- Migraine Headache in Adolescents

If you would like more information about these clinical trials please ask one of our physicians or physician assistants during your visit or call our office at 828-328-5500.

## Neurology Topics "In the News"

### New Study Suggests Tart Cherry Juice Can Be a Natural Solution for Insomnia

Drinking tart cherry juice daily could help reduce the severity of insomnia and time spent awake after going to sleep, according to a new study published in the Journal of Medicinal Food. A team of University of Pennsylvania, University of Rochester, and VA Center of Canandaigua researchers conducted a pilot study on the sleep habits of 15 older adults. The adults drank 8 ounces of tart cherry juice beverage in the morning and evening for 2 weeks. There were significant reductions in reported insomnia severity and the adults saved about 17 minutes of wake time after going to sleep. The researchers suspect tart cherries' natural benefits could be due in part to their relatively high content of melatonin.

### Restless Legs Frequent in Those With Migraine

Patients with migraine are at higher risk of having restless legs syndrome, warn investigators. Researchers report that 11.4% of migraine patients had restless legs. This rate was higher than for patients with other headache types. The study authors suggest this also explains the higher frequencies of migraine features and accompanying symptoms, as well as higher headache disability, in patients with restless legs.

### Low Vitamin D Levels May Heighten Risk for Parkinson's Disease

In the first analysis of its kind, investigators have identified a link between vitamin D and Parkinson's disease. Looking at more than 3000 people, researchers found that low vitamin D levels increased the risk for Parkinson's, and high rates appeared to have a protective effect. The investigators found that individuals with a serum vitamin D concentration of at least 50 nmol/L had a 65% lower risk for Parkinson's than those with values less than 25 nmol/L. The exact mechanisms by which vitamin D may protect against Parkinson's disease are not fully understood.



## RotaryRock 2010

X-BOX TOURNAMENTS:  
Call of Duty MW2, Madden 2011  
& Guitar Hero III

Saturday, September 25, 2010 12 Noon - 8pm  
at the CVCC Multipurpose Complex

**\$2,000 Total Prize Money!**  
\*limited entry\*

Tourney Fees apply; FREE Lectures  
Proceeds to benefit the CVCC Scholarship Fund



Hosted by Hickory Sunrise Rotary Club  
([www.hickorysunrise.org](http://www.hickorysunrise.org))

register now at [www.rotaryrock.com](http://www.rotaryrock.com)

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Designs



## Patient Tip:

- Do you have an appointment scheduled? If so, you can complete your paperwork at home by visiting our web-site ([www.noggindocs.com](http://www.noggindocs.com)). This can actually cut down on your waiting time and make your appointment go much faster. Website forms are in both English and Spanish.

## Questions or comments?

- Please feel free to contact us at 828-328-5500.



# NEUROLOGY ASSOCIATES, P.A.

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Neurology Associates, P.A. specializes in adult and pediatric neurological conditions, including sleep disorders, headaches, seizures, dementia, stroke, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, dizziness, nerve disorders, and much more.