Neuropathy Action Foundation

Awareness • Education • Empowerment

Website About NAF Neuropathy 101 Resources & News Advocacy Support Contact

In This Issue of the Patient Voice

Working Hard To Help Keep Up Vaccination Rates

Your Plasma Could Save Lives

RxFunction Awarded Department of Defense Contract for Rehabilitation Research and Development

Newly approved topical treatment for neuropathic pain

Working Hard To Help Keep Up Vaccination Rates

September 2020

Dear NAF Members ,

We are all experiencing an unprecedented time for so many reasons. Many of us have been and continue to struggle both physically and emotionally, however, these times are a test of our strength and remind me of a story I once

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our health and well-being beyond the damage caused by the virus, with profound implications across the healthcare system.

In nearly every US community, elective surgeries have been postponed and routine care has been delayed. Amid closed healthcare settings and fears of contracting COVID-19, routine vaccination rates have declined significantly across all age groups, with demand plummeting as much as 95 percent for some vaccines. These declines are dangerous to public health, and we can no longer delay life-saving vaccines.

The NAF is pleased to join the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) and more than 100 partner organizations on the Keep Up The Rates campaign, to encourage all individuals to receive recommended vaccines that may have been delayed during the pandemic. The campaign launched in August during National Immunization Awareness Month and engages national experts and leading public health organizations to reach populations most at risk of delaying vaccinations.

People of all ages, from newborn babies to older adults, need to stay up-to-date on recommended immunizations to help prevent serious diseases. Vaccines are one of the most important and effective public health tools available to

heard called: Potatoes, Eggs and Coffee Beans.

One cold afternoon a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to make it. She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot, and ground coffee beans in the third pot.

He then let them sit and boil, without saying a word to his daughter. After twenty minutes he turned off the burners. He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup. Turning to her he asked. "Daughter, what do you see?" "Potatoes, eggs, and coffee," she replied.

"Look closer," he said, "and touch the potatoes." She did and noted that they were soft. He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face. "Father, what does this mean?" she asked.

He then explained that the potatoes, the eggs and coffee beans had each faced the same adversity- the boiling water. However, each one reacted differently. The potato went in strong, hard, and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak. The egg was fragile, with the thin outer shell protecting

prevent a variety of diseases across the lifespan.

The campaign encourages everyone to talk to a healthcare professional to make sure they are up-to-date on all recommended vaccines.
Vaccines also help protect those around us-we all have an important role to play in keeping our communities as safe and healthy as possible during these challenging times.

For more information visit: https://www.nfid.org/keep-up-the-rates/

its liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard. However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

"Which are you," he asked his daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean? "

In life, things happen around us, things happen to us, but the only thing that truly matters is what happens within us.

Which one are you?

Dominck V. Spatafora
President - NAF

Your Plasma Could Save Lives

A coalition of world-leading medical and research institutions, blood centers, life science companies, technology companies, philanthropic organizations, and COVID-19 survivor groups, have come together to support the rapid development of potential new therapies for patients with COVID-19. Working together under the "The Fight Is In Us" campaign, the coalition is seeking to mobilize tens of thousands of people in the United States who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate their blood plasma, which contains vital antibodies that have fought off the disease already once, and could now help others do the same.

Individuals who have recovered from COVID-19, or know someone who has, can visit https://thefightisinus.orgto understand if the recovered individual may be eligible to donate and find a nearby blood or plasma donor center using a simple self-screening tool. The coalition offers more than 1,500 locations in the United States at which COVID-19 survivors can choose to donate. Uber Health has contributed 25,000 free, roundtrip Uber rides to and from plasma donor centers for those potentially eligible to donate. YOUR PLASMA COULD SAVE LIVES...watch this link to learn more: https://youtu.be/xJaWGe1dqxk

RxFunction Awarded Department of Defense Contract for Rehabilitation Research and Development Project

RxFunction, Inc. has been selected by the Defense Health Agency to receive a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Direct Phase II contract to fund development that will incorporate WalkasinsÂ® sensory neuroprosthetic technology into artificial limbs for enhanced rehabilitation of gait and balance for active-duty military members, veterans, and civilians with lower limb trauma and/or loss.

The project, entitled "Optimize Performance and Mitigate Falls in Warfighters with Lower Limb Trauma and/or Loss", will be conducted in collaboration with Liberating Technologies, Inc. (LTI), the research arm of College Park Industries, now part of Ã–ssur Group, a global leader in non-invasive orthopaedics. The grant is anticipated to be in excess of one million dollars.

"I am thrilled that we were able to get this competitive Department of Defense contract in collaboration with the excellent research team at LTI," says Dr. Lars Oddsson, Principal Investigator, CTO of RxFunction, and co-inventor of the Walkasins technology. "It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to combine our technology, experience and expertise with theirs to develop a new rehabilitation tool that can help improve gait and balance function for those with lower limb loss."

Dr. Todd Farrell, Director of Research at LTI adds, "We are incredibly excited to have the opportunity to continue our collaboration with the team at RxFunction. This project aligns with our company's strategic goals of developing novel technologies to improve the quality of life of individuals with limb difference. I believe that the synergistic nature of the technologies that each company is bringing to the project will allow for the development and deployment of an effective rehabilitation tool for the Warfighter, Veteran, and civilian populations."

Loss of balance and associated falls are a significant problem for active-duty military members, veterans, and civilians with lower limb trauma and limb loss. Therapists currently lack readily available tools to use in the clinic for advanced balance and gait training to decrease fall risk and increase performance.

Future commercial applications would extend the technology into a prosthesis to provide remote patient monitoring capabilities with therapy on an ongoing basis.

RxFunction CEO, Tom Morizio adds, "It's exciting to see this next development coming out of our strong and extensive IP portfolio. This project can help open a market to serve a new population of patients in need, and is in line with our longer-term plans to expand this technology into other applications and new neuromuscular disease indications, building on our work in peripheral neuropathy."

Newly Approved Topical Treatment for Neuropathic Pain

By: NAF Board Member Leslie MacGregor Levine, V.M.D., Ph.D., J.D

The Food and Drug Administration recently approved a prescription patch treatment for neuropathic foot pain caused by diabetes. The patch delivers a high dose of capsaicin, a compound found in hot peppers, into the skin. As explained further below, this treatment may be very useful in many types of neuropathic pain, as the relief is often felt very quickly and lasts for several months.

There are many different types of capsaicin cream formulations that are available over the counter (OTC). The strongest formulation available OTC is 0.1 percent, which can be found in nonprescription products labeled "high potency." The new treatment is 0.8 percent capsaicin (8 times higher strength than the strongest OTC creams) delivered through a skin patch. The product is called QUTENZAÂ®, made by Averitas, a U.S. subsidiary of the GrÃ¼nenthal corporation. QUTENZAÂ® was approved in Europe for treating shingles and other neuropathic pain in adults. It was approved for sale in the U.S. in 2009 for adults with shingles pain, and recently for foot pain from diabetic neuropathy. It is the first and only topical, non-systemic, non-opioid pain treatment of its kind to deliver prescription strength capsaicin directly into theskin. It can provide significant and sustained pain relief for up to 3 or 4 months after an application.

The QUTENZAÂ® patch is applied in a physician's office only; it will not available for patients to use themselves at home. This is because it must be handled with great care, including gloves and eye protection, since the high concentration capsaicin in the patch can cause severe irritation to eyes, airway and mucous membranes. It has no known drug-drug interactions. During and shortly after the patch is applied, about a third of patients have reddening, pain and/or itching at the site of application. To minimize these, before the patch is applied, the painful area is treated with a numbing cream. The patch is left on for 30 minutes for foot pain, and for 60 minutes for pain elsewhere on the body. The patch treatment can be repeated every three months, or with longer intervals as dictated by each patient's pain levels.

There have been several large clinical trials on this patch, which provide useful information. In one trial, over 300 patients with painful diabetic neuropathy in their feet had the patch applied 7 times at 2 month intervals, either for 30 or for 60 minutes. Only 15 discontinued their participation due to discomfort caused by the treatment. In another study, the effectiveness of this patch in treating non-diabetic peripheral neuropathic pain was compared with an optimal dose of pregabalin pills (brand name LyricaÂ®). About 280 patients were treated a single time with the

patch applied over their area of pain. Another 280 patients were given an effective dose of pregabalin. In the patch group, there were no patient dropouts from the trial due to discomfort caused by the patch, in contrast to 24 patients who dropped out due to pregabalin side effects. In the pregabalin group, about 55 percent of patients had at least a 30 percent decrease in pain, with it taking an average of 36 days to feel relief. In contrast, about 70 percent of the patients who got a patch treatment had a 30 percent pain reduction, on average after just one week. In fact, a fourth of patients had pain relief within 2 days,, and a third within 3 days.

Our community now has a new option forrelief of pain caused by peripheral neuropathy. While it may cause some discomfort when applied at the doctor's office, it can provide very fast pain relief that lasts for months, with no lasting side effects.

Stay Connected

Follow us on twitter

Like us on Facebook

Join My Mailing List

Forward To A Friend

Neuropathy Action Foundation
1950 Old Tustin Avenue | Santa Ana, CA 92705
(877) 512-7262 | info@neuropathyaction.org