

After advocating amino acid therapy for others, Palos Hills doctor is now using it himself

By Dermot Connolly
Staff Reporter

Illness in his family led Dr. Robert Wright, a Palos Hills chiropractor for 25 years and certified clinical nutritionist, to begin using amino acid therapy in his practice six years ago.

Now he is using the therapy on himself.

"My sister got Parkinson's disease about eight years ago, and my mission was to come up with a way of managing it naturally," said Wright, a Palos Park resident whose office is at 10059 S. Roberts Road. His wife, Joyce, is his office manager.

He said that the amino acid therapy he uses is based on 16 years of research performed by NeuroResearch Clinic in Duluth, Minn.

Wright said that amino acids, often described as the building blocks of protein, are a natural way to boost the production of neurotransmitters in the brain, such as dopamine and serotonin. A lack of dopamine causes Parkinson's disease, a progressive neurological disorder that affects movement.

Typically, physicians would treat Parkinson's patients by prescribing drugs such as L-DOPA, a chemical precursor to dopamine, which their bodies are not producing naturally. Similarly, drugs prescribed for the treatment of depression, anxiety and attention deficit disorder are designed to increase serotonin levels in the body.

But Wright said the amino acids increase the dopamine and serotonin naturally, without the side effects caused by drugs.

He practices what he preaches.

Wright himself was diagnosed recently with Parkinson's disease, and said taking amino acids to manage his symptoms has worked well for him.

"I've never taken drugs for it," he said.

A graduate of the National School of Health Sciences, Wright said he follows protocols developed over time by the NeuroResearch Clinic and does not alter any medicine his clients have been prescribed. "I wouldn't want to do that. We find the right dosage to succeed and once the basic functions better, they may decide to work with their doctors (regarding prescriptions).

"Advising them to stop taking their prescriptions immediately would be like pulling the rug from under someone, without having something there to replace it. They would just feel worse."

He currently has six patients with Parkinson's disease on amino acid therapy, as well as about 20 of all ages taking amino acids for depression, anxiety or attention deficit disorder. He said he has found amino acids work better for ADD than attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

"(Amino acid therapy) really helps with focus, and also sleep, and leads to the production of melatonin. We haven't really marketed it yet. It has all been by word of mouth. Amino acid therapy isn't for everyone. Probably about 80 percent of patients respond well."

The chiropractor said amino acid therapy could cost from \$100 to \$250 a month, depending on the dosage.

"You reach maximum effect after five

days," he said, so patients don't have to wait weeks or months to see if the dosage is working.

Wright determines the dosage to start out with by using urine tests to see what levels are in the body. But he is starting to use muscle testing more often, using acupuncture points.

"Not everyone with depression needs amino acids," he said. "Some people only need them temporarily. There is no addiction to it," the chiropractor added.

He said that essentially, the amino acids are making up for what patients are not getting in their diets, or their bodies are not using efficiently.

"Certainly, we want to improve everyone's health," he said. "They can get some amino acids through their diet, but when there is a nutritional deficiency, they often need another source."

Wright said he knows of no other chiropractors in the area working with amino acid therapy, and there may only be a few in the state.

"I haven't met any in Illinois using it," he said. "Some (medical doctors) may be using it, the ones who take a holistic approach."



Dr. Robert
Wright

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