



Poetry That Evokes Emotional Memories

The article "Poetry in Emotion," with Cathy Wolf's poems, caught my attention while reading your May/June 2006 issue.

Cathy Wolf has ALS, and has had it for 10 years. My uncle also had ALS, and died from it at age 68. He was a history teacher. He also was a professional drummer at night. He died within one year of his diagnosis. Even when the disease robbed him of his ability to play drums with both arms and hands, he played with one arm and one hand the last three months of his life.

This article touched my heart. So brave is Cathy Wolf! As was my Uncle Harold!

Martha D. Stair
Sioux City, Iowa

If Only a Migraine Were 'Just a Headache'

"Lifting the Rock" by Sherry Anderson [SPEAK UP, May/June 2006] reminded me of how lucky I am. Yes, I suffer from frequent migraines, but I've had much success with the various triptans. Ms. Anderson's husband has been not as lucky. I cannot imagine going back to the time before the triptans came out, when I'd just lay in bed praying for the pain to end for hours and hours. Deep down, I fear having to return to that way of life. I remember all too well how I could not commit to anything without saying, "I can go, if I don't have a migraine." The

next time I hear an uninformed person refer to a migraine as "just a headache," I will show them Ms. Anderson's essay.

Michele Ocejvo
Saddle Brook, N.J.

Treating the Pain of Diabetic Neuropathy

As expert answers are among the many valuable aspects to your much appreciated publication, I wanted to make you aware of a mistake in your ASK THE EXPERTS column. In the March/April 2006 issue, Dr. Peter J. Dyck stated, "Several drugs are approved to treat the pain that comes with diabetic neuropathy. The major ones are gabapentin (Neurontin) and duloxetine (Cymbalta)." While pregabalin (Lyrica) is indicated for the management of neuropathic pain associated with diabetic peripheral neuropathy, the last I checked gabapentin did not have the indication Dr. Dyck refers to in his answer. Since patients look to you and your contributing experts for advice, I think a clarification might be helpful.

Paul Summers
Hopkinton, Mass.

CLARIFICATION: "The reader is correct," responds Peter J. Dyck, M.D., director of the Peripheral Neuropathy Research Laboratory at the Mayo Clinic. "The article should have said that gabapentin (Neurontin) and duloxetine (Cymbalta) are commonly prescribed by physicians for severe neuropathic pain." While gabapentin isn't indicated for diabetic neuropathic pain, the Food and Drug Administration has approved it for "severe localized nerve pain experienced by some patients recovering from shingles," reports an FDA medical officer.

YOUR VOICES

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS. All correspondence for publication on this LETTERS page must include name, address and daytime phone number. They should be e-mailed to neurologynow@lwwny.com, faxed to 646-674-6500 or mailed to 333 Seventh Ave., 19th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

WE ALSO WELCOME YOUR PERSONAL ESSAYS. The SPEAK UP essay is a forum for people who live with neurological conditions and those who care for them. Submissions should be kept to 600 words and e-mailed to neurologynow@lwwny.com or mailed to 333 Seventh Ave., 19th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

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