

## Tinnitus and Sleep Apnea

I got my first copy of your magazine in 2009, while waiting to be seen by my sleep specialist nurse. I gave a subscription to a close friend of mine whose husband has Alzheimer's disease. She told me she finds your magazine very informative and helpful, as do I.

I just received my February/March 2012 issue a few days ago and read it cover to cover. To my surprise, you had two articles that relate to me personally. I didn't know that tinnitus was a neurologic as well as an auditory problem. My tinnitus is a constant, loud ringing. I think that being on aspirin therapy for a long time to treat my arthritis may have damaged my hearing. For me, the best way to muffle the constant ringing, especially at night, is to use a fan as "white" noise.

The second article I was happy to see was on obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). It was very informative to read how OSA could lead to cognitive impairment. I was diagnosed

CONTINUES ON P. 8

# Neuropathy Awareness Week

Peripheral neuropathy is a 24/7/365 battle for more than 20 million people in the United States. And, until we find better treatments and cures for neuropathy and neuropathic pain, every week is Neuropathy Awareness Week, every day is Neuropathy Awareness Day. Everyone who has or cares about someone with neuropathy has got to be counted as

Neuropathy Awareness Week May 14 - 18, 2012 someone who cares about the issues facing the neuropathy community.

At the recommendation of The Neuropathy Association—since 2005—the third week of May has been designated as

Neuropathy Awareness Week on the federal government's official Calendar of National Health Observances. This year's observance will take place from May 14 to 18. Visit neuropathy.org in the coming weeks for information on Neuropathy Awareness Week events, media opportunities, and other ways to get involved in the fight against neuropathy!

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with sleep apnea in the winter of 2006. My results showed that I stopped breathing 137 times every hour! BPAP therapy made an immediate difference in terms of how I felt during the day.

The only thing your article didn't mention was that with CPAP or BPAP, you can still experience some sleepiness during the day. I take armodafinil (brand name Nuvigil) which takes care of 99 percent of this residual sleepiness.

—Tisha E. Smith Grand Rapids, MI

## **Epilepsy**

I very much enjoyed the article in the February/March 2012 issue of Neurology Now about the responsive neurostimulator (RNS) system for epilepsy ("A Healing Jolt: Reducing Seizures with Brain Stimulation"). However, it incorrectly



# Neuropathy Action Awareness Day

The Neuropathy Action Foundation's sixth annual "Neuropathy Action Awareness Day" will take place on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento, CA. The event will feature talks by top neurologists and an appearance by Jerry Mathers of Leave It to Beaver. Mathers will discuss his experience with neuropathy. Contact 877-512-7262 or info@neuropathyaction.org for more info.

stated that the RNS system is approved in Europe. We are not—we won't submit for European approval until we receive approval from the FDA.

—Martha Morrell, M.D., Fellow of the American Academy of Neurology Clinical professor of neurology, Stanford University Chief Medical Officer, NeuroPace, Inc. Mountain View, CA

THEEDITORRESPONDS: Weappreciate your correction, Dr. Morrell.

### Multiple Sclerosis

The article, "The Cost of MS Drugs" in the December 2011/January 2012 issue of Neurology Now states, "But if the disease progresses to secondary-progressive MS, that person will experience more frequent episodes of illness." This is incorrect: a person with secondary-progressive MS does not experience more frequent flares but rather has a gradual decline in their illness due to the nature of the disease being more degenerative rather than inflammatory.

—Luigi Troiani, CertifiedPhysician-Assistant,MSspecialty University of North Carolina, department of neurology Chapel Hill, NC

#### **Tinnitus**

I was disappointed to see that nothing was mentioned in "The Sounds of Silence" about acupuncture.

I have had tinnitus for more than 20 years. Most doctors that I saw told me I would just have to live with it. The noise was so bad that it gave me terrible nausea. Three years ago I was diagnosed with Ménière's disease, which is an inner ear disorder. In trying to find treatments that would help me now cope with this, my ENT recommended I try acupuncture. I cannot tolerate drugs, so she thought this

might be a good option.

I went for acupuncture to reduce the stress caused by the tinnitus. To my total delight, the acupuncturist decreased my tinnitus from a loud whistle to a tiny noise that I hardly ever hear. I can finally sleep! After five treatments, the noise was 95 percent gone and has remained that way for more than a year.

—Laura Minogue Williston Park, NY

Thank you for the splendid article "The Sounds of Silence" in the February/March 2012 issue of Neurology Now. I first experienced tinnitus over 43 years ago and was told, "You need to learn to live with it!" So glad for articles like this to inform and educate people on this type of condition. I actually thought I was going crazy when it first came on, and yes I've learned to live with it over all of these years....

—Barbara Smith Concord, CA

## Sleep Apnea

At 34 years old, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). My symptoms were fatigue, slurred speech, the sensation of pins and needles running down my arms and legs, trouble with balance, and spasticity.

I was on different types of MS medications for 10 years when my neurologist said that she didn't think I had MS, so I was sent back to different doctors: MS specialists, neurosurgeons, rheumatoid specialists, and an infectious disease doctor (I tested a false positive for Lyme's disease). The infectious disease doctor told me to have a sleep study done. I was diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea and chronic sinusitis.

At the age of 44 years old, I had reconstructive surgery of my sinuses and had my tonsils and adenoids removed. I have so much energy now!

—Sue Bean Connersville, IN