

# Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence Newsletter



## Team Member Spotlight



**Hubert Fernandez, MD**

Dr. Fernandez is a neurologist and Director of the Center for Neurological Restoration in Cleveland Clinic's Neurological Institute.

He primarily sees patients at Cleveland Clinic main campus.

An active and productive researcher, Dr. Fernandez has initiated or participated in over 150 clinical trials and has published his findings in over 300 articles on Parkinson's disease (PD), deep brain stimulation, behavioral and non-motor features of PD, cervical dystonia, blepharospasm and other movement disorders. He has written a dozen books and has published 50 book chapters. He is currently Editor-In-Chief of *Parkinsonism and Related Disorders* and has served on the editorial board of *Movement Disorders* and several other peer-reviewed journals.

Dr. Fernandez received his medical degree in the Philippines. He completed his internship in internal medicine at University of Pennsylvania/Pennsylvania Hospital, his residency in neurology at Boston University Medical Center and his fellowship in movement disorders at Brown University.

### Q&A with Dr. Fernandez

#### **When should neurotoxin administration be considered for a patient?**

Most people think that neurotoxin injections are for cosmetic purposes or to relieve spasticity after a stroke or traumatic brain injury. But in fact, we offer neurotoxin injections quite commonly

to our patients with Parkinson's disease. One indication is to stop excessive drooling, which is commonly experienced by our patients. Another scenario that can benefit from injections is when our patients experience painful spasms and curling of some body parts (such as the foot, leg, neck, trunk or abdomen) when dopamine levels fluctuate between levodopa doses. Injections can provide significant relief, especially for pain.

#### **What outcome can patients expect from receiving neurotoxins?**

At best, they should feel significant improvement in their drooling, or spasms, or pain in the area affected. But it is not going to be 100% better. You need to realize that, pound for pound, botulinum toxin is the world's most powerful biological agent used for medical purposes. Therefore, the delicate part is finding just the right dose to "tame the muscle" but not to paralyze it. I would always recommend for our patients to go to the most experienced injectors.

#### **What comments have patients told you about the impact of neurotoxins on their daily life?**

Sometimes we take for granted how excessive drooling can affect a patient with Parkinson's disease. True, there are "bigger fish to fry," but for someone already suffering from tremors, stiffness, slowness, shuffling gait and constipation, this little bit of relief can mean the world to them. Also, injecting the foot muscles so they do not spasm in the middle of the night and the patient can walk without fear of falling can be life-changing. Imagine being able to sleep soundly at night and feel more confident when walking. Wouldn't that make a big difference?

#### **How has neurotoxin administration changed during your time as a physician?**

The biggest change is that there are now four brands of neurotoxin to choose from, so if a patient does not respond to one, we can try another. More importantly, when there is competition amongst toxin makers, prices are kept at a more reasonable level and services and support are enhanced. And, as you know, practice makes perfect, so the more we use botulinum toxins, the better we become at it and the more indications we discover that benefit our patients. Not so long ago, we only had two indications for neurotoxins. Now there are over a dozen!

### Fun Facts About Dr. Fernandez

*"I'm a huge fan of tennis – both as a player and as an admiring spectator. I am fascinated by the game and how much learning needs to be done to be a decent player. I love that all my efforts in learning physics way back when did not go to waste."*

*"I LOVE food. All kinds of food; with a soft spot for Japanese and French. But I'll eat (almost) anything."*

*"Before the pandemic hit, because of all the meetings and conferences, I was on my way to earning my 3rd million in miles flown at Delta Airlines. Now, it's back to square one."*

## Interested in Parkinson's Disease Research at Cleveland Clinic?

Here are three easy ways to learn more:

1. Ask your doctor/provider.
2. Contact the Center for Neurological Restoration at 216.442.2670 or [cnrresearchreferrals@ccf.org](mailto:cnrresearchreferrals@ccf.org).
3. Visit the Center for Neurological Restoration research website at [clevelandclinic.org/cnrresearch](http://clevelandclinic.org/cnrresearch) or scan the QR code.



## Parkinson's Disease COE Resource Corner

Research indicates that 75% of people with Parkinson's disease do not get their medication on time when staying in the hospital. The Aware in Care Kit, offered by the Parkinson's Foundation, has all of the tools needed to help prevent this from happening as well as other ways to keep you safe.



For more information about the Aware in Care Kit and to order your own (free with an \$8 shipping charge), visit [parkinson.org/resources-support/hospital-care-kits](http://parkinson.org/resources-support/hospital-care-kits) or call the Parkinson's Foundation Helpline at 1.800.4PD.INFO (473.4636).

## Parkinson's Disease Multidisciplinary Clinic in Medina



**Kristin Appleby, MD**

The Parkinson's Disease Multidisciplinary Clinic, led by Kristin Appleby, MD, a neurologist in Cleveland Clinic's Center for Neurological Restoration, offers patients the opportunity to meet with multiple Parkinson's disease therapy specialists in the same afternoon. Patients are scheduled for a four-hour block of appointments, during which they will see speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy providers. These one-time appointments can benefit patients who are newly diagnosed or have never had therapy to establish a well-rounded plan that will be shared with their neurologists as well as those who just need a therapy tune-up. Appointments are available monthly at the Medina Medical Office Building located at Medina Hospital.

*If you interested in scheduling an appointment, call 216.448.4266, option 3.*

## Living Well with PD Tip



**Benjamin Walter, MD**

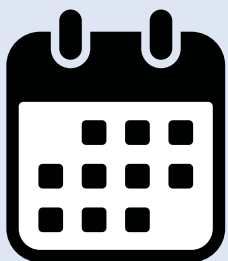
*From Benjamin Walter, MD*

### Expect change, anticipate it and manage it.

One of the biggest challenges in treating and fighting Parkinson's disease (PD) is that the symptoms and response to treatment change over time. Your PD is constantly (but slowly) changing and therefore we must expect that the treatment must change as well. When change is anticipated and managed, there is less worrying. You and your family members and friends are not taken by surprise, and you are able to respond to change with agility and remain in control.

Dr. Walter is a neurologist in Cleveland Clinic's Center for Neurological Restoration.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### September 18 – Pals In Motion 2022

Join InMotion for a fun race and fitness event at Beachwood High School. This event will help InMotion fund life-changing physical wellness, creative movement, arts, education, support and research programs for the northeast Ohio Parkinson's community.

*For more information, visit [beinmotion.org/pals-in-motion](http://beinmotion.org/pals-in-motion).*

### November 6 – Big Band Brunch

People with Parkinson's disease and their families are invited to an afternoon of great food, friendship and music at Landerhaven. Experience the excitement of a 12-piece band playing all the popular hits from the Big Band era to today. This event is sponsored by the Ohio Parkinson Foundation, Northeast Region and Come Dance With Me.

*For more information, visit [ohparkinson.com/events](http://ohparkinson.com/events).*