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Shoulder pain and lumbar pain, two typical markers to identify Parkinson's disease

Pietro Marano¹ and Seminara M²

¹IRCCS Oasi Maria SS., Italy

²Cannizzaro Hospital, Italy

In Parkinson's disease, shoulder pain as well as low back pain are the red flags that identify the pathology. In addition to being identified with one of the pure motor symptoms, it is a disorder that, in addition to the initial pain, worsens over time, interferes with the daily life activities of these patients, compromising their autonomy. Dressing, combing and eating, walking, bending over on the trunk, are activities that create problems that are not only painful but also motor, with severe functional limitations, which immediately require the intervention of the care giver, with serious repercussions on the patient's life. Stamey et al. (2008) claims that 11% of patients experience scapulo-humeral pain. The causes seem to be reminiscent of postural phenomena, reduction of ROM with changes in joint dynamics. Furthermore, it should be noted that the pain threshold in parkinsonians is lower than in healthy subjects (Gerdelat-Mas et al. 2007). Regarding lower back pain, it is useful to remember the role played by the multifidus muscle which plays a fundamental role in supporting the spine, especially the lumbar spine and in the pain that this alteration causes. Very high percentages of Parkinsonian patients begin their pathology with lumbar pain, which precedes the onset of the pivotal symptoms by three years that then lead to the diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. Often, due to the scarce collaboration that exists between medical specialists, physical, pharmacological and sometimes even surgical treatments are carried out completely out of place and useless, when it would be much easier to establish a collaboration that could also anticipate a diagnosis and facilitate therapy.

Recent Publications

1. Tessitore, A., Marano, P., Modugno, N. et al. Caregiver burden and its related factors in advanced Parkinson's disease: data from the PREDICT study. *J Neurol* 265, 1124–1137 (2018).
2. Mariachiara Sensi, et al., Which patients discontinue? Issues on Levodopa/carbidopa intestinal gel treatment: Italian multicentre survey of 905 patients with long-term follow-up, *Parkinsonism & Related Disorders*, Volume 38, 2017, Pages 90-92
3. Lopiano, L., Modugno, N., Marano, P. et al. Motor outcomes in patients with advanced Parkinson's disease treated with levodopa/carbidopa intestinal gel in Italy: an interim analysis from the GREENFIELD observational study. *Neurol Sci* 37, 1785–1792 (2016).

pmarano@oasi.en.it