



Richard Mattson, MD   Scott Mintzer, MD   James Wheless, MD   Joyce Cramer



presents a Professional Roundtable

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**Tolerability of Antiepileptic Drugs in Children, Adults, Elderly**

**JUST MY OPINION: THOUGHTS FROM EPILEPSY.COM EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS**



**Medication Management**

Joyce Cramer  
President, Epilepsy Therapy Project  
Associate Research Scientist, Yale University School of Medicine

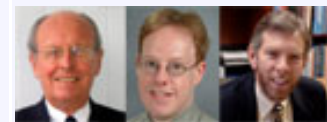
Do you take your medication the way you expect your patients to take theirs? Doctors are notoriously unreliable in following medical instructions, particularly taking medication. Healthcare professionals have the knowledge to understand the importance of preventive and symptomatic treatment; they know what health behaviors should be accomplished regularly (e.g., diet, exercise, medication); they understand the mechanisms of action and pharmacology of medications; they have the intelligence to plan and the self-regimentation to maintain a pattern of personal healthcare. True, but unrelated to actual behaviors. Of course, some healthcare professionals do follow the advice they give to patients, but not all. The Doctors' Health Study revealed that a large proportion of doctors who volunteered for the study were not eligible for randomization because they were so poorly compliant with the dosing during the placebo run-in phase.

Kastrissios et al.<sup>1</sup> asked medical students to take Tic Tac candy pills for two weeks, in a BID or TID regimen. They discovered that only 2/3 of "doses" were taken as agreed, 47% of doses were taken at the prescribed frequency (BID or TID), and 29% were taken at the prescribed intervals (hours apart). The Physicians' Health Study II was designed to assess the efficacy of vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, and a multivitamin in reducing cardiovascular risk. Doctors who enrolled were sent calendar packs containing placebos of all four of the study drugs. Of the 11,128 willing to participate, only 7,001 (63%) took the pills regularly during the baseline (placebo run-in phase) and said they wanted to continue with the study<sup>2</sup>.

I wrote an article for [www.epilepsy.com](http://www.epilepsy.com) geared toward patients called: "The Titanic Impact of Medication Compliance on Epilepsy"<sup>3</sup> to explain that seizures may be related to missed doses, inadequate scheduling, and other remediable factors. Forgetfulness remains the main reason people report for missed doses, not unexpected for people commonly having memory difficulties. Rather than expecting patients to accommodate to know how to take their medication, or to use dosing schedules that are not convenient, try to adjust the medication to what the patient will be able to accomplish.

**NEW** Webcasts Featuring Professional Roundtables on:

**Tolerability of AEDs in Children, Adults, Elderly** with guests Dr. Richard Mattson, Dr. Scott Mintzer, and Dr. James Wheless.



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**Cognition Across the Lifespan: Antiepileptic Drugs, Epilepsy, or Both?** with guests Dr. Bruce Hermann, Dr. Kimford Meador, and Dr. William Gaillard.



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Webcasts hosted by Joyce Cramer, President, Epilepsy Therapy Project.

Of course, it's difficult to counsel patients on medication management unless you know a few methods to impart to patients. Watch for a new CME program next month with tips on how to teach patients approaches to taking their (essential) antiepileptic drugs.

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## **Epilepsy.com/Professionals Announcements from Joseph I. Sirven, MD, Editor-in-Chief**

First of all we want to acknowledge and congratulate the Epilepsy Research Foundation New Therapy Grant Awardees. These Grants are what the Epilepsy Therapy Project are all about.

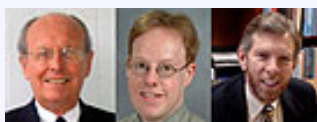
### **July 2009: Epilepsy Research Foundation New Therapy Grant Awards**

#### **Grant: Safety Profile of the Subdural Hybrid Neuroprosthesis for Focal Epilepsy New York University School of Medicine New York, NY**

Ludvig Nandor, MD, PhD, Associate professor at the New York University School of Medicine received a grant to determine the safety of a new medical device, the subdural Hybrid Neuroprosthesis, for the treatment of drug resistant, surgically untreatable focal epilepsies. The device will deliver muscimol or other seizure-controlling drugs directly into the cortical seizure focus via the subdural space to prevent seizures without side-effects. The safety of this emerging epilepsy therapy will be tested in monkeys so that the device can be implanted in the same way as in humans, and generated data can be relevant to human conditions.

#### **Grant: Clinical EEG Acquisition Systems with Online Fast Ripple Detection Columbia University Medical Center New York, NY**

Catherine Schevon, MD, Assistant Professor at Columbia University Medical Center received a grant to develop a practical intracranial EEG recording system that will bring the additional information that can be gained from evaluation of high frequencies into clinical practice, thus increasing the efficacy of the current surgical treatment of medically refractory partial epilepsy. By increasing the specificity of the identification of the epileptogenic region, seizure outcomes can be improved while the area of brain that must be removed is minimized. In addition, a biomarker that is reliably present in interictal recordings could obviate the need for prolonged implantation. This technology may even make possible single-stage surgical procedures for neocortical epilepsy syndromes, a therapy which currently is not available to most patients with medically refractory epilepsy.



**Check out this month's featured online roundtable: [Tolerability of Antiepileptic Drugs in Children, Adults, Elderly](#) with guests Dr. Richard Mattson, Dr. Scott Mintzer and Dr. James Wheless, and hosted by Joyce Cramer, President, Epilepsy Therapy Project.**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Upcoming epilepsy-related Hallway Conversations, conferences, symposia, and events include:

**September 14, 2009  
Hallway Conversations:  
Interview with Dr. Katherine Noe**  
Epilepsy Talk Radio

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**September 17, 2009  
Hallway Conversations:  
Interview with Dr. Hemant  
Kudrimoti**  
Epilepsy Talk Radio

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**September 25, 2009  
Hallway Conversations:  
Interview with Dr. Steve Chung**  
Epilepsy Talk Radio

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Please Join us for our September offerings on *Epilepsy.Com/Professionals*. During this month, we begin a special series of Hallway Conversations relating to the 22nd Annual Arizona Epilepsy Update which is scheduled for November 6, 2009. As part of the symposium, we will be highlighting the various talks by speakers at the conference. This month, **Dr. Hemant Kudrimoti** from the University of Arizona will be discussing Generic Antiseizure Medications and **Dr. Steven Chung** from the Barrow Neurological Institute will be talking about New Antiseizure Medications and how to choose between them? Lastly, **Dr. Katherine Noe** will be discussing Women's Issues and Epilepsy. We hope that you join us for these Hallway Conversations and take full advantage of all of our offerings.

**Joseph Sirven, M.D.**

<sup>1</sup> Kastrissios H, Flowers NT, Blaschke T0046. Introducing medical students to medication noncompliance. Clin Pharmacol Therap, 1996; 59, 577-582.

<sup>2</sup> <http://phs.bwh.harvard.edu/phs2.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy/compliance/titanic>

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

**epilepsy.com/Professionals** is building a resource section of useful practice tools for the professional community. If you have a form, patient information sheet, or other useful handout for patients with epilepsy, and you'd like to share it with thousands of your colleagues by adding it to the **resource section of [epilepsy.com/professionals](http://www.epilepsy.com/professionals)**, please email it to [info@epilepsytherapyproject.org](mailto:info@epilepsytherapyproject.org) or fax it to (540) 687-8066, and we'll take it from there. Thanks!!

## ABOUT THE EPILEPSY THERAPY PROJECT



**Epilepsy Therapy Project**, the sponsor of *epilepsy.com*, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance new treatments for people living with epilepsy. ETP helps scientists develop new drugs and brain stimulators to treat epilepsy. The goal is to fast-track great ideas into treatments to reach people as fast as possible. Your donations go directly toward development of new treatments as well as maintain *epilepsy.com*. Read more about the **Epilepsy Therapy Project**.

The Epilepsy Therapy Project is also the sponsor of *epilepsy.com* and *epilepsy.com/professionals*. We are working to build *epilepsy.com/professionals* into the most comprehensive source of information, tools, and interchange available online for patients, practicing neurologists, and for the research and therapy development community.

To learn more about our programs, please visit us at: [www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy\\_therapy\\_project](http://www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy_therapy_project).



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