

**Progress Against Parkinson's Disease**

(NAPS)—More than one million people in the U.S. and more than four million worldwide suffer from Parkinson's Disease, a chronic progressive disorder of the nervous system. As the baby boomers age, this number is expected to grow.

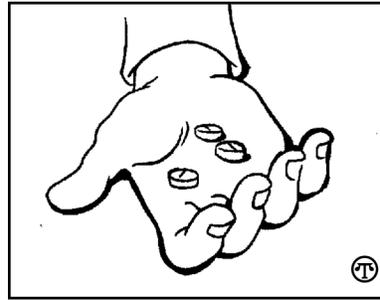
Now, a new survey shows that in addition to its established clinical benefits, a recently introduced medicine to treat the disorder called entacapone (Comtan®), can significantly improve the mood and overall sense of well-being of those with the disease.

"Doctors often ask themselves if add-on drug therapies actually improve the quality of life of Parkinson's patients," said Dr. Jean Hubble, Director, of the Madden-National Parkinson Foundation Center of Excellence at Ohio State University and chairperson of the steering committee for this initiative. "This survey showed that by adding entacapone to levodopa/carbidopa, the current gold standard of therapy, we are indeed accomplishing just that."

The survey, called the Response Initiative Program, involved 1,168 patients who were asked about their quality of life at baseline and again after 30 days of treatment with entacapone plus levodopa/carbidopa therapy. The survey utilized a validated Parkinson's Disease Questionnaire called PDQ-8.

After 30 days of treatment with entacapone plus levodopa/carbidopa, the total mean PDQ-8 score showed a significant improvement. In addition, there was a statistically significant improvement in each of the eight individual items surveyed, including difficulty getting around, difficulty getting dressed and feelings of depression. The most improvement was seen in ease of getting around, where patients had indicated the greatest impairment at baseline.

Patients also reported significant improvements in compliance with taking their Parkinson's Disease medication, as well as in mood, with more than twice as



**A recently introduced medication may help people with Parkinson's disease do better on their old medication.**

many patients reporting their mood was better or much better after 30 days. In addition, patients indicated that they experienced significant decreases in feelings of depression versus at baseline.

A full discussion of these results was published as a supplement to the October 2000 issue of *Neurology Reviews*.

Comtan belongs to a new therapeutic class called COMT inhibitors that block the COMT enzyme and thus reduce the breakdown of levodopa before it reaches the brain. The addition of a COMT inhibitor to the treatment regimen ensures efficient use of levodopa/carbidopa, resulting in greater and more sustained availability of levodopa for brain entry and extending the positive effect of each levodopa dose. Under a licensing agreement with Orion Corporation in Finland, Comtan is marketed in the U.S. by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation.

Comtan is generally well tolerated and does not require any specific safety monitoring. The most commonly reported side effects were dyskinesia, nausea, diarrhea, abdominal pain and urine discoloration. Dopaminergic side effects like dyskinesia often improved after adjustment of the levodopa dosage.

To learn more about Parkinson's Disease and Comtan (including full prescribing information) visit the Comtan Web site at [www.comtan.com](http://www.comtan.com).