

Tips given on coping with Parkinson's disease

With the only program of its kind being presented in the metro Detroit area, Health Development Network, a department of Botsford General Hospital, will conduct a comprehensive seven-week program for people with Parkinson's disease and for the people who take care of them, known as "care partners."

"Living With and Understanding Parkinson's" is being presented as part of National Parkinson's Awareness Month in April.

The program focuses on a positive approach to coping with the disease. Participants will have the opportunity to learn more about Parkinson's from noted experts and medical professionals who will discuss symptoms and treatments, the use of medication, relaxation techniques, nutrition and physical therapy.

They will also have a chance to meet others, like Gina Bedrosian, whose 30 years of coping with Parkinson's is a motivating story.

"Living With and Understanding Parkinson's" is co-sponsored by the Michigan Parkinson Foundation.

The program begins with an overview on Tuesday, April 5 and runs for seven consecutive Wednesdays beginning April 6 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the Botsford Center for Health Improvement, 39750 Grand River Avenue, Novi. The cost is \$35 per person or couple. To register, or for more information, call (810) 477-6100.

Parkinson's disease strikes most people than multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and Lou Gehrig's disease combined. Parkinson's disease sometimes has been called "the happy disease" because of the Charlie Chaplin-like shuffling and stooped posture of some people diagnosed with the disease.

Parkinson's, with more than 1 million victims, gradually steals control of the part of the nervous system that governs movement,

posture, balance and walking. Left undiagnosed and untreated, the physical impact of Parkinson's frequently leads to depression.

Parkinson's affects 35,000 people in Michigan and about 1 percent of the population over age 60 nationally. It counts such people as Harry Truman and the Rev. Billy Graham among its victims.

Parkinson's is not hereditary and not preventable. It can turn a lively, engaged, intelligent person

into someone frustrated and depressed who at times is totally dependent on others for care. The disease can take a toll on family members as well.

Health Development Network is a department of Botsford General Hospital offering health and wellness education and programs for the community and business.

Botsford General Hospital is a 336-bed osteopathic teaching hospital affiliated with the Michigan State College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Workshops deal with needs for many types of families

The majority of families in the United States today are single-parent and blended families, according to Wesley Bran, director of the Samaritan Counseling Center in Farmington Hills.

More than ever before, the American family is facing divorce, single-parenthood, troubled teenagers and the care of aging parents. The center will be sponsoring a series of afternoon seminars

Sunday, April 17, to help family members in different situations learn to cope with their circumstances.

Workshops will cover everything from dealing with teenagers, divorce and single-parenthood to experiencing the death of a spouse. There's even a workshop for "intact" or two-parent families.

Beginning at 2 p.m., Herbert

Anderson will kick off the afternoon workshops with a keynote address focusing on how Christian faith can help families cope with different forms of family. It will also help define what a Christian family is.

"The restoration of the two-parent family isn't necessarily the answer," he said. "There have always been, and always will be, different forms of family."

At 3 p.m., families will attend various workshops. The sessions will conclude with a short presentation from 4:30-5 p.m. The workshops will focus on the different stages families encounter.

The workshops are part of the center's efforts to celebrate 1994, which has been named the Year of the Family by the United Nations. The workshops will be held in an open forum style. An ex-

change between participants and workshop leaders will be encouraged.

The workshops will cover the following topics: the intact family, letting go, coping with teens, divorce; breaking up is hard to do, the single parent family, the sandwich generation, when your family is only you, aging and the loss of family and caring for the caregiver.

The April workshops will be from 2-5 p.m. at the Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 29886 West 11 Mile Road, west of Middlebelt in Farmington Hills.

Pre-registration is \$10 for adults, \$15 for one adult and children and \$25 for families. Registration fees will be an additional \$2 at the door. For more information call 474-4701.

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