

**What's Hot in Parkinson's Disease?
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**Glutathione Fails to Demonstrate Significant Improvement in
Parkinson's Disease Symptoms in a Recently Published Trial**

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Dr. Robert Hauser and colleagues at the National Parkinson Foundation (NPF) Center of Excellence at the University of South Florida recently put a highly controversial drug of interest in Parkinson's disease to the test. They carefully performed the first randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial of intravenous glutathione therapy in twenty one Parkinson's disease patients. The therapy was well tolerated but there was no significant improvement in any outcome variable.

The National Parkinson Foundation has for many years received a large number of information requests on whether intravenous glutathione therapy works in any positive way for Parkinson's disease. Glutathione acts as an antioxidant, and has been found to be reduced in the brains of patients with Parkinson's disease. Some doctors have chosen to offer a fee for infusion of glutathione service. It is important for patients to be aware of several important facts about glutathione therapy: first, there is a lack of evidence it actually works; second, the therapy requires an intravenous line which has both short and long term risks; and finally, insurance does not cover the costs of this therapy.

There is a clear message for patients and families in the Parkinson's disease community regarding this drug. At this time there exists no compelling evidence that intravenous glutathione results in any meaningful clinical improvement in Parkinson's disease patients. Patients should beware of any medical practices offering a fee for glutathione treatment of Parkinson's disease.

The Hauser article appeared in the journal, *Movement Disorders*:

Hauser RA, Lyons KE, McClain T, Carter S, Perlmutter D. *Mov Disord*. Randomized, double-blind, pilot evaluation of intravenous glutathione in Parkinson's disease. 2009 May 15;24(7):979-83.

*A letter to the editor of *Movement Disorders* concerning the appropriate interpretation of the results for patients has been submitted by Dr.'s Jankovic (Baylor), Lang (Toronto Western), and Okun (University of Florida)