Recognition and Treatment of Non-Motor Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease

It is estimated that over 1,000,000 people in the United States are affected by Parkinson's disease (PD) with approximately 50,000 to 60,000 new cases diagnosed each year. PD is a neurodegenerative disorder with the cardinal symptoms of bradykinesia, rigidity and tremor as well as postural instability in the later stages of the disease. Treatment has traditionally focused on the motor symptoms; however, it has been increasingly recognized that non-motor symptoms are under-recognized, under-treated and have a significant impact on both function and quality of life. The diagnosis and treatment of non-motor symptoms in PD can present numerous challenges to clinicians and require careful consideration of the history and symptomatology of each individual patient.