

Ambulatory Assessment of Tremor



The Actiwatch® Neurologica from Cambridge Neurotechnology Ltd. is a small, compact and lightweight wrist-worn device which distinguishes tremor from other movements as a patient goes about his daily life. By logging data continuously over a period of days, all aspects of tremor behaviour can be characterised accurately over time in terms of its intensity, duration and hence the degree of disablement it causes. In a study of the movements of Parkinson's patients with average disability rating compared with normal subjects the results for this type of tremor correlated well with the UPDRS for tremor. Tremor duration showed a .85 correlation, tremor intensity showed a .68 correlation and a composite tremor score showed a .94 correlation. Dyskinesias are not detected.

The Actiwatch® range is widely used by many respected medical institutes in Europe and the USA and numerous studies into a variety of disorders have been done using these products.

For more information contact Cambridge Neurotechnology Ltd, Tel. 01480 831223, E-mail: admin@camntech.co.uk

New treatment for Parkinson's disease

Stalevo®, a new treatment advance for patients with Parkinson's disease, has been launched by Orion Pharma in the UK.

Stalevo® is the first new levodopa based treatment in over ten years and will be used for patients who develop the common symptoms of Parkinson's disease due to a shortening of their levodopa dose effectiveness. A combination of levodopa, carbidopa and entacapone, the enzyme-blocking compounds in Stalevo® – carbidopa and entacapone – enhance the therapeutic benefits of levodopa.

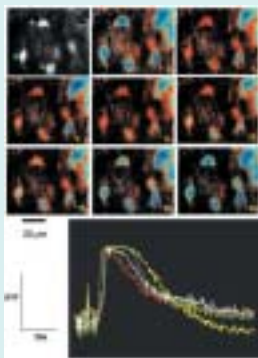
How to combat the shortening of levodopa dose effectiveness has been a problem for doctors since the introduction of levodopa over forty years ago. Medical research has focused on how to extend the benefits of levodopa - the 'gold standard' in the treatment of Parkinson's disease - while using the least amount of medication possible.

With the introduction of Stalevo® doctors may now be able to alleviate the symptoms of Parkinson's disease and optimise the dose effectiveness of levodopa.

For more information contact Orion Pharma on Tel. 01635 520300, or use ACNR's reader enquiry service.



Olympus working for Neuroscience



Arthur Butt and Greg James, Centre for Neuroscience Research at GKT Guy's Campus, King's College, London, are looking at the role of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) in glial calcium signalling using an Olympus BX51WI microscope. A single application of ATP, a neurotransmitter in the brain, can be seen to produce calcium signalling in glial cells of the isolated optic nerve of adult rats.

To observe this, the researchers loaded the nerve with the calcium sensitive dye Fura-2 and excited it at 340:380 nm using a Cairn Optoscan. The nerve was viewed using the Olympus microscope equipped with a high NA (0.95) 20x single position water immersion objective and using an intermediate magnification changer. Images were captured via an intensified CCD camera and sequences analysed using Axon Imaging Workbench software.

The individual glial cell bodies are visible and the changes in fluorescence intensity from blue to red are a measure of increase in cytosolic calcium concentration. The images are taken at increasing time intervals after application of ATP and the traces represent the response of the 4 cells identified in the upper left image. The results show that ATP evokes calcium elevations in optic nerve glia

in situ, supporting a role for this neurotransmitter in glial calcium signalling.

For more information Tel. Microscope Marketing Manager on 020 7250 0179, E-mail: microscope@olympus.co.uk

NICE recommends newer AEDs for adults with epilepsy

NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) has recommended that newer antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) can be used in the management of adults with epilepsy.

UCB Pharma, which makes the newer AED, Keppra (levetiracetam), welcomed the decision as excellent news for patients who seek the opportunity for significant seizure control with an AED that has a favourable tolerability profile and no known interactions with other AEDs or other drugs, including oral contraceptives.

The standard therapy in the management of epilepsy has traditionally been older drugs such as carbamazepine and sodium valproate, which are widely regarded to be less well tolerated than the newer products. In its guidance, NICE has recommended that the newer AEDs can be used, within their licensed indications, in addition to the older drugs. NICE recommends that they are particularly appropriate in patients who have not benefited from the older drugs, who have problems associated with side-effects, interactions or contraindications with older AEDs, and in women of childbearing age.

For more information see http://www.nice.org.uk/pdf/Epilepsy_ult_FAD.pdf For information about Keppra Tel. UCB Pharma on 01923 211811.

New scanners in Bristol

The Bristol Royal Infirmary has expanded its Computed Tomography service with the acquisition of a new SOMATOM Sensation16 from Siemens. The new 16 slice CT Scanner will improve both the speed and resolution of head and abdominal imaging.

The Bristol Children's Hospital has expanded its service with the purchase of a new MAGNETOM Symphony.

The United Bristol Healthcare Trust purchased the new MRI scanner with a significant charitable donation on behalf of the Bristol Children's Hospital. The MAGNETOM Symphony is an ideal choice for specialist paediatric work as the design of the flared end short bore magnet is very child friendly. The introduction of the Siemens Scanner will allow the hospital to get the highest quality and resolution images in a very short time with minimal intervention with the patient during the examination.

For more information contact Mike Bell on Tel. 01344 396317.



Pictured at the handover of the SOMATOM Sensation 16 slice CT scanner at Bristol are Vince Golledge, Siemens Medical Solutions and Martin Snow, the CT Superintendent Radiographer.