

Enjoying The Ride: The Road To Living Well With Movement Disorders

(NAPSA)—Innovative technology for the treatment of Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders was recently implanted for the 100,000th time worldwide, inspiring people like longtime fitness trainer Roy Roden to pursue previously impossible goals.

Roden has always had an adventurous spirit, and the 55-year-old and his wife Lynn enjoy participating in many interesting outdoor activities together. This month, Roden and his wife embarked on their most challenging journey together yet—a 4,500-mile cross-country bike ride to raise awareness and research funds for Parkinson's disease.

Just a few months ago, these activities would have been unmanageable for Roden, who is one of the more than 1 million Americans living with Parkinson's.

Diagnosed in 2008, he began experiencing difficulty over time with basic tasks, such as eating and getting dressed. Each day, he was taking 10 different medications, and their effectiveness was waning.

"It was crazy—I was taking some medications purely to control the symptoms from other medications," Roden said.

Last July, Roden made the decision with his neurologist and family to pursue Medtronic Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) therapy, during which a small, pacemaker-like device sends electronic stimulation to a specific area of the brain that controls movement. The stimulation suppresses the unwanted motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease. The device is placed under the skin in the chest, and very thin wires connect the device to the brain to enable the electrical stimulation to reach the source of symptoms.

Roden says the tremors he experienced before the surgery have decreased thanks to Medtronic DBS therapy.

"DBS therapy has given me things I never would've had without it. I didn't want to be looking in the mirror in 15 years, wishing I had done the surgery," he said.

Roden added that when a cure is discovered for the disease, he will be ready. "The therapy is reversible, so when they find a cure, my doctor can just take the device out."

Medtronic DBS therapy can reduce several motor symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease, including stiffness or inflexibility of the limbs or joints; slow-



Medical technology has allowed one man with Parkinson's disease to take an epic bicycle journey.

ness/absence of movement; and involuntary, rhythmic shaking of a limb, the head, or the entire body. Results with the therapy vary; not every individual will receive the same benefits or experience the same complications. Patients should discuss potential risks and benefits of DBS with their physician. Medtronic DBS therapy is the only FDA-approved DBS therapy in the United States for Parkinson's disease, as well as essential tremor and dystonia (through a Humanitarian Device Exemption).

"DBS therapy has harnessed advanced technology to meet the varied needs of patients and enabled them in many cases to improve their ability to live well with movement disorders," said Bruno V. Gallo, M.D., Roy's neurologist and Director of Intraoperative Neurophysiology & DBS at the University of Miami's Department of Neurology.

That is certainly true for Roden. Feeling healthy and strong, his mission is to educate people who have Parkinson's about their options for managing their disease. Roy, his wife and brother-in-law are currently on their 3.5-month-long bike ride, which started in Seattle and will end in South Florida, and are making frequent stops to speak to community groups and raise funds for Parkinson's research.

"People's amazing response to what we're doing has restored my faith in humanity," he said.

Roden sees his ability to bike cross-country as a true gift.

"DBS therapy has opened a door for me. It's been a great ride so far."

Learn More

For further facts about Medtronic DBS Therapy, go to www.knowbeforeyouneed.com or follow Roden's journey at www.pdchallenge.com.