

PodiatryToday

Podiatry Today

May 2011

"Can A Medical Food Improve Sensation In Patients With DPN?"

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<http://www.podiatrytoday.com/may-2011?page=1>

A new study in *Reviews in Neurological Disorders* notes that patients with diabetic neuropathy may achieve improved cutaneous sensation by taking a combination of L-methylfolate, methylcobalamin and pyridoxal 5'-phosphate (Metanx, PamLab).

Researchers studied 20 patients with type 2 diabetes who took Metanx twice a day for four weeks and then once a day for 48 more weeks. The study says patients experienced statistically significant improvements in tactile and discriminatory static testing at the left and right great toe and in the heel. Authors noted the greatest improvement occurred between baseline and one year of treatment.

The combination of L-methylfolate, methylcobalamin and pyridoxal 5'-phosphate provides patients with the benefits of increased nitric oxide production and increased flow mediated dilation, according to lead study author Mackie Walker, Jr., DPM. He says the supplement improves endothelial function, addressing the postulated underlying pathophysiology of diabetic peripheral neuropathy.

When one considers the true cost of the symptomatic treatment medication regimes, such as pregabalin (Lyrica, Pfizer) and duloxetine (Cymbalta, Eli Lilly), Dr. Walker says Metanx is very affordable.

"Since diabetic peripheral neuropathy is the leading cause of amputation, the opportunity to reverse or even slow down the progression of this process is of tremendous benefit to the cost burden of diabetic peripheral neuropathy to the healthcare system overall," says Dr. Walker, who practices in the Podiatry Division at Carolina Musculoskeletal Institute in Aiken, S.C.

Dr. Walker says patients tolerate Metanx as well as placebo. "Of the literally thousands of prescriptions I have written for Metanx, I can count on one hand the number of patients who could not tolerate it," he adds.