



Chapter Meeting, Berkeley Heights October 15, 2017

Our Fall chapter meeting on October 15, 2017, was held at the Summit Medical Group facility, Lawrence Pavilion, in Berkeley Heights. Dr. Jed Kwartler, otologist and neurotologist with SMG, was present at the beginning of the meeting to welcome everyone to the facility and to introduce our speaker, Dina Leyden, PT. Dina is also a member of SMG and has special certification in vestibular rehabilitation. Her topic for the day was “Acoustic Neuroma and Balance Issues.” Twenty-seven acoustic neuroma patients and caregivers were in attendance.

This was a really great meeting. Both the speaker and attendees were in top form. Dina began by reviewing briefly how the normal balance system works. The importance



of the VOR, vestibular-ocular-reflex, was explained clearly. She then began to give examples of balance issues, which resulted in an outpouring of questions and descriptions of personal experiences from the audience. We heard about, and Dina commented on: age as well as AN as a factor in balance; the discomfort and risks of ‘over-stimulating’ environments (as in Walmart or Costco); the balance value of a cane, shopping cart, or husband; the value of sit-stand and demi-squat balance stabilization exercises, as

demonstrated; the importance of our brain’s plasticity in correcting imbalance with the help of vestibular therapy; how stress and anxiety affect balance adversely; how quick motions can be problematic for ‘motion-intolerant’ persons; that acupuncture can help in some cases, but copper bands, not likely; how basic yoga and tai chi are helpful; the importance for balance of good footwear and good vision; the danger of walking in the dark on uneven surfaces; how sitting on the edge of the bed for a minute or two before getting up in the morning is a good idea; and much more.

Dina ended the meeting by giving brief sample lessons in yoga and meditation. She received a good round of applause for an overall wonderful and helpful presentation.