

Parkinson Disease: Planning for the Future



It may take many years for the symptoms of Parkinson disease to become severe. But it's important to plan now for the changes that will come. Key areas to focus on include budgeting for medical, household, and long-term care expenses. You should also talk with your family about the type of care you may need in the future.

Discuss legal and financial issues

Financial and legal planning is always a good idea. But planning is even more key now. What type of care is covered by your insurance? Who will handle finances if you're no longer able to make decisions? These issues can often be complex. So, you may wish to get advice from professionals. These include financial planners, insurance agents, social workers, and estate-planning attorneys.

Advance directives and living wills

These documents spell out the kinds of medical treatment you do—or don't—want in the future. Keep a copy of these papers with your medical records. Also make sure your family knows about your wishes.

Durable power of attorney

This document transfers financial and legal power to a family member or other person who can make decisions in your best interest. It can become effective right away or only under conditions you specify.

Dementia is a possibility

People with Parkinson disease have an increased risk of developing dementia. This is a condition that makes it harder to remember, reason, and communicate. It also requires a much greater level of care. So get started on long-term legal and financial planning as soon as possible. Settling important issues now can help you and your loved ones feel more secure about the future.

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