

Parkinson Disease: Understanding Your Medicines



Medicines are key to treating Parkinson disease. You may be given one or more medicines. Your healthcare provider will determine the best medicine for you. They will look at many things before choosing a medicine or medicines for you. Some of these things include:

- Your symptoms
- Other health issues you have
- The medicines used to treat those other health issues
- Your age

Be sure you know the names of your medicines. Know when and how to take them. Keep a list of your current medicines on your smartphone and a copy in your wallet. Ask your healthcare provider what side effects you might have. Also, ask if you should not eat certain foods. If you drink, ask if it's OK to drink alcohol. Never share your medicines with another person. Some over-the-counter medicines may interact with your Parkinson medicines. Talk with your provider about herbal supplements or OTC medicines before using them.

Types of medicines	Examples	How they help
levodopa combined with carbidopa	carbidopa-levodopa	Levodopa replaces missing dopamine. Carbidopa helps levodopa enter the brain with fewer side effects.
dopamine agonists	pramipexole, bromocriptine, ropinirole, and rotigotine	Act the same way dopamine works in the brain
MAO-B inhibitors	selegiline, rasagiline	Help dopamine work longer
COMT inhibitors	entacapone, combination of carbidopa, levodopa, and entacapone	Taken with levodopa; helps dopamine enter the brain and work longer
NMDA antagonists	amantadine	Reduce involuntary movements and tremors
anticholinergics	trihexyphenidyl, benzotropine	Reduce tremors

*This chart is not a complete list of medicines used to treat Parkinson disease. It does not include side effects. It does not include how these interact with other medicines. Only a healthcare provider can recommend or prescribe these medicines.

The list of medicines does not include medicines that may treat other symptoms of Parkinson disease. These include depression, psychosis, and urinary symptoms. Talk with your pharmacist if you have questions about medicines or how they interact with other medicines.

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