

Common Symptoms of Parkinson Disease



Parkinson disease is caused by a loss of a chemical in your brain needed to help control movement and balance. For reasons that aren't clear, cells that make this brain chemical stop working. This causes symptoms. This sheet tells you more about the symptoms of Parkinson disease.

How symptoms may affect you

Parkinson disease symptoms vary by person. You may have many severe symptoms. Or you may have a few mild ones. Your symptoms may affect 1 side or both sides of your body. Also, your symptoms may change over time. And you may have different symptoms at different stages. Your symptoms may also get worse as your disease progresses.

Symptoms that affect movement and balance

These can include:

- **Tremor (shaking).** This is a very common symptom. Most often, a hand or arm shakes on one side or both sides of the body. Tremor may also affect other areas of the body, such as a leg, a foot, or the chin. Shaking may lessen when the affected part is used. It may worsen when at rest.
- **Rigidity (stiff or tight muscles).** This happens because the muscles don't get the signal to relax. Rigidity may cause muscle pain and cramping. It may also cause a stooped posture.
- **Problems with balance and coordination.** This can affect how well you stand and move. This can also increase your risk for falls.



Other symptoms

Other symptoms of Parkinson disease include speaking too softly and in a monotone voice, writing that gets shaky and smaller across the page, and trouble swallowing. They also include constipation, oily skin, and changes in blood pressure. Memory loss and other problems with thinking can occur later in the disease progression. Slow movement (bradykinesia) can also occur. This can cause problems with actions, such as getting out of chairs and beds. Walking may be limited to short, shuffling steps. You may feel frozen, or unable to move. Blinking, facial expressions, swinging of your arms when walking, and other unconscious movements are also slowed down. Some people may have problems with their urination or feel depressed.

Parkinson disease has no cure. But certain medicines and therapies may help manage many of its symptoms. Certain types of exercise can also help with maintaining functional abilities. Talk with your provider about the best approach to managing your symptoms.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.