

BRAIN BOOSTER

BY FUSION

PARKINSONS



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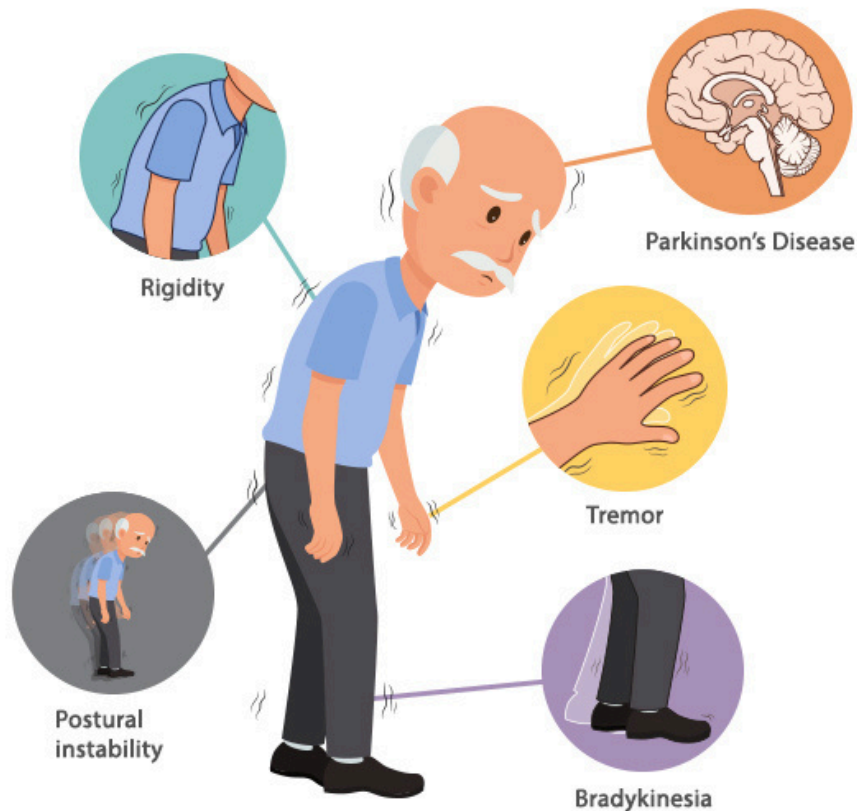


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PARKINSONS DISEASE



Parkinson's Disease (PD) is a progressive neurological disorder that affects movement. While there is no cure, there are various treatment options aimed at managing symptoms, improving quality of life, and slowing disease progression. Management involves a combination of medication, physical therapy, lifestyle changes, and sometimes (although rarely) surgical interventions.

The five stages of Parkinson's:



1



Mild symptoms, such as mild tremors and difficulty walking.

2



Symptoms worsen, affecting both sides of the body.

3



Balance and coordination are affected, increasing the risk of falls.

4



Simple tasks become challenging.

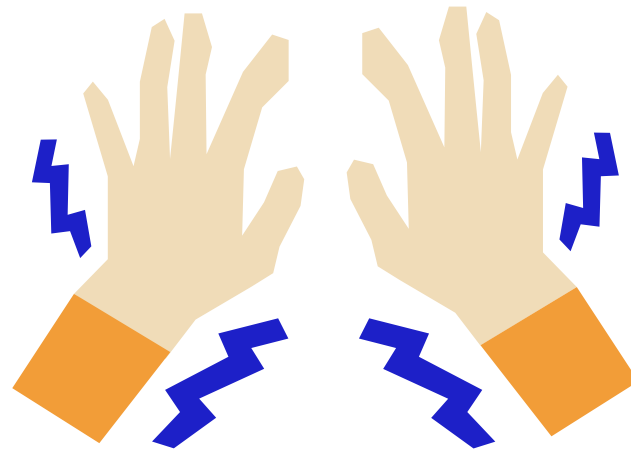
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The most severe stage, with significant stiffness and disability.

What is Parkinson's Disease?

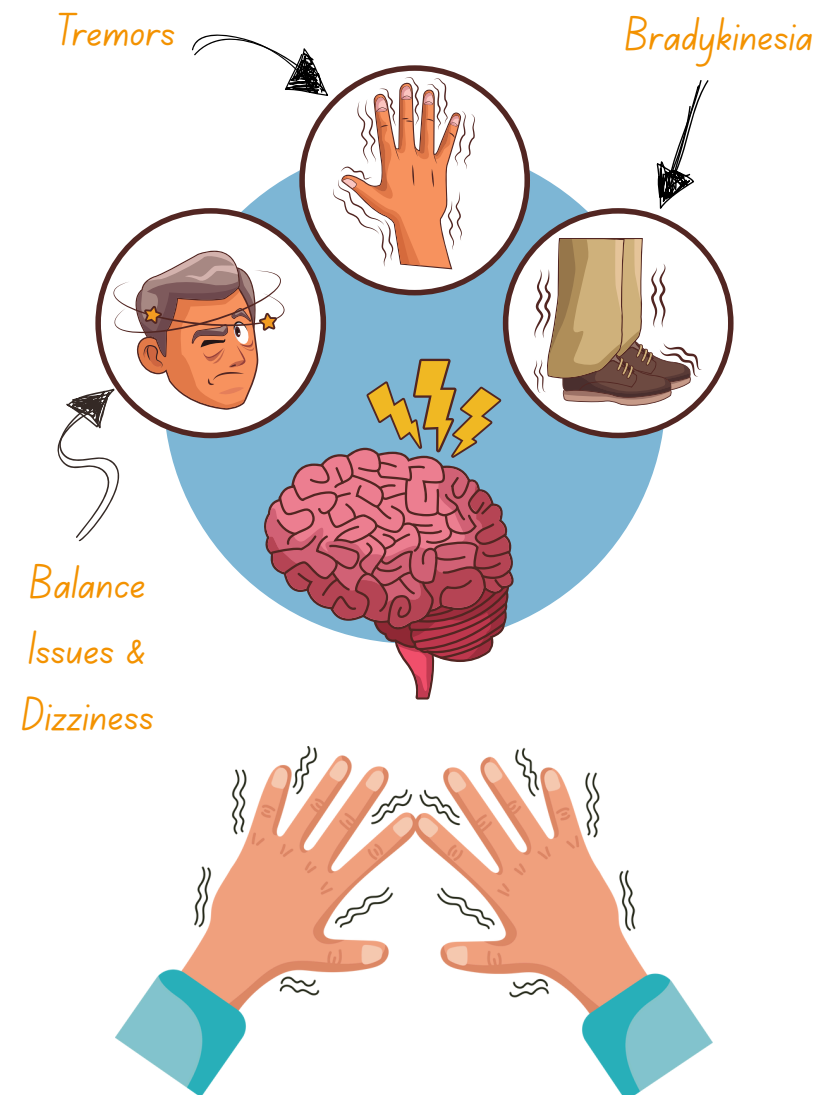
Parkinsonism is a term covering several conditions, including Parkinson's and others with similar symptoms. We don't yet know exactly why people get Parkinson's. Researchers think it's a combination of age, genetic, and environmental factors that cause the dopamine producing nerve cells to die.



Symptoms of Parkinson's

The main symptoms of Parkinson's disease are:

- involuntary shaking of specific parts of the body (tremor)
- slow movement (Bradykinesia)
- stiff and inflexible muscles
- They may also experience a range of other physical and psychological symptoms.
- depression and anxiety
- balance problems (this may increase the chances of a fall)
- loss of sense of smell (anosmia)
- problems sleeping (insomnia)
- memory problems



Physical Therapy and Exercise

Physical therapy (PT) is a vital part of managing Parkinson's disease and aims to improve mobility, flexibility, and balance. Regular exercise is one of the most effective non-medical treatments and can help slow the disease's progression.

Strengthening exercises: Focus on strengthening muscles to maintain mobility and independence.

Stretching: Helps to manage rigidity and improve flexibility.

Balance training: Aimed at preventing falls, which are a risk in PD.

Aerobic exercises: Activities like walking, cycling, or swimming improve cardiovascular health and overall mobility.

Speech therapy: Since PD can affect speech and swallowing, working with a speech therapist can help.

Over To You



Test Yourself

Ask These Questions

- Do your residents with Parkinson's have a specific, person centred care plan on Fusion?
- Do staff understand how important administering time critical medication is to manage Parkinson's symptoms?
- Where there are concerns with swallowing has a Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) referral taken place?
- Are all recommendations from external professionals included in the Fusion care plan?

Medication



- The primary goal of medication is to manage the motor symptoms such as tremors, rigidity, and bradykinesia (slowness of movement). The main categories of medications include:
- **Levodopa (L-dopa)**: The most effective treatment for motor symptoms, as it is converted into dopamine in the brain. Levodopa is often combined with carbidopa to reduce side effects like nausea.
- **Dopamine Agonists**: These drugs mimic dopamine's effects in the brain. Examples include pramipexole, ropinirole, and rotigotine.
- **Monoamine Oxidase-B Inhibitors (MAO-B inhibitors)**: These drugs, such as selegiline and rasagiline, block the enzyme that breaks down dopamine, thereby increasing dopamine levels in the brain.
- **Anticholinergics**: These medications help with tremors and muscle rigidity. Examples include benztropine and trihexyphenidyl.

Amantadine: Often used in initial stages of the disease, it can help with symptoms of motor fluctuation and dyskinesia (involuntary movements).



Surgical Interventions:

For people with Parkinson's who have not responded well to medication, surgical options may be considered. The most common procedures include:

- **Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS):** This involves implanting electrodes in specific areas of the brain to help regulate abnormal brain activity. DBS can help reduce tremors, stiffness, and motor fluctuations.

Pallidotomy and Thalamotomy: This is the least common procedure that involves destroying specific parts of the brain to alleviate tremors and rigidity.

Who is affected?

- It is thought around 1 in 500 people are affected by Parkinson's disease, which means there are an estimated 153,000 people in the UK with the condition.
- Most people with Parkinson's start to develop symptoms when they are over 50, although around 1 in 20 people with the condition first experience symptoms when they're under 40.
- Men are slightly more likely to get Parkinson's disease than women.

(Source: NHS 24, June 2024)



Lifestyle and Supportive Care

Living with Parkinson's (PD) involves adjustments in daily life to help cope with symptoms:

Dietary adjustments: A balanced diet, rich in fibre can help prevent constipation, which is a common issue in PD. In addition, reducing protein intake can help optimise the effects of levodopa. In some people, protein (which is found mainly in meat, fish, eggs, cheese, yoghurt, nuts, beans and pulses) may interfere with the effects of their levodopa medication. Therefore, it's generally advised that Parkinson's medication should be taken at least 30 to 45 minutes before meals. *Remember that time critical factor when administering medication.....

Mental health support: Anxiety, depression, and cognitive changes can occur in PD, so psychological support, counseling, or medications for mental health are often necessary.

Rest and Sleep: People with PD often have disrupted sleep patterns, so establishing a regular sleep schedule, reducing caffeine intake, and other good sleep practices such as warm drinks, reduced screen time prior to bed may help.



Regular Monitoring and Adjustments

Parkinson's symptoms can change over time, and treatments may need adjustments. Regular follow-ups with a neurologist or movement disorder specialist are important to assess the effectiveness of the current treatment plan and make necessary changes.

Managing Parkinson's requires a team approach that includes medical professionals, physical therapists, speech therapists, and support from family and caregivers. The treatment plan is highly individualised, so it is crucial to regularly communicate with the multi-disciplinary team to adjust as needed. Ongoing person centred care is essential to managing Parkinson's effectively.

Support Groups

Parkinsons UK is the UK charity offering support and advice for anyone on their Parkinsons journey, including carers. They will also be able to point you at a local support group.



The Parkinsons website can be reached by clicking on the icon on the Important Links area in the resource section of our Fusion webpage:

www.fusioncare.co.uk

