

# Parkinson's

## Parkinson's Quick Guide

This handy guide has been developed to provide you a quick overview of Parkinson's disease it's causes and symptoms and how you can cope with it.

To receive detailed assistance to this debilitating disease, you can arrange for a call back from our helpline by visiting our website



[www.parkinsons.co.in](http://www.parkinsons.co.in)



## What is **PARKINSON'S** **DISEASE?**

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects movement. It is estimated that 10 million people have Parkinson's disease worldwide, affecting all races and cultures. In India there are an estimated 1 Million people who suffer from Parkinson's.

Parkinson's disease develops gradually, sometimes starting with a barely noticeable tremor in just one hand. However other signs of Parkinson's disease may include stiffness of the limbs or slowing down of your movement.

Although it typically develops after the age of 65, about 15% of people with the condition develop “young-onset” Parkinson's disease before reaching age 50. As Parkinson's disease progresses, it becomes increasingly disabling, making daily activities like bathing or dressing difficult or impossible.

**REMEMBER- THERE IS NO CURE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE AS YET.**

# What causes Parkinson's diseases?

Parkinson's disease is caused by the degeneration of a small part of the brain called the substantia nigra. As brain cells in the substantia nigra die, the brain becomes deprived of the chemical dopamine. Reduced levels of dopamine lead to the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. As the disease progresses, some people need to use a wheelchair or may become bedridden.

# What are the Types of Parkinson's?

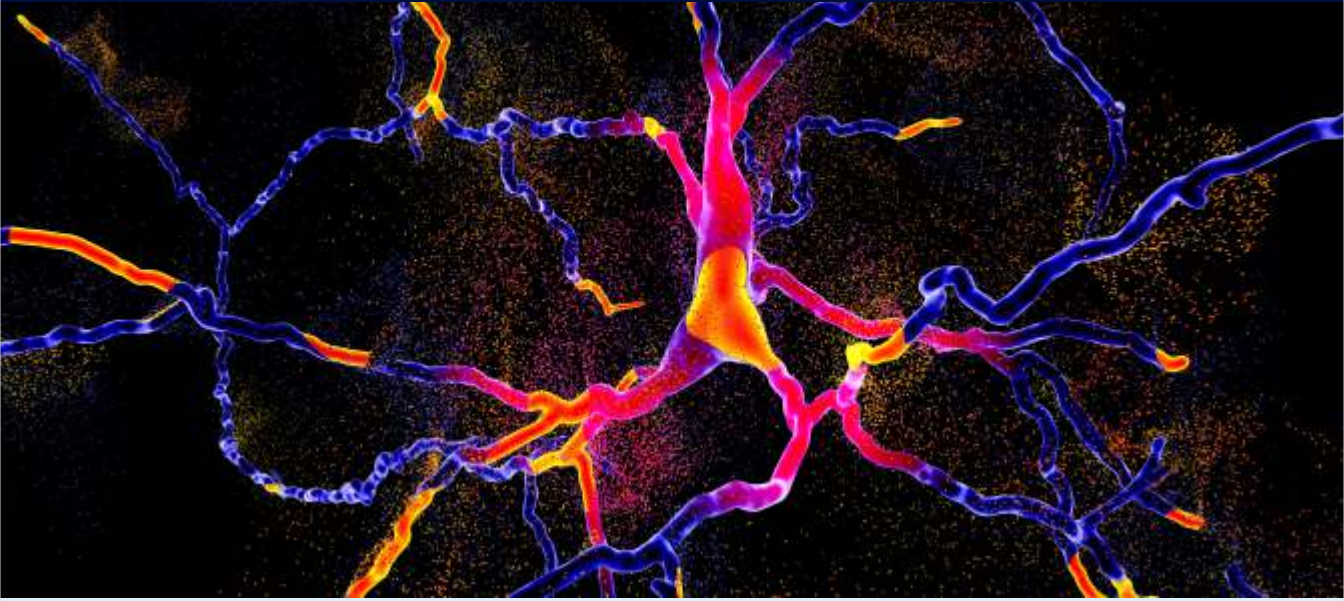
Parkinsonism is the term given to the various forms of Parkinson disease that afflicts people, especially older men. It is an umbrella term that covers all types of Parkinson's disease that typically manifests itself in terms of tremors, slow movement, slurry speech and disability of basic motor functions of the human body.

The main types of Parkinsonism that are there are:-

## What are the Types of Parkinson's?

- 1. Multiple system atrophy (MSA) | 2. Normal pressure hydrocephalus
- 3. Progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP) | 4. Vascular or arteriosclerotic Parkinsonism | 5. Drug-induced Parkinsonism | 6. Wilson's disease
- 7. X-linked dystonia Parkinsonism





## Parkinson Disease Stages

Parkinson's disease is not a basic disease and things may not unfold in the typical stages that Parkinson's disease progresses. While the progression may be different for different people, symptoms begin to get worse over time and new symptoms will emerge

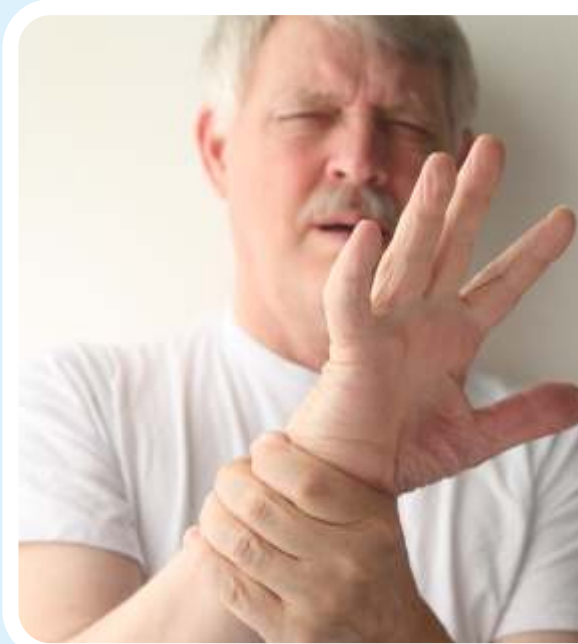
**Stage 1 :** During this initial stage, the person has mild symptoms that will usually not interfere with daily activities. The person will experience mild tremors and other motor related symptoms usually on one side of the body. Changes in posture, walking and facial muscles may also appear during this stage. You may feel stiffness and tremors and your handwriting may get smaller.

**Stage 2 :** Stage 2 often occurs within 3-7 years. Earlier tremors start getting worse. Tremors, walking rigidity and facial problems begin to affect both sides of the body.

**Stage 3 :** Considered mid-stage, loss of balance and slowness of movements are hallmarks. Falls are more common. The person is still fully independent, but symptoms significantly impair activities such as dressing and eating.

**Stage 4 :** At this point, symptoms are severe and limiting. It's possible to stand without assistance, but you may require a walker to move around. You will require the support of a care giver in assisting you with daily activities and you will be unable to perform most basic functions on your own.

**Stage 5 :** This is the most advanced stage. Stiffness in the legs may make it impossible to stand or walk. The person requires a wheelchair or is bedridden. Around-the-clock nursing is required for the patient. The person may also experience hallucinations and delusions and other non-motor related symptoms



## Is Parkinson's Genetic?

It is estimated that about 10% of the cases of Parkinson could be inherited from your blood line. This means that genetically if you have relatives within your family who have Parkinson, your risk may be significantly higher. Most people have what is called 'idiopathic Parkinson's', meaning that there is no known cause and no clear genetic cause.

Nobody still knows exactly what causes Parkinson's. Environmental conditions also play a role. Frequent interaction with certain chemicals used in farming may increase the predisposition to get Parkinson disease as does age. The older you are, the more likely you are to get this disease.

Similarly aspects like Race (white people are more pre-disposed than non-whites), Gender (Men are likely to get it than women), Jobs (Jobs that are farming led leading to interaction with chemicals or factory jobs are more pre-disposed), Head injury (if you have had a head injury the chances go up)



## Can Parkinson's be avoided or reduced?



There are some protective factors that studies have shown to reduce the risk factors that cause Parkinson's disease. These are:-

- Consumption of caffeine in tea or coffee may lower risk of getting Parkinson's disease. Green tea may also reduce the risk.
- People with high levels of uric acid or urate also have lower incidence of Parkinson's
- Some research has shown that regular aerobic exercises also reduce the risk incidence
- Taking anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen also reduces the chances of getting the disease.
- People with higher Vitamin D are likely to have a lower risk of getting Parkinson's
- Some studies have shown that smoking reduces the risk factors due to the protective nature of nicotine
- Use of statin drugs for reducing cholesterol levels have also proven to reduce the risk factor of acquiring Parkinson's disease.

## What are the symptoms of Parkinson's?

Parkinson's disease symptoms and signs may differ from person to person. Early signs may be mild and often go unnoticed.

Broadly, the symptoms of Parkinson's can be classified as

### Motor Symptoms

Symptoms that manifest themselves around motor or movement related areas come under this category. These include the following

### Physical Symptoms

Signs that are physical in nature but do not involve any motor or movement

### Non-Physical Symptoms

These are cases where it is harder to detect whether the person has Parkinson's or not because many of the signs may be also due to other factors and other issues

## MOTOR SYMPTOMS

- Tremors  
Bradykinesia or akinesia (slowness of movement or absence of movement)
- Parkinson's gait
- Freezing
- Postural Instability

---

## PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

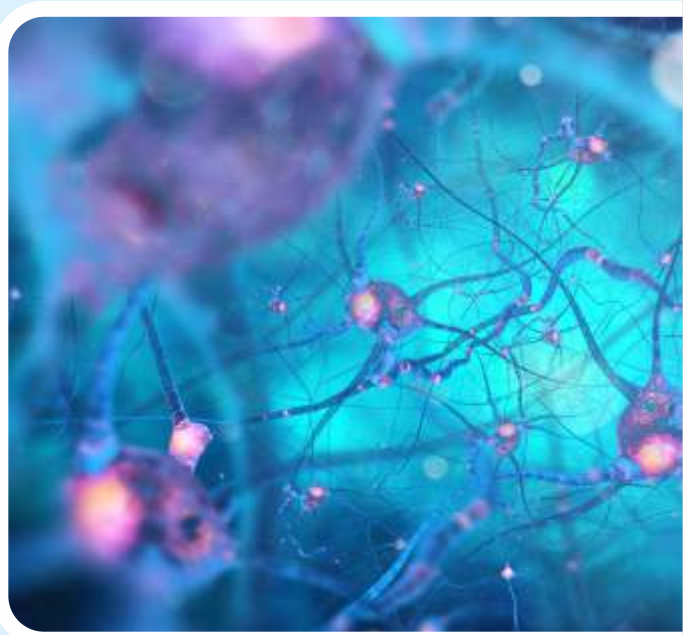
- Rigidity & Cramps
- Facial & Vocal Expression Changes
- Dysphagia (Swallowing difficulty)
- Eye and Dental Symptoms
- Pain



## NON-PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Parkinson's disease can cause neuropsychiatric issues, which can range from mild to severe. This includes disorders of cognition, mood, behaviour, and thought

- Sleep Disorders
- Mood Swings
- Social Phobia
- Dementia
- Impaired Recall
- Impaired perception
- Compulsive sexual behaviour
- Binge eating
- Loss of smell
- Hallucinations & Delusions



Different people exhibit different symptoms and it is often best to consult a specialist in Parkinson's disease rather than self-diagnosis.

## See a Parkinson Specialist

Remember, there is no cure for Parkinson. However there are treatments that can help you recover your ability to live a normal life. See your doctor if you have any of the symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease. [Click here to visit our website](#)

## How to live an active life despite having Parkinson

Having Parkinson's disease can be a life changing moment for most people, but with the right strategy approach and support of your family members, people with this disease can live a normal active lifestyle.

The biggest step that one can take is to educate oneself about the disease. Taking action early will enable one to understand and deal with the many effects of the disease. Some of the things to keep in mind while living with Parkinson's disease are given below

## Keep a healthy diet if you have Parkinson's

Having a healthy dietary habit is important if one is diagnosed with Parkinson's. Vary your diet and have healthy portions of foods and ensure that you have the right balance in your food groups. Make sure that you have plenty of fluids and at least 4-5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

## Performing daily activities with Parkinson's

### Getting dressed

Always get dressed sitting in a chair that has armrests, as that will help you keep your balance. Wear clothes that are loose fitting. Change clothing's from button type to Velcro. Change your normal lace shoes to Velcro shoes and wear slip on shoes.

### Having a Bath or using the Toilet

Uses a shower chair and use a hand held hose for bathing. Have your soap inside a bath mitt so that the soap does not slip off and ensure that you have a non-skid rug on the floor of your bathroom. Make sure that your water is not very hot. Hot water can cause one to have fatigue.

In the bathroom have an elevated toilet seat and a safety rail to enable you to sit down or get up. Make sure that there is an anti-skid rug

### Grooming

Groom yourself while sitting whether it be shaving or drying your hair or even brushing your teeth.

### Eating or drinking

Eat slowly and don't rush your meal. Let your elbows rest on the table. Make sure that your plate has a non-skid mat below. Use a straw to drink water. Use a non-spill cup with a large handle

### Writing

Use weighted pencils or pens. If you are used to using a mobile phone, there are several voice recorders available that you could use to send WhatsApp messages easily to people.

### Sitting, standing, Getting up

Before you get up bend slowly at your waist, touch your toes before trying to get up. Once you get up, remain standing for a while before you begin walking.. While trying to get out of bed one useful tip is to tie a knot on the side of the bed you are in like a rope and use that to raise yourself into a sitting position from the sides

### Freezing

Freezing is a common symptom with those having Parkinson's. If you have got frozen, rock in place from foot to foot to get moving or visualize something you need to step over to get moving again.

### Cramps and Muscle spasms

This is another common symptom of Parkinson's. Try and get regular massage of your legs and hands to relieve cramps. Take warm baths and have a heating pad at night in your bed.

### Using the phone or mobile

Use speaker phone functionality to have conversations. Put your key family group in speed dial mode. Use voice recording rather than typing to send messages.





## Treatment options for Parkinson Patients

While there is no cure for Parkinson's disease as yet, there are several treatment options that one can consider depending on the stage life cycle of the disease. Before commencing any treatment, it is best advised to consult a specialist in Parkinson's disease and undertake the treatment under his or her guidance.

The starting point before treatment is recommended is diagnosis of the disease. The examination should be done by a neurologist and usually comprise of a review of your signs and symptoms followed by some tests

### TREATMENT SOLUTIONS

#### *Medicinal or Drug Based Treatments*

Parkinson's disease happen when dopamine ( a chemical messenger in your brain) levels fall. Drugs help to increase the levels of dopamine in your brain and stimulate the parts of your brain where dopamine works.

There are many different drugs prescribed for Parkinson's, so your medication will be based on what suits you as an individual.

#### *Surgical Treatments*

Surgical Treatments are another way to treat Parkinson's disease and may be recommended by your doctor depending on the stage of Parkinson one is at.

Some of the surgical treatments are

#### *Deep Drain Stimulation (DBS)*

DBS uses a small, pacemaker like device, placed under the skin of the chest, to send electrical signals through very thin wires to an area in the brain that controls movement. These signals block some of the brain messages that cause the movement symptoms of Parkinson's. DBS is delivered 24 hours a day and requires no daily cleaning or refilling and is extremely useful for addressing the physical symptoms of Parkinson's

#### *Treatment Therapies*

Therapy is another way in which Parkinson patients are treated. Therapist's help Parkinson's patients cope with the disease and live a fuller healthier life. Some of the well know therapies are -:



**Occupational Therapy**  
**PHYSIOTHERAPY**  
**Communication Therapy**

## Exercises to slow down Parkinson's

A good regular exercise routine can go a long way in helping one deal with Parkinson's disease. Since Parkinson's largely impairs the movement or motor functions of the body, exercising can be an effective way to counter the effects. Exercising may increase your muscle strength, flexibility and balance. Exercise can also improve your well-being and reduce depression or anxiety. Depending on the stage of your Parkinson's disease, you may need to work with your therapist to learn the most effective exercise routine that works for you.



### General Exercise Rules

- Do not over exercise and take frequent rests in-between exercise routines
- Take up exercises that involve active movement of your legs and arms such as walking, jogging or even swimming
- Exercise parts of your body especially hands through exercise kits that enable them such as sponge balls for your hands. Keeping one handy will help you regularly exercise your hand.
- Exercise 5 times a week in a max of 30 minutes
- Be safe. Before starting an exercise program, consult your neurologist and primary care doctor about concerns and recommendations.
- Purchase a pedometer (step-counter) and figure out how many steps you take on average each day, then build up from there. Many smartphones or smartwatches have a built-in pedometer feature or an application that can be downloaded.
- Exercise indoors and outdoors. Change your routine to stay interested and motivated.
- Exercise your mind along with your body. Mind games such as scrabble, word association games can help keep your mind sharp and agile



# Parkinson's

[www.parkinsons.co.in](http://www.parkinsons.co.in)

---