

Parkinson's

The road may bring challenges, but it keeps moving forward.



Parkinson's is a brain disorder that leads to shaking, stiffness and difficulty with balance and coordination issues. Symptoms usually begin gradually and worsen over time. Individuals may also have mental and behavioral changes, sleep problems, depression, memory difficulties and fatigue. Both men and women can have Parkinson's. However, the disease affects about 50 percent more men than women. Although Parkinson's can be hereditary, in most cases the disease occurs randomly.

AGING
Resources + Counseling
SERVICES

Understanding. Answers.



Understanding the Basics

Parkinson's disease occurs when nerve cells, or neurons, in an area of the brain that controls movement become impaired and/or die. Normally, these neurons produce an important brain chemical known as dopamine. When the neurons die or become impaired, they produce less dopamine, which causes the movement problems of Parkinson's.

People with Parkinson's also lose the nerve endings that produce norepinephrine, the main chemical messenger of the sympathetic nervous system, which controls many functions of the body, such as heart rate and blood pressure. The loss of norepinephrine helps explain some of the non-movement features of Parkinson's.

Symptoms

Parkinson's disease has four main symptoms:

- Tremor (trembling) in hands, arms, legs, jaw or head.
- Stiffness of the limbs and trunk.
- Slowness of movement.
- Impaired balance and coordination, sometimes leading to falls.

Other symptoms may include depression and other emotional changes; difficulty swallowing, chewing and speaking.

Treatment of Parkinson's

Although there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, medicines, surgical treatment and other therapies can often relieve some symptoms. The main therapy for Parkinson's is levodopa, also called L-dopa. Nerve cells use levodopa to make dopamine to replenish the brain's dwindling supply. Usually, people take levodopa along with another medication called carbidopa. Carbidopa prevents or reduces some of the side effects of levodopa therapy—such as nausea, vomiting, low blood pressure and restlessness—and reduces the amount of levodopa needed to improve symptoms.

As an expert in Parkinson's, Aging Resources and Counseling Services is here to provide you with the answers and understanding you need. Let that expertise guide you in understanding the disorder and counseling you in your journey in understanding the disease.

Guidance

Luanne Harms, LCSW Therapist

Luanne Harms is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with an academic concentration in Mental Health, Alzheimer's Disease, Lewy Body and Parkinson's Dementia, Frontotemporal Dementia, Chronic Encephalopathy (CTE), as well as alcohol- and drug-related dementias.

Professionally, Luanne has served individuals in the midst of the aging process and other phases of life as well their families and caregivers, guiding them and helping them to care for loved ones with Alzheimer's Disease and other related dementias, as well as other chronic health conditions, at home, in the hospital, in long-term care, memory care and hospice.

Certifications in Dementia Care:

- Teepa Snow Positive Approach to Care Master Trainer
- Teepa Snow Engagement Leader
- Dementia Caregiver Specialist
- Texas Oasis Dementia Trainer
- Dementia Advanced Care, HealthCare Interactive

Call 903.330.9592 and make an appointment today.

7282 Crosswater Ave, Suite 100
Tyler TX, 75703

AGING
Resources + Counseling
SERVICES