

Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease affects the part of the brain that controls muscle movement. There is no cure for Parkinson's, but it often progresses slowly and the signs can be managed.

Signs

The 4 most common signs of Parkinson's are:

- Tremors or shaking
- Muscle stiffness
- Slowed movement
- Problems with balance and movement

As these signs worsen, you may have trouble walking, talking, or doing simple tasks such as bathing or dressing.

Your Care

When the signs cause you to have problems, your doctor may order medicine or physical therapy to help manage your signs. As your signs get worse, surgery may be an option to reduce tremors.

Things You Can Do to Manage Your Signs

- Walk slowly with a straight posture and with your legs further apart.
- Use a 4-prong cane or a walker if needed.
- If you become stuck or freeze in one place, rock gently from side to side or pretend to step over an object on the floor.
- Place tape strips on the floor to guide you through your house. Remove area rugs and furniture from your walking path.
- Stand up from a chair or bed slowly to avoid feeling dizzy or lightheaded.
- Install grab bars on the walls beside toilets and inside showers and bathtubs to help you stand up.
- Use a shower chair inside the shower.
- Install an elevated toilet seat to make standing up easier after using the toilet.
- Shave with an electric razor.
- Wear loafers or shoes with Velcro.
- Wear simple dresses or pants with elastic waistbands such as sweatpants.

Work closely with your health care team to manage your signs of Parkinson's. **Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.**