

thicker than water (such as fruit smoothies). However, do not take dairy products with your pills, as the proteins in them may interfere with levodopa.

4. If you often choke on the last sip, tilting your head in a neutral or chin down (chin tuck) position before swallowing can help prevent choking

5. Discuss your swallowing problems with your doctors. Professional care providers can advise you on techniques to prevent aspiration and strengthen your swallowing

HOW TO GET BETTER SLEEP?

People with PD often face sleep issues that impact their quality of life. Here are some suggestions for individuals with PD and their caregivers to improve their sleep.

- Adopt healthy sleep habits: Follow a regular sleep schedule, waking up and going to sleep at the same time each day. Before going to bed, engage in relaxing activities, such as listening to soothing music or reading a book.
- Create a relaxing sleep environment. This may include a quiet room, a comfortable bed, suitable lighting, and the right temperature.
- Only go to bed when it is time to sleep. Do not use screens (TV, computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.) for an hour or two before bed.
- Avoid consuming anything that may interfere with your sleep, such as tea, coffee, alcohol, or nicotine.
- Reduce fluid intake before bedtime to avoid frequent trips to the restroom. Empty your bladder before going to sleep.
- Eat a healthy diet and avoid heavy late-night meals. Before bedtime, you may have a small healthy snack or a glass of milk.
- Taking a warm shower or bath before bed may help you sleep.

- If you tend to act out dreams, place pillows around your bed to protect yourself from falls and injuries. Lowering the bed to a comfortable height and fixing bedrails can also help minimize fall-related injuries.
- Exercise regularly and stay active throughout the day. However, avoid exercising within 2-4 hours of bedtime.
- Limit daytime naps. Avoid long or late-afternoon/early evening naps
- Do not stay in bed for long periods if you cannot sleep. If you can't fall asleep after half an hour, get out of bed and do something calming. Then, try to go back to sleep later.
- Avoid using over-the-counter sleep aids.
- Share your sleep concerns with your doctor to receive the right management.

HOW TO IMPROVE SEXUAL WELLNESS?

Sexual health and intimacy may be influenced both by PD and its treatments. Here are some tips for better sexual health in PD.

- Plan sexual activity during the time frame when motor symptoms are at a minimum (Medication ON period).
- Use water-based lubricants during intercourse to minimise dryness and discomfort.
- Use satin sheets to make movement easier, and plan comfortable positions ahead to minimize any discomfort during movements.
- Consider getting professional help to address specific sexual concerns and improve communication with your partner. Engaging in an honest discussion with your doctors can be extremely helpful.
- Addressing depression and anxiety can have a positive impact on sexual health.
- Consult with your doctor about the influence of PD medications on sexual function and explore alternative options if there are any adverse effects.



Prepared by
National Parkinson Network,
Movement Disorders Society
Of India



This material is for informational purposes only. It does not replace the advice of a doctor or health care professional.

LIFESTYLE INTERVENTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND THEIR CAREGIVERS



Lifestyle interventions for Parkinson's disease (PD) focus on improving quality of life, managing symptoms, and possibly slowing down the progression of the disease. If you or someone you care for has PD, these lifestyle tips will help.

This material is for informational purposes only. It does not replace the advice of a doctor or health care professional.

EXERCISE FOR PD

Exercise is an essential component in managing PD. It helps improve mobility, balance, and overall quality of life. Exercise has the potential to prevent and slow down the progression of PD. It can also improve attention, thinking, and memory.

Here are some of the most effective exercises recommended for individuals with PD:

- Aerobic Exercises: Engage in aerobic exercises like walking, cycling (stationary or outdoor), swimming or water aerobics, jogging, or aerobic dancing for 30 minutes three times a week. Make sure you warm up and cool down for 5-10 minutes.
- Strength Training: Include strength training exercises in your routine two to three times a week (30 minutes per session on alternate days), using resistance bands or water bottles. When a patient has physical limitations, the caregiver should help lift their limbs and body.
- Balance and Coordination Exercises: Include exercises that improve balance, flexibility, coordination, agility, and multitasking skills into your routine two to three times a week. Activities such as tai chi, yoga, boxing, and dancing can be particularly beneficial.
- Flexibility and Stretching Exercises: Regular stretching routines are suggested for maintaining flexibility and reducing muscle stiffness. Stretching exercises should be done at least two to three times weekly.
- No one exercise is definitively better than another; both indoor and outdoor activities are options.

- Take care to avoid excessive exertion and situations that might cause you to fall.
- For optimal mobility, schedule your exercises during the medication's ON period (when it is most effective). Also, be mindful of symptoms related to low blood pressure.
- Consulting with healthcare providers or physical therapists is important for tailoring an exercise program that is safe and effective based on your individual needs and capabilities

DIET AND NUTRITION IN PD:

Dietary management is an important aspect of living with PD).

It can help ease symptoms, improve medication efficacy, and promote overall health. Here are a few dietary tips for people with PD.

- Consume a diet high in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, healthy fats (such as nuts, olive oil, and fish), and lean proteins. Include sources of omega-3 fatty acids (such as fish and shellfish, nuts and seeds, plant oils, soy products, eggs, and fortified foods) in your diet.
- Restrict your consumption of saturated fats (such as butter, cheese, and red meat). Avoid or limit the intake of ultra-processed foods (like ice creams, carbonated drinks, breakfast cereals, canned goods and junk foods)
- Drink enough fluids to help with digestion and the absorption of medications.
- Since high-protein meals can interfere with the absorption of PD medications like levodopa, it is advised to consume

protein-rich foods at different times from medication intake. You should take levodopa either 30 minutes to 1 hour before meals or 1-2 hours after meals.

- If constipation is a concern, try adding fiber-rich foods (such as fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, peas, and lentils) and probiotic-rich fermented milk products (e.g., curd) to your diet. Increasing physical activity and drinking more fluids can also help.
- If delayed stomach emptying is a problem, try limiting your intake of cheese, sweets, and fatty foods. Eat three main meals per day, but avoid heavy meals. Avoid napping or sleeping immediately after a meal. Include more easy-to-digest foods in your diet.
- Vitamin D plays a vital role in preventing osteoporosis and reducing fractures in those who are susceptible to falls. Sun exposure is the most natural way to get vitamin D. To avoid osteoporosis, consume foods rich in calcium and vitamin D, such as fish, dairy products, eggs, tofu, beans, lentils, mushrooms, nuts, seeds, and foods fortified with calcium and vitamin D.
- Consult with your doctor or a registered dietitian to balance your diet and optimize medication timings. This is especially important if you have trouble swallowing or other dietary challenges.
- As PD advances, the ability to chew and swallow can be affected. Here are some tips to make swallowing easier.
 1. Choose soft, easy-to-chew foods and divide them into many small bites. Avoid foods like tough meat and uncooked vegetables.
 2. Avoid talking and eating (or drinking) together to prevent choking.
 3. If you struggle to swallow pills, you may find it helpful to take them with liquids