

What is Parkinson's?

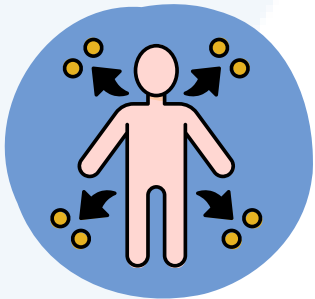


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Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder connected to the loss or slowing down of brain cells that produce dopamine (a chemical that coordinates movement). Because it can cause tremors, slowness, stiffness, and walking and balance problems, Parkinson's is called a "movement disorder."

Nearly one million Americans are living with Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's is currently recognized as the fastest-growing neurodegenerative disease, outpacing even Alzheimer's disease in its rate of increase.

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While genetics is thought to play a role in Parkinson's, in most cases the disease does not seem to run in families. Many researchers now believe that Parkinson's results from a combination of genetic and environmental factors, such as exposure to toxins.

Currently, there is no cure for Parkinson's, but there are plenty of things you can do to improve your quality of life. Finding research-supported educational programs, community support groups, and adequate levels of exercise can help you live well with Parkinson's today and everyday.

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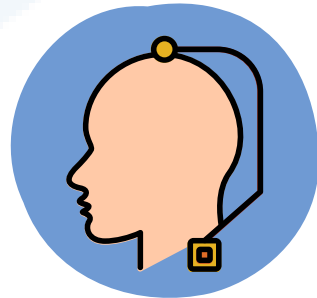


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Parkinson's disease can't yet be cured, but medications can help control the symptoms. Medications may help you manage problems with walking, movement, and tremor. These medicines increase or substitute for dopamine.

When medications aren't as effective as they used to be, deep brain stimulation (DBS) along with medications may help control some of the motor symptoms of Parkinson's: tremors (shaking), slowed movement (bradykinesia), and stiffness (rigidity).

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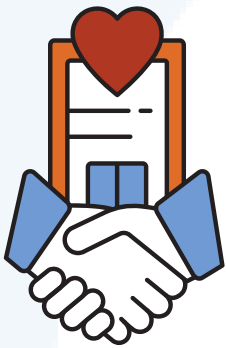


What is Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS)?



The Procedure

Deep brain stimulation involves placing small, thin wires (leads) in targeted areas in the brain that control movement and are impacted during the progression of Parkinson's. The leads deliver controlled electrical signals (stimulation) from a device known as a neurostimulator, which is similar to a cardiac pacemaker and is implanted in the chest. As with any procedure, there are potential surgical risks such as infection.



How It Can Help

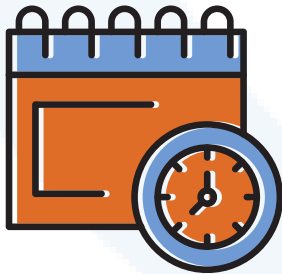
DBS is thought to affect the brain signals that cause tremors and other movement symptoms of Parkinson's disease. It provides additional hours of good movement control (known as "ON" time) without unintended movements (dyskinesia), compared to medication alone. DBS may also reduce some of the need for Parkinson's medication, thereby reducing medication-related side effects. Discuss with your doctor the benefits and risks. DBS is not for everyone, and therapy results may vary.



When It's Right

DBS may be right for you if you:

- ✓ Have had Parkinson's for 4+ years
- ✓ Have had movement symptoms and/or medication side effects for 4 months or longer
- ✓ Respond well to levodopa
- ✓ Have movement symptoms not adequately controlled by medication



A Decision That Won't Wait

Don't think of DBS as a "last resort." If you wait until your medications no longer help, DBS is no longer an option. Talk with your doctor about it now, so you can be ready for DBS at the right time for you. It's never too soon to learn more.

Thank you to Medtronic for their sponsorship to advance education with the Parkinson's community.

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To learn more about DBS:

 [DiscoverDBS.com](https://www.DiscoverDBS.com)