

## Resources to Improve Exercise Habits for People with Parkinson's Disease

The resources included in this toolbox were designed with input from members of the PD community to help people with PD increase or sustain their exercise.

Please also refer to the toolboxes for people with PD and community exercise advocates for more information.

For Healthcare and Exercise Providers  
that work with People with PD

## Description of Resources

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#### Document

#### Instructions for Use

**Below are two versions of an exercise assessment for people with PD. One is designed to be used as a discussion guide and the other can be done by the patient/client in the waiting room.**

**Exercise Discussion Guide for People with Parkinson's Disease**

Use as a discussion guide to determine a person's exercise status and help problem-solve with them

**Exercise Self-Assessment**

Provide for people with PD to gauge their current exercise status and create a plan

## EXERCISE DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE

### Using Evidence-Based Health Behavior Change Techniques

#### 1. Current Exercise (Physical Activity Vital Sign)

- On average, how many days per week do you engage in moderate to strenuous exercise (like a brisk walk)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ days
- On average, how many minutes do you engage in exercise at this level (moderate to strenuous)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes
- Total minutes per week of physical activity (multiply #1 by #2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes per week

#### 2. What types of exercise do you do? (Check all that apply.)

- |                        |               |                         |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Physical therapy_____  | Tai chi_____  | PD-specific groups_____ |
| Aerobic exercise_____  | Boxing_____   | Yoga/Pilates_____       |
| Strength training_____ | Dance_____    | Other_____              |
| Cycling/Spinning_____  | Aquatics_____ |                         |

***If they do not participate in a variety of exercise or they do not meet 150 min/week:***  
***“May I share with you some other exercise recommendations that may be helpful for you to manage your PD?”***

#### 3. Over the past month, how well have you be able to maintain your regular exercise habits?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Very well  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not as well as I should

***If not well, present common challenges below:***

- ***“People with Parkinson’s disease commonly report the following challenges to exercise. Discussing how often you experience these challenges will help us decide how to proceed.”***
- ***“What would it take to make it easier for you?”***

#### 4. During the past week, to what degree have the following challenges kept you from exercising?

	Not at all	Moderately	Quite a lot
<b>Physical Problems</b> (fatigue, pain, injury, sleep, PD symptoms, fear of falling)	0	1	2
<b>Mood or Motivation Problems</b> (feeling apathetic or depressed, loss of a loved one)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Time</b> (other obligations, time commitments family/kids, work, appointments)	0	1	2

<b>Environmental Challenges</b> (weather, convenient classes or gym, affordable location, equipment/space)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Information</b> about exercise for PD (how to exercise, what to do, why it is important)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Social Support</b> (lack of emotional or transportation support from family, friends, or peers)	0	1	2

5. Moving forward, how confident are you in your ability to carry out your exercise plan for the next month? (0=not confident at all, 10=very confident)

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Fairly confident ( $\geq 7$ )	→ “What strategies have you come up with for exercising when challenges occur?” (e.g. bad weather, a change in your schedule, transportation, etc.)
Not confident ( $< 7$ )	→ “What are some of the challenges that you think could make exercise difficult this month?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How could you incorporate exercise into your day when [insert challenge] occurs?”</li> <li>• If they are unable to verbalize solutions independently, ask “Can I provide some ideas that I’ve learned from other patients with PD?”</li> </ul>

6. Do you want to learn more about how to optimize your exercise routine for managing Parkinson’s disease?

“No, I think I exercise enough.”	→ No intervention needed. Or if you disagree based on response to #1, consider providing education that is stage-matched for readiness to change.
“No, I don’t consider exercise a priority at this time.”	→ No intervention wanted, consider providing education that is stage-matched for readiness to change.
“Yes, a little information would be helpful, but I’m not ready to commit a lot of time.”	→ Provide motivation and research resources that are stage-matched for readiness to change. Consider further probes on importance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How important is it for you to be more active?”</li> </ul>
“Yes, I want to spend more time with an expert to learn about exercises that would be right for me.”	→ Provide motivation and research resources that are stage-matched for readiness to change. Link to appropriate types of care.

## Parkinson's Disease Exercise Self-Assessment

### 1. Current Exercise (Physical Activity Vital Sign)

- On average, how many days per week do you engage in moderate to strenuous exercise (like a brisk walk)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ days
- On average, how many minutes do you engage in exercise at this level (moderate to strenuous)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes
- Total minutes per week of physical activity (multiply #1 by #2)  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes per week

### 2. What types of exercise do you do? (Check all that apply.)

- |                        |               |                         |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Physical therapy_____  | Tai chi_____  | PD-specific groups_____ |
| Aerobic exercise_____  | Boxing_____   | Yoga/Pilates_____       |
| Strength training_____ | Dance_____    | Other_____              |
| Cycling/Spinning_____  | Aquatics_____ |                         |

### 3. Over the past month, how well have you been able to maintain your regular exercise habits?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Very well  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not as well as I should

### 4. During the past month, to what degree have the following challenges kept you from exercising?

	Almost never	Moderately	Quite a lot
<b>Physical Problems</b> (fatigue, pain, injury, sleep, PD symptoms, fear of falling)	0	1	2
<b>Mood or Motivation Problems</b> (feeling apathetic or depressed, loss of a loved one)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Time</b> (other obligations, time commitments, family/kids, work, appointments)	0	1	2
<b>Environmental Challenges</b> (weather, convenient classes or gym, affordable location, equipment/space)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Information</b> about exercise for PD (how to exercise, what to do, why it is important)	0	1	2
<b>Lack of Social Support</b> (lack of emotional or transportation support from family, friends, or peers)	0	1	2

### 5. Moving forward, how confident are you in your ability to carry out your exercise plan until your next doctor's appointment? (0=not confident at all, 10=very confident)

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

## KEY

Everyone is different and should make their own individualized exercise plan. Use the following key to determine if you should seek support to help you develop an ideal exercise plan.

	You might need support if:	Recommendations
<b>Question 1:</b> <i>Current exercise</i>	1c is less than 150 minutes	People with PD should try to exercise at least 150 min/week at a moderate intensity for aerobic activities. Ask your Doctor or Physical Therapist if you are unsure if you are meeting physical activity/exercise recommendations or how you can improve.
<b>Question 2:</b> <i>Types of exercise</i>	You checked fewer than 3 items	Research and the experts agree that a combination of aerobic, strengthening, balance, posture, and flexibility training is ideal for people with PD. Talk to your Physical Therapist to find out what is right for you.
<b>Question 3:</b> <i>Ability to maintain habits</i>	You checked "not as well as I should"	If you are not satisfied with your current exercise habits and would like to learn more about exercise, getting motivated, or finding ways to increase your activity levels you should meet with a Physical Therapist or Exercise Physiologist. They could help you problem solve and incorporate activity into your daily or weekly routine.
<b>Question 4:</b> <i>Exercise challenges</i>	Your total score is greater than 2	Challenges are normal and may fluctuate on a day to day basis or over a longer time frame. In either case, healthcare professionals may be able to help you find ways to overcome your specific challenges. Talk to your doctor to find out who would be able to help you.
<b>Question 5:</b> <i>Confidence</i>	Your confidence is less than 7	Developing an exercise plan in which you have confidence is key to maintaining your activity levels. Talk to your doctor or healthcare professional to find ways to improve your confidence related to exercise or physical activity.