

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

Exercise can be very beneficial for people with PD, although it is often hard to start or maintain. The resources included in this toolbox were designed using key stakeholder input to help people with PD increase or sustain their exercise.

For People with Parkinson's Disease

# Description of Resources

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## EXERCISE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

### Why Exercise? **Exercise is Medicine for Parkinson's Disease**



**Maintaining any type of exercise for at least 150 min/week helps to improve quality of life and mobility.**

People who start to exercise early and maintain that exercise for two years had better scores on health-related quality of life and mobility measures.

Rafferty MR, Schmidt PN, Luo ST, et al. Regular Exercise, Quality of Life, and Mobility in Parkinson's Disease: A Longitudinal Analysis of National Parkinson Foundation Quality Improvement Initiative Data. *J Parkinsons Dis.* 2017;7(1):193-202.



**Balance activities help to improve balance and may reduce falls.**

Exercises including tai chi, boxing, and dance can help improve balance and reduce falls in people with Parkinson's disease.

1. Combs SA, Diehl MD, Chrzastowski C, et al. Community-based group exercise for persons with Parkinson disease: a randomized controlled trial. *NeuroRehabilitation.* 2013;32(1):117-124.
2. Li F, Harmer P, Fitzgerald K, et al. Tai chi and postural stability in patients with Parkinson's disease. *N Engl J Med.* 2012;366(6):511-9.
3. McNeely ME, Duncan RP, Earhart GM. A comparison of dance interventions in people with Parkinson disease and older adults. *Maturitas.* 2015;81(1):10-16.

**Weight-lifting exercises help to reduce symptoms over time.**



A randomized-controlled trial showed that progressive weight-lifting reduced PD symptoms more effectively over two years than a gentle multi-modal exercise program.

Corcos DM, Robichaud JA, David FJ, et al. A two-year randomized controlled trial of progressive resistance exercise for Parkinson's disease. *Mov Disord.* 2013;28(9):1230-40.



**Aerobic exercise at a high intensity helps to slow Parkinson's progression.**

In a randomized-controlled trial, people who exercised at 80% maximum heart rate had slower progression of PD than people who exercised at 60% maximum heart rate.

Schenkman M, Moore CG, Kohrt WM, et al. Effect of High-Intensity Treadmill Exercise on Motor Symptoms in Patients with De Novo Parkinson Disease: A Phase 2 Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Neurol.* 2017;75(2):219-226.

**\*\*\*Many other types of community-based exercise may be beneficial for people with Parkinson's disease. Consult your physician or physical therapist for individualized recommendations before starting a new exercise routine\*\*\***

## EXERCISE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

### How to Gain Support to Exercise

Exercise can be very effective for people with Parkinson's disease to help people with Parkinson's disease manage their symptoms. However, it can be difficult to get yourself to exercise regularly, particularly with the challenges associated with Parkinson's disease. Here are some strategies to gain support and accountability from others:

1. **Attend a group exercise class or support group for people with Parkinson's disease.** Exercise classes and support groups can be great resources to meet new people and connect over shared or similar experiences. The Parkinson's Foundation has local chapters across the country that offer exercise programs in supportive group settings. Find a class in your area: <https://parkinson.org/Living-with-Parkinsons/in-your-area>.
2. **Participate in an online community or open forum.** The Parkinson's Foundation has an open forum where people with PD can connect with others in the PD community. Ask a question or share your personal story here: <https://forum.parkinson.org/>. The Parkinson's Foundation also has a Facebook page where you can learn about events, programs, and research. Many local chapters also have their own pages. Connect with the Parkinson's community here: <https://www.facebook.com/parkinsondotorg/>.
3. **Connect with an Ambassador from the Davis Phinney Foundation.** The Davis Phinney Ambassador Program identifies individuals throughout the country to provide support for people with PD. Connect with an ambassador over email: <https://www.davisphinneyfoundation.org/resources/ambassadors>.
4. **Use an app to motivate and encourage you to exercise.** Many people use technology to set up an exercise routine, gain motivation, and hold themselves accountable. See what exercise-based apps are available to you by visiting your mobile device app store (for example search for "exercise and Parkinson's" or other similar keywords).
5. **Encourage a friend or family member to support you.** Support looks different for different people, and it could be useful to have someone to encourage you or participate with you. If you find it difficult to get motivated to go exercise, having friends, family, or caregivers exercise with you may be beneficial.

## Need Motivation?



Talk to your doctor or physical therapist if you have low motivation or apathy.

It is common in PD!

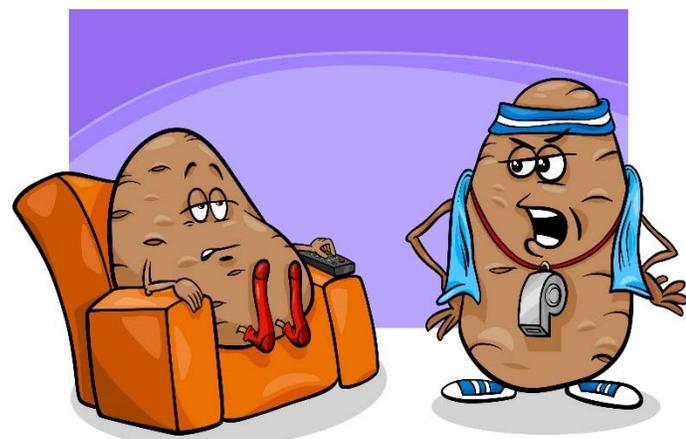


### Hold yourself accountable!

- Start small and track your progress!
- Start with something you enjoy – If you don't like walking, ride a bike instead.
- Set goals and reward yourself!

### Fake it 'till you make it!

- Dress the part – put on some workout clothes and your running shoes.
- Tell yourself positive thoughts: "I can do it."
- Listen to upbeat and motivating music.



## EXERCISE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

### Finding Help to Overcome Your Exercise Challenges

Many people with Parkinson's disease experience challenges related to starting or maintaining exercise. The suggested resources below could help you overcome some of those difficulties.

I have physical problems.



- Physical therapist to help improve your walking, balance, or pain
- Physical therapist or orthopedist to address pain due to joint or musculoskeletal problems
- Neurologist to address medications



I have mood problems.

- Physical therapist or personal trainer to help motivate
- Social worker to address resources or support
- Psychologist to address mood or behavior strategies
- Neurologist or psychiatrist to address medications

I don't have time.



- Physical therapist or personal trainer to help you develop a system to hold yourself accountable to a new routine
- Psychologist or counselor to help you problem-solve
- Social worker to help find resources and support



I need more info.

- Neurologist, clinic nurse, or social worker to provide information on why exercise is important and to share suggestions or local resources
- Physical therapist to provide information and/or practice on specific exercises: type, amount, individualized safety, and local resources

The environment limits my exercise.



- Social worker to help find resources, transportation, and other community support services
- Physical therapist, psychologist, social worker, or counselor to help identify strategies for overcoming environmental exercise challenges



I need more support.

- Social worker to provide social services and support information
- Support groups to share common experiences and solutions
- Local or national PD community to learn about resources
- Personal trainer to provide 1:1 or group exercise support

## 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.

## EXERCISE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

### Exercise Videos for Parkinson's Disease

People with PD are overwhelmed by where and how to look for videos that are credible, engaging, and relevant. Below are 7 short, engaging, and motivational videos about exercising with PD, and one longer educational video series.

1. **"How exercise will help your Parkinson's"** (Parkinson's UK - Length: 1:27)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7A1jf27cpVI>  
Shows a variety of exercises done by people with PD at various levels of function
2. **"How can I start exercising with Parkinson's?"** (Parkinson's UK - Length: 1:34)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRHmGJpGIRY>  
Includes a physiotherapist's explanation on ways to incorporate exercise into your day for people with PD, and demonstrates a variety people at various levels of PD performing a range of exercises
3. **"Brian Grant Miami Heat Feature"** (Brian Grant Foundation – Length: 2:14)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ntgk0CH6FXc>  
Tribute to former Miami Heat basketball player Brian Grant showing how he continues to exercise and battle PD to maintain his quality of life
4. **"Weightlifting helps my Parkinson's"** (Parkinson's UK – Length: 2:23)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbiR8S3ZhQ>  
Testimonial from a woman with early onset PD highlighting the importance of a variety of exercises
5. **"Exercising at home with Parkinson's"** (Parkinson's UK – Length: 2:13)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=recpcNfHFHs>  
A person with PD demonstrates his home exercise routine.
6. **"Patients pedal past Parkinson's"** (ABC News – Length: 1:54)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRGCWIOeTC0>  
News story showing the before and after effects of exercise (cycling) for people with PD and Cleveland Clinic researchers studying the effects of cycling on PD
7. **"Knocking out Parkinson's"** (Live 5 News – Length: 4:55)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkQ2nwMMYEQ>  
Local South Carolina news story showing a person with PD's improvement with before and after effects of exercise (boxing)
8. **"Parkinson's Exercise Essentials Video"** (Davis Phinney Foundation – Length: 1:19:36)  
<https://www.davisphinneyfoundation.org/resources/parkinsons-exercise-essentials/>  
Comprehensive 4-part series that includes both education and instruction on exercising with PD

\*\*\*Consult your physician or physical therapist to help determine what type of exercise is best for you\*\*\*