

Types of Exercise

- **Aerobic**: involves the cardio respiratory system and should be done continuously for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Examples: walking, jogging, bicycle riding (stationary or outside), swimming, water aerobics, dancing, tennis, golf (without a cart), raking leaves, pushing a lawn mower

- **Flexibility or stretching**: helps with range of motion and posture, combats rigidity, releases muscle tension, improves circulation and balance.

Examples: simple arm and leg stretches, head tilts and neck turns, trunk twists, tai chi, yoga

- **Muscle strengthening & core**: involves external resistance against muscles.

Examples: lifting weights with dumbbells or free weights, using resistance bands, Pilates, using weight machines

- **Passive**: for people having a hard time moving by their self. Therapists or family members move arms and legs for them.

Example: range of motion exercises

Safety and Awareness Tips

- Heart or lung problem? Consult with your doctor before beginning.
- Perform exercises in a chair if you are at risk for falling or freezing.
- Exercise when your PD meds are at their peak and you are “on.”
- If you experience sudden drops in blood pressure (orthostatic hypotension), remember to move slowly between lying, sitting and standing movements.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids.
- Exercise should not give you pain.

Make a lifelong commitment to exercise.
Develop a daily routine and stay active.

Exercise is Medicine for PD

Q. Recently diagnosed with PD?

A. Discuss your current activity level with your doctor. Ask for a baseline consult to physical therapy (PT) or kinesiotherapy (KT). Explore PD specific exercise options near your home.

Q. Already active? What else can I do?

A. Ask your doctor how you can exercise at higher intensity levels.

Q. Diagnosed with PD for years, but not exercising?

A. It is never too late to start. Consult a rehabilitation doctor or PT or KT to help you take the first step.

**Parkinson's Disease Research Education
and Clinical Centers (PADRECC)**

www.parkinsons.va.gov

1-800-949-1001x205769

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Exercise & Physical Activity



PARKINSON'S DISEASE

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Parkinson's Disease Research,
Education & Clinical Centers

Parkinson's disease:

- Is a slowly progressive neurologic disease affecting a person's ability to move.
- There is no cure.
- Medications are the cornerstone of therapy for symptomatic treatment of PD
- Currently, there are no drugs that slow disease progression.

Anti-parkinson drugs are not enough!

Treatment must include exercise and regular physical activity!

Benefits of Exercise:

- Improves mood
- Improves flexibility & mobility
- Improves muscle & joint stiffness
- Keeps muscles strong
- Increase energy level
- Promotes good posture
- Relieves constipation
- Helps improve balance
- Improves cardiac & respiratory function
- Decreases rate of bone loss

Research continues to study the benefits of exercise in both animal & human models. Strong evidence is emerging that exercise for people with PD:

- Repairs the brain
- Relieves motor symptoms
- Keeps you independent longer
- Provides benefits for the road ahead

Exercise may help these symptoms:

- slowness
- stiffness or rigidity
- gait
- balance problems
- tremor
- constipation
- depression

Ideas and Tips for Exercise:

- Popular Parkinson community suggestions include: walking, water exercises, bicycling, dancing, tai chi, yoga, boxing, Nintendo Wii or Microsoft Kinect Xbox games.
- Pick something fun. What activities did you enjoy as a youth?
- Try several things until you find something you like to do regularly.
- Pair with music to stay motivated and keep the intensity up.
- Go for a walk each day. Wear a pedometer and count your steps.
- Find out what is available in your community. Inquire at your hospital, clinic, support group, local gym, YMCA, dance studio, or parks & recreation department.
- Ask for a referral to a Rehabilitation doctor, Physical therapist, Occupational therapist, or Kinesiotherapist.

Parkinson's Exercise Resources

- **APDA (American Parkinson Disease Association)**
www.apdaparkinson.org
- **Brian Grant Foundation**
www.briangrant.org
- **Dance for PD®**
www.danceforparkinsons.org
- **Davis Phinney Foundation**
www.davisphinneyfoundation.org
- **Delay the Disease™**
www.delaythedisease.com
- **Exercise Helpline 888-606-1688**
Center for Neurorehabilitation at Boston University
<https://www.bu.edu/neurorehab/resource-center/apda-exercise-helpline/>
- **LSVT® Global - BIG & LOUD therapies** www.lsvtglobal.com
- **Michael J Fox Foundation**
www.michaeljfox.org
- **Parkinson's Foundation**
<https://www.parkinson.org/>
- **PD & The Art of Moving**
www.parkinsonsexercise.com
- **PWR!® (Parkinson Wellness Recovery)**
www.pwrgym.org
- **Rock Steady Boxing**
www.rocksteadyboxing.org
- **Yoga for Movement Disorders**
www.limyoga.com