Fall Prevention and Living Safely at Home with Parkinson’s

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Thursday, November 19th at 1PM ET
Fall Prevention

Rose Wichmann, PT
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Balance and Falls in Parkinson’s

Postural Instability: A primary symptom of Parkinson’s disease
• Typically emerges in mid stages of PD
• Least responsive to dopamine replacement/medications

Falls and PD
• A complex, multi-factorial problem
• Multiple potential contributing factors
Common Walking Changes in PD that Increase Falls Risk

- Shuffling: reduced step size, increases risk of tripping
- Festination: walking speed increases as steps become smaller ("runaway train")
- Retropulsion: backward balance loss
- Freezing: feeling like feet are stuck to floor
- Difficulty turning: multiple steps affecting balance
Cueing: what we say or do helps the brain to move!

For shuffling: “Big steps”
For festination: “STOP, Start over, Move big”
For freezing: “Step over” an imaginary object, or move to a rhythmic beat (counting, clapping, snapping fingers)
For turning: “March”, lifting knees high
Other Potential Contributing Factors to Falls Risk

- Improper footwear
- Complex medication schedules
- Inactivity/reduced strength
- Environmental hazards

- Low blood pressure
- Vision changes
- Thinking changes
- Fatigue
Strategies to Reduce Falls

Modify unsafe situations!
- Sit to dress. Avoid climbing. Remove clutter from floor

Avoid multi-tasking
- Focus attention on your movement

Exercise regularly
- Movement is medicine!

Use an assistive device if needed
- Practice consistent use. Seek PT referral for appropriate device
Strategies to Reduce Falls

Get adequate rest
• Take breaks during the day
• Regular bedtime

Consider using color contrast where needed
• Mark edge of steps
• Mark chair arm rest or grab bars to signal hand placement

Have blood pressure monitored
• Discuss dizziness, vision changes or other symptoms with your provider
When Someone Falls

- Do not panic!
- Allow time to rest and ensure there is no injury
- Know when it is safe to assist, and the best way to help
- Have an emergency back up plan
Involving Rehab in Your Team: Physical and Occupational Therapies

- Individualized evaluation and treatment development
- Exercise program
- Practice of daily skills for enhanced safety
- Assistive devices
- Adaptive equipment
- Carepartner instruction
- Home safety assessment

Choose therapists with experience in treating Parkinson’s disease!
For more info:

Speak with PD information specialists by calling 1-800-4PD-INFO (473-4636)

Virtually attend Fitness Fridays, visit Parkinson.org/PDHealth

Order Free Resources

- Fact Sheets
- Fitness Counts Book
- Care Partners: Caring & Coping Book

All these resources and more can be found at parkinson.org
Living Safely at Home with Parkinson’s

Danielle Arigoni
Director of Livable Communities
AARP
HomeFit
Making Home Safe and Livable for All
Why is HomeFit Important?

The Problem: America’s housing stock no longer fits its rapidly changing and aging population.

The Solution: Residents and leaders can be informed about changes to their homes that make them more suitable for everyone in their household.

The AARP HomeFit Guide is a free resource to help communities improve the quality and fit of their homes.

Learn more about HomeFit at aarp.org/homefit
Housing is generally built for a larger average household size.

- In much of the U.S., housing was built over a generation ago to serve a population of generally young, able-bodied, single-family households (typically two parents + two children).

- But in 2020, the dominant American household type, accounting for nearly 30 percent of all households, is single adults living alone. Moreover, by 2030, 1 in 5 people in the U.S. will be age 65+.

Learn more about HomeFit at aarp.org/homefit
Housing No Longer Fits: Household Size

In 2019, AARP released **Making Room** to highlight how innovative housing approaches may better suit changing demographics.  

[www.aarp.org/MakingRoom](http://www.aarp.org/MakingRoom)
Housing is generally not designed for an aging population.

• By 2034, it is projected that people age 65+ will outnumber children under 18 for the first time ever.

• More than 3/4 of people age 50+ want to remain in their home or community.

In 2018, AARP conducted a national survey on Home and Community Preferences. [Source: www.aarp.org/Research]
What People Want in Housing as They Age

• Desire to age in place **increases with age.**

• Over 60 percent of all adults own their own homes, and approximately one-third report that **major modifications are needed** to accommodate aging needs.

• Only one-third currently have an ADU, but 70 percent of adults **would consider building an ADU** for a loved one who needs care.

• Half of adults already share or would be willing to **share a home as they age**, with a major consideration being if they needed help with daily activities.

Role of AARP’s HomeFit Guide

• Helps people **live safely and comfortably** by enabling their home, regardless of housing type, to be suitable for everyone in their household, regardless of a person’s age or life stage.

• Helps individuals and families make their current or future residence, or that of a loved one, “aging-friendly.”

• Helps elected officials, policymakers, and local leaders learn about and advocate for the housing options that their communities need, so that residents of all ages can live safely and comfortably — and thrive.

Learn more about HomeFit at [aarp.org/homefit](http://aarp.org/homefit)
What is AARP’s HomeFit?

• **Over 100 room-by-room tips** that are applicable to all housing types.

• **Detailed illustrations and explanations** of how a smartly designed or modified home can meet the current and future needs of its residents.

• **Solutions for all skill levels**, from simple do-it-yourself fixes to improvements that require skilled expertise.

Learn more about HomeFit at [aarp.org/homefit](http://aarp.org/homefit)
2020 Enhancements to AARP’s HomeFit

• More inclusive:
  • Renters and owners
  • Apartment or house
  • Cultural traditions + languages
    (Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Spanish)

• More info on **smart home tech**

• Expanded frame to include visitability and “all ages” benefits

Learn more about HomeFit at aarp.org/homefit
The Bedroom

With so many portable and high-tech devices at our disposal, the bedroom has become more than just a bed room. Electronics, laptop computers, stereo gear, and game consoles often make their way into the area. While the bed can and should be accessorized to insulate the bedroom area, the use of several items in the bedroom — especially if these devices emit heat — should be approached with caution.

- If there isn’t enough room on a bedside table for a lamp as well as all the other items that end up on the nightstand, consider installing a wall sconce with adjustable arm. The lighting can be hardwired or corded. Adding adhesive clip to a cord allows the wall sconce to swing out of the way.
- The bedroom should have a bedside telephone or cell phone that’s brought into the room each night. Leave it in an extra charger so there’s always one plugged in and ready.
- Positioning a bed so that one side is flush to the wall means that it will be harder to make it and more difficult to maneuver when changing the sheets. Placing the bed so that both sides are accessible is an easier, more logical solution.
- A digital clock with large, lighted numbers will make the time visible from a distance and not requires having to put on glasses or turn on a light.
- Power outlets happen. Keep a charging flash light near the bed (or know how to use the cell phone flashlight function if needed).
- Carbon monoxide (CO) is a deadly, colorless gas that results from burning carbon fuels, such as natural gas, propane, wood, heating oil or gasoline. Any residence with fuel-burning appliances, heater, fireplace or attached garage needs at least one carbon monoxide detector on every level of the home — and especially in or near the bedroom. CO detectors (also called carbon monoxide detectors) are often equipped with battery-powered plug in and battery versions. They are most effective when placed five feet from the floor or ceiling below the ceiling.

FOLLOW THE NUMBERS

1. A light switch near the doorway can power a sliding feature that light can be turned on from entering the room. Although such a switch can be wired to a switch in another location, the switch will not work unless one switch or the other is in the "off" position.
2. Create a designated spot — such as a side table, drawer, dresser top or nightstand — for storing any electronic cords and accessories.
3. Ensure that all furniture is either secured to the wall or firmly enough not to tip over. If the home trip wire release, ticket and wall hanging should not be installed near the bed.
4. Windows should have screens or windows that open for fresh air and air can help reduce the risk of emergencies.
5. A motion sensor night light will provide needed light when walking in or from the bathroom in the middle of the night. Another option is to place a motion or vehicle-activated light fixture in the room.
6. During the day, keep the curtains, blinds or shades to bring in natural light.
7. If area rugs are used, be sure they stay and secured to the floor with an anti-skid mat or non-slip tape.
Exterior: Zero-Step Entrances

- Modifications to existing entrances can take many forms (zero step, walker steps, threshold ramps, temp/perm ramps)
- The goals are safety and practicality
Entryway: Doorbells and Handles

Peepholes and doorbells
  • Video doorbells (smart home option)

Handles and locks
  • Lever-style door handles
  • Digital door lock (smart home option)
Entry Spaces

- Useful furniture
- Convenient storage options
- Alternatives to a hall closet
Smart Home: Virtual Home Assistants

- Turn the TV on and off
- Dial into video calls and online meetings
- Play music and podcasts
- Control lights and appliances
- Do online research
- Adjust thermostats
- Lock and unlock doors
- Make shopping lists
- Place telephone calls
- Provide reminders
Kitchen: Cabinets, Shelving and Drawers

- Adjustable lighting for ease-of-use
- Lower-level cabinetry and pull-out shelves for better access
- Open shelving for visibility
- Drawers for maximizing space
Hallways and Stairways

- Clearances
- Handrails
- Carpeting
- Motion-sensor night-lights
- Treads
- Runners
- Riser covers
AARP: More HomeFit Resources

- **HomeFit Guide** - visit [aarp.org/homefit](http://aarp.org/homefit) to order or download the free guide.

- **HomeFit AR** - uses image recognition to identify design elements and employs augmented reality to provide information on specific “to-dos” or fixes. Download free at the App Store.

- **Here to Stay: Home Upkeep for All** - a guide to help residents plan and prepare so that home maintenance is more manageable and affordable. [http://aarpfoundation.org/heretostay](http://aarpfoundation.org/heretostay)
Thank You
Resources

National Helpline
Specialists answer calls about all aspects of Parkinson’s in addition to helping you expert care.
1-800-4PD-INFO
Helpline@Parkinson.org
Mon- Friday 9 am to 8 pm ET

Fact Sheets & Publications
Get the resources and information you need to start living a better life with Parkinson’s.
Parkinson.org/FactSheets

Podcast: Substantial Matters
Parkinson.org/Podcast

PDGENEration
Parkinson’s Foundation’s national initiative that offers genetic testing for relevant Parkinson's-related genes and counseling at no cost. Parkinson.org/PDGeneration

Newly Diagnosed Kit
Designed to help you get started on your journey to living well with PD
Parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed

Aware in Care Kit
Includes tools and info for people with PD to share with hospital staff during a planned or emergency hospital stay
Parkinson.org/Awareincare
AARP: Learn More and Stay in Touch

Free publications, weekly newsletter, info on livable work in your community …and more.

aarp.org/livable

@AARPLivable

AARPLivableCommunities

livable@aarp.org
Symptom Management: Is it PD, Medication or Aging?

**Tuesday, February 9th**
1pm ET

Motor Symptoms Co-management: Occupational Therapy and Neurology
Michael S. Okun, MD
Lisa Warren, MHS, OTR/L

**Tuesday, March 9th**
1pm ET

Exploring Non-Motor Symptoms: Neuropathy, Fatigue, GI Issues
Ellen Walter, NP
Steven Swank, Clinical Pharmacist

**Tuesday, April 20th**
1pm ET

Mental Wellbeing and Memory
Gregory Pontone, MD, MHS

Register at [Parkinson.org/ExpertBriefings](http://Parkinson.org/ExpertBriefings)
Don't go anywhere - your feedback is important to us! Kindly complete our evaluation after the close of this webinar.