Living Alone: Home Safety and Management in PD

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Disclosures

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Objectives

1. Describe person, activity and environment-related risk factors and contributors to home safety problems associated with Parkinson disease.

2. Understand the impact of home safety problems on daily function and quality of life among people with Parkinson disease.

3. List potential strategies for managing home safety risks.
Outline

• General frameworks
  • Person-Environment-Activity
  • Problem-solving process

• Application to falls

• Other tips for those who live alone

• Resources to access/explore on your own
A Way to Think About Daily Function…

Person
• Your abilities
• Other personal factors

Environment
• Where you do things
• Social context

Activity
• What you do
• How you do it

(e.g., Baum & Christiansen, 1997, 2001 2005; Law, 1997)
General Problem-Solving Approach

Goal
- Analyze and record the main aspects of the problem
- Develop a goal

Plan
- Brainstorm solutions
- Evaluate solutions
- Pick the best
- List the steps, make a plan

Review
- Evaluate/verify effectiveness
- What worked? What didn’t?
- Scrap, modify, optimize?

Do
- Implement solution
- Monitor effectiveness
- Give it enough time!

Analyze and record the main aspects of the problem.
Develop a goal.

Brainstorm solutions.
Evaluate solutions.
Pick the best.
List the steps, make a plan.

Evaluate/verify effectiveness.
What worked? What didn’t?
Scrap, modify, optimize?

Implement solution.
Monitor effectiveness.
Give it enough time!

(e.g., Haskins et al., 2012; Ylsvaker & Feeny, 1998)
Falls in PD

- 45-68% of people with PD fall annually
- 2/3rds of these people fall recurrently

Consequences
- Injury, pain
- Activity limitations, loss of independence
- Caregiver burden, nursing home placement
- Fear of falling
- Reduced quality of life and participation
What Contributes to Falls in PD?

- Gait & balance problems
- Cognitive impairment
- Visual changes
- Fatigue
- Medication effects
- Orthostatic hypotension
- Anxiety, stress

Person

Falls

Environment

Activity

- Tripping hazards
- Inadequate lighting
- Crowds
- Doorways
- Slippery surfaces

- Dual tasking
- Time of day
- Time pressure
- Autopilot
- Reaching, bending
- Turning
- Transfers
First Step: Understand the Problem

- Where was I?
- What was I doing?
- Be specific!!
- E.g. Getting the bowl from the top right cabinet (vs. making dinner)

- When did it happen?
  - E.g. time of day, meds status, after the grandkids left

- How did I feel?
  - E.g. tired, “on/off,” stressed, light headed, fine

- Why do I think it happened?
  - Remember Person, Activity, and Environmental factors

- Could it have been avoided? What could I have done differently?
Second Step: Identify Possible Solutions

- What can I change about myself (Person)?
  - What I’m doing
  - How I’m doing it
  - When I’m doing it

- What can I change about the Activity?
  - What I’m doing
  - How I’m doing it
  - When I’m doing it

- What can I change about the Environment?

- Who can I ask for help?

- Brainstorm solutions
- Evaluate solutions
- Pick the best
- List the steps, make a plan
What Can I Change About Myself?

• Exercise/training!
  • See Dr. Fay Horak’s webinar from January 19, 2018
  • Best is to incorporate movements that challenge balance in a variety of ways (e.g. tai chi, dance, boxing, agility training)
  • Practice/train in a safe place, while supervised, while “on” meds, with others

• Adjust medications
  • To address wearing off, dyskinesia, orthostatic hypotension, etc.

• Mindfulness to reduce stress and stay focused on the present moment

• Good sleep hygiene, seek treatment for sleep problems
What Can I Change About the Activity?

• Avoid dual-tasking (doing something else while walking)
  • E.g. talking on the phone, looking for items in your purse
  • Keep your hands free while walking (except for a mobility device)
  • Sit while dressing, cooking, etc.
  • Possible to improve with supervised training/practice, but until then, it’s probably best to avoid in daily life

• For freezing:
  • Change direction, shift weight, step over something
  • Sing, hum, count,
  • Stop and take a deep breath

• Make “U turns” vs. pivoting
What Can I Change About the Activity?
Break it Down into Steps

1. Hands on arm rests
2. Place feet correctly
3. Move pelvis forward
4. Flex trunk
5. Rise - look up

May need or want to recite the steps out loud at first, or use signs or reminders

Reach across your body with your inside arm to help roll →
What Can I Change About the Activity? cont.

• Plan your day and think about time
  • More physically demanding or higher fall risk activities when feeling best (e.g. most awake, “on” meds, late morning)
  • Build in rest breaks or a short nap (≤ 30 min)
  • Give yourself extra time to get things done
  • Cut your “to-do” list by 30-50%

• Use adaptive equipment, devices (see pictures at end)
  • Can be on an as-needed basis

• Clothing
  • Avoid changing footwear to reduce the need to adapt
  • Avoid long, loose clothing that could cause tripping or get caught on things
What Can I Change About the Environment?

- **Change layout**
  - Increase walking and turning space

- **Add support**
  - Grab bars
  - Railings (both sides of walkways)
  - Places to rest

- **Raise surfaces**
  - Beds, toilets, chairs

- **Remove fall hazards & obstacles**
  - Clutter, cords, rugs
  - Low pile carpeting

- **Re-organize**
  - To avoid bending and reaching
  - Keep commonly used items close at hand, duplicate

- **Improve lighting**
  - Brightness, glare
  - Night lights, flashlights

- **Cognitive supports**
  - Reduce distractions
  - Add signage, reminders

- **External cues for gait**
  - Auditory (metronome, music)
  - Visual (lines on the floor)

Pictures at end
Next: Select Solution(s) to Try

- Weigh the pros & cons
- Select which to implement
- Make a plan
  - Multi-step solutions
  - Action plans – specify exactly when, where, how you will do it

You can ask family/friends for home safety modifications or assistive devices for your birthday or holiday present!
Finally: Start Testing!

- Did this plan allow me to achieve my goal?

**Review**
- Evaluate/verify effectiveness
- What worked? What didn’t?
- Scrap, modify, optimize?

**Do**
- Implement solution
- Monitor effectiveness
- Give it enough time!

May need to try something else
Home Safety Self-Assessment Tool (HSSAT)

- OT Geriatric Group at the University at Buffalo
- Good reliability, validity and responsiveness to change
- Free and downloadable
1. Home safety checklist and solutions
   - 10 areas of the home: front & back entrance, hallway/foyer, living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, staircase, laundry room/basement, garage

2. Assistive devices and helpful products (31)
   - Selected based on usability, quality and ratings by users
   - Descriptions, price range, pictures

3. “How to” home improvement instructions
   - Detailed steps with before-after pictures

4. Tips for fall prevention

5. Providers in Erie County, NY

6. ADA guidelines

7. Action log
Solutions for the Problems in Kitchen

1. Cabinet too high or too low
   Move items to the shelves closest to the counter. Add hooks to the wall for pots and pans you use frequently.

2. Not enough counter space
   Make sure available counter space is cleared of clutter. Use Lazy Susan. (See page 27, item 14)
   Move kitchen table closer to counter for additional work space.
   Use a rolling cart for added work space.

3. Using a stool to a chair to reach things
   Move items to lower shelves. Replace the stool with a sturdy step ladder. (See page 27, item 12)

4. Not enough room to maneuver
   Eliminate clutter or excessive furniture (extra kitchen chairs, etc.) to add space.
   Remove a leaf from the table and push it closer to the wall.

5. Presence of a throw/scatter rug
   Remove a scatter rug or use a double sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to the floor. (See page 28, item 9)

6. Presence of slippery floor
   Do not walk on a wet floor. Wear comfortable and fit shoes or socks with a non-slip sole. (See page 27, item 13)
   Change flooring surface to one that is less slippery.

7. Poor lighting
   Increase wattage of bulbs to allowable level.
   Add under counter lighting.
   Add additional overhead lighting.

8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals
   Remove the pet from the kitchen while cooking and add a pet gate to the entry ways of the kitchen. (See page 27, item 15)
   Put the pet outside or in a crate.

For information on additional device, See page 28, item 16

The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- 1. Cabinet too high or low
- 2. Not enough counter space
- 3. Using a stool or a chair to reach things
- 4. Not enough room to maneuver
- 5. Presence of throw/scatter rug
- 6. Presence of slippery floor
- 7. Poor lighting
- 8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals

Other

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.
Other Resources

Parkinson’s Foundation Home Safety:

AARP 31 tips for “future proofing” your home:
https://www.infographicsarchive.com/lifestyle-infographics/31-tips-future-proofing-home/
Professional Support

- Occupational and Physical Therapists with expertise in movement disorders and/or home safety
  - Exercise/training for balance, gait, mobility
  - External cueing systems
  - Cognitive and movement strategies
  - Task adaptations
  - Home modifications
  - Assistive devices
  - Community resources
  - Can help navigate payment

Ask your physician for a referral!
Keep in Mind

- There is likely no silver bullet
- An iterative process, requires some trial and error
  - If it doesn’t work, it’s not a problem with YOU, it’s simply a problem with the plan…So try another!
- Seek input/help from others…and the internet
  - Especially for generating, evaluating and optimizing solutions
- Manage your expectations
  - Some problems will not be completely solved
  - E.g. The house doesn’t need to be spotless, you don’t have to get it all done in one day
- Remember the goal
  - The purpose of walking & driving are to get from place to place
  - The purpose of cooking is to…
Living Alone: Planning & Organization

• A place for everything
• Duplicate items or information you access frequently
  • Keep a phone in each room or a cell phone in your pocket or fanny pack pre-programmed with important contact numbers
• “Smart home” – automate as much as possible
  • Motion sensors or timers for lights
  • Automated features on appliances – convenience & safety
  • Alarms, timers to remind you to do things
  • For locking doors, closing garage, turning alarms on
Living Alone: Medical Emergencies

- Have 911 on “speed dial”
- Personal emergency response system
- Make your medical information accessible
  - E.g. iPhone Health app, medical ID bracelet, card
  - Critical info: “I have PD”, medications and contraindications, allergies, emergency contacts
- Learn to self-Heimlich
- Inform responders of PD or live alone status
- Familiarize yourself with any other community services
  - E.g. St. Louis County Access and Functional Needs registry
Living Alone: Managing Medical Care

- Prepare for doctors appointments
  - Write down/type out questions and record answers while there
  - Take someone with you!

- Parkinson’s Foundation “Aware in Care” kit
  - What to do before, during and after a hospital visit
  - Tools and information to share with hospital staff during visit
  - http://www.awareincare.org/

- Designate and advocate, durable power of attorney, advanced medical directive
Aware in Care Kit

Hospital Action Plan, PD ID Bracelet, Medical Alert Card, Medication Form, PD Fact Sheet, “I have Parkinson’s” Reminder Slips, Magnet
Stay Socially Connected

Social isolation & loneliness = health risk
- Profound health effects
- E.g. memory loss, stroke, heart disease, hypertension, physical inactivity, poor sleep, poor immune functioning, depression, mortality, etc.

Social engagement → benefits psychological, cognitive and physical health
Stay Socially Connected cont.

- PD organizations for wellness, social and instrumental support, education, etc.
- Keep your neighbors, friends, family in the loop
- Regular social appointments or check-ins
- Volunteer
- Join a class or club
- Designated helpers
  - Certain people for certain tasks
  - …with reciprocity
Use Your Resources!

- Local chapters of PD organizations (e.g. Parkinson’s Foundation, American Parkinson Disease Association)
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Community resources
  - Religious organizations
  - Community centers
  - Libraries
- 2-1-1 (US and part of Canada)

...transportation, home repair, chores, meal provision, legal & tax assistance, check-ins, information & referrals, wellness, education...

*image from www.clintonvillecrc.org
Resources cont.

- TaskRabbit, Thumbtack, HomeAdvisor, etc.

- GoGo Grandparent
  - Gogograndparent.com, 1 (855) 464-6872
  - US & Canada
  - Uber & Lyft
  - Regular schedule option
  - Text alerts to family members
Final thoughts...

YOU have control
• Help yourself
• Help others
• Seek help

PREVENTION is key
• Make changes early
• Don’t wait for first challenge to happen
• Anticipate → Plan = Avoid
To avoid bending
washlet ➔

->{$\text{toilelevator}}$
Strips on steps for increased visibility and grip
External Cues for Gait/Freezing

Beats Mobile →
Handibar for getting in and out of the car

Offset hinges to widen doorways
Sample Fall Diary

**FALL DIARY**

For falls or near falls, answer these questions. Be as specific and detailed as possible!

(type directly into the fields, and they will expand as needed)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>When (Date &amp; time)</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>What happened? What was I doing?</th>
<th>How did I feel? (mentally and physically)</th>
<th>Why did it happen? What could I do differently next time to avoid it?</th>
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Sept. 8, 2018
**Mental Health & PD** | Laura Marsh, MD

Nov. 27, 2018
**Taking Care of Someone with Advanced PD** | Janis M. Miyasaki, MD, MEd, FRCPC, FAAN

Jan. 15, 2019
**Non-motor symptoms: What’s New?** | Ronald Pfeiffer, MD

March 5, 2019
**Seeing Clearly with PD: Vision Changes** | Dan Gold, MD

April 9, 2019
**PD & Medication: What’s New?** | Rajesh Pahwa, MD

June 11, 2019
**When Care Comes to You: Tips for Using Home Health Aides, PTs & OTs** | Julie Hershberg PT, DPT, NCS
Allied Team Training for Parkinson’s Disease™ (ATTP)

OCTOBER 17-20, 2018
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
Educational Resources

Order Materials
Information about Parkinson’s symptoms, medications, resources and more.
http://parkinson.org/books

Aware in Care Kit
Includes tools and information for people with PD to share with hospital staff during a planned or emergency hospital stay.
http://parkinson.org/awareincare

National Helpline
Available at 1-800-4PD-INFO or http://helpline@parkinson.org
Monday through Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET.

Podcast: Substantial Matters
New episodes every other Tuesday featuring Parkinson’s experts highlighting treatments, techniques and research.
http://parkinson.org/podcast