Parkinson’s Foundation Georgia is dedicated to making life better for people with Parkinson’s disease by improving care and advancing research toward a cure. With a unique focus on the benefits of exercise for those living with PD, we manage the PD Gladiators Fitness Network, a network of over 60 weekly community-based exercise classes in greater Atlanta and provide education and outreach to the medical community about the emerging body of research indicating that exercise can change the brain and positively impact PD symptoms.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- An original PD Gladiator shares his tips for living well with PD for 21 years and counting!
- Our new Gladiator Guide program offers connection and support
- In the news—WSB-TV features the PD Gladiators Fitness Network and Moving Day Atlanta
- Upcoming events: Moving Day, Art Therapy, a free educational program & more!
Who's in Charge Here?

Lessons I've Learned After 21 Years with Parkinson's

Written by Bob Negri

When people find out that I've had Parkinson’s disease for 21 years and have minimal visible symptoms, they inevitably ask “What is your secret?” My response is simply that I have no secret but choose to live each and every day to the fullest, while managing my disease head-on.

The question you must ask yourself is “Who’s in charge here?” Am I doing everything in my power to fight this adversary? Am I willing to take the time to learn more about the impact PD has on various elements of the body and the brain?

Over the years, I have discovered that treatment of this disease is more than just medication and doctor’s visits. I’ve narrowed down what I believe are important elements to combatting Parkinson’s in these seven simple steps.

7 Steps to Taking Charge and Fighting PD

Step 1: Accept you have Parkinson’s and stop feeling sorry for yourself. Being diagnosed with PD can be a shock which often carries with it depression, apathy and denial. You’re not alone in this battle and the sooner you begin focusing on the future and the hope it brings, and
the resources available to you, the faster you will begin seeing positive results.

**Step 2: Bring family members and close friends into your world of Parkinson’s.** Usually a spouse takes on the role of care giver. If there isn’t a spouse, a close friend or another family member may play that role. But having someone you can count on is critical to your mobility and general wellbeing.

**Step 3: Evaluate your exercise regimen and understand the role exercise plays in combatting the effects of Parkinson’s.** The power of exercise cannot be overstated. Learn more about all of the exercise options available in your area. In metro Atlanta, the PD Gladiators Fitness Network is a fantastic resource.

**Step 4: Figure out how certain foods make you feel.** A balanced diet that focuses on vegetables (especially ones with color), fruits, fish and poultry, with a limited amount of sugar and carbs is best for me. Excessive carbs slow me down and too much sugar exacerbates my symptoms, especially my motor skills. Healthy eating is good for everyone but for those of us with Parkinson’s, it can have a real impact on our quality of life. You are what you eat!

**Step 5: Focus on getting a restful night’s sleep.** This is easier said than done. There are numerous reasons for getting a poor night’s sleep. Combine age and urinary issues with the effects of the disease itself and the end result is far from restful. Working with your physician, you may find various medical and non-medical treatments that may help. Monitor
your pre-bedtime habits. I have found that turning the computer off by 9:00 p.m., not consuming liquids after 8 p.m. and controlling post-dinner snacks really helps me improve my sleep patterns.

**Step 6: Volunteer in clinical trials.** Finding a cure may just come from a clinical trial that you participate in, so get close to the action and be part of the solution! Click here for more information on clinical trials and how to get involved.

**Step 7: Get involved with the Parkinson’s community.** There are plenty of educational meetings, community events and fitness classes open to all of us. Participating in these events help inform us about the best treatment options and also provide us with a way to interact with others who understand what we are going through. These steps are not new, but I sure hope they help. I titled this message “Who’s in Charge Here?” The answer should be self-explanatory. You are! Make a commitment today to get control of your life and your Parkinson’s and show the world your gladiator spirit!

*Bob Negri has been a participant in the LDBF-PD Gladiators Boxing Training for PD program since the very first class in January 2014. He is also a volunteer in our new Gladiator Guide program.*
Gladiator Guide Program - We Are Here for You!

Our Gladiator Guide program is a volunteer-run initiative dedicated to connecting individuals (Gladiators) within the PDG network of classes for the purposes of strengthening our community of PWPs and advocating the benefits of our exercise programs.

Additionally, the Gladiator Guide program will also serve as a way to introduce people to the Parkinson’s Foundation and provide a personal contact to those who are newly diagnosed or new to our programs and resources.

In the News!

Check out this story from the WSB Community highlighting the Parkinson's Foundation PD Gladiators Fitness Network. We're so thankful for the support of founders Ellie and Larry Kahn and their tireless efforts to make life better for people with Parkinson's! Thank you WSB-TV for being a media partner for the Moving Day Atlanta Walk for Parkinson's. Register today at www.movingdayatlanta.org.
Upcoming Events

October 17-20, 2018 – Allied Team Training for Parkinson’s (ATTP™)

This training helps medical professionals from diverse disciplines learn the best techniques in Parkinson's disease care through a dynamic team-based approach designed to deliver the right interprofessional, patient-centered care at the right time throughout the continuum of care. Click here for more information.

October 22, 2018 – Living Well with Parkinson's - Art Therapy

Join the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta on October 22 from 1-2 p.m. for an art therapy session geared toward the Parkinson’s
community, led by Ling Oleas. During the session, a care partner support group is provided. This program is supported by a community grant from the Parkinson’s Foundation. [Click here for more information.]

October 27, 2018 – Moving Day Atlanta - A Walk for Parkinson's

[**Moving Day Atlanta**](https://example.com), benefiting the Parkinson's Foundation! Moving Day is your chance to speak up about Parkinson’s disease and move others to take action. It is a movement for change—towards more awareness, more funding, and more understanding of a disease that affects so many of our family and friends.

- **Date/Time:** Saturday, October 27, 2018 (Registration Opens: 9:00 a.m. / Walk Start Time: 11:00 a.m.)
- **Location:** The Promenade - Piedmont Park
- **Contact:** Celeste Tennant / 404-397-1014 / [ctennant@parkinson.org](mailto:ctennant@parkinson.org)
- **Register Your Walk Team Today:** [www.movingdayatlanta.org](http://www.movingdayatlanta.org)
- **You can also join the PD Gladiators Team!**

November 30, 2018 – Educational Symposium – “Fitness Counts: Managing Your Parkinson’s with Exercise”

Join the Parkinson's Foundation for this free educational symposium on Friday, November 30 at Heritage Sandy Springs. Hear from local experts Jorge Juncos, MD, Joash Lazarus, MD, James Annesi, PhD, and Amy Morse, DPT, as they discuss the evidence-based benefits of exercise on Parkinson’s disease (including mobility, mood change and quality of life) and show you how preventive and rehabilitative therapy, medication and devices can help PD patients exercise at effective levels at any stage of
the disease. The symposium is free and lunch will be provided, but seating is limited. Sign up today for this must-see event!

- **Date/Time:** Friday, November 30 (10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.)
- **Location:** Heritage Sandy Springs - 6110 Blue Stone Rd, Sandy Springs, GA 30328
- **RSVP:** [www.parkinson.org/atledu](http://www.parkinson.org/atledu)

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