

Medications for Motor Symptoms



There is no standard treatment for Parkinson's disease (PD). Treatment for each person with PD is based on his or her symptoms. There are many medications available to treat Parkinson's motor symptoms and it is common for people with PD to take a variety of these medications — at different doses and at different times of day — to manage motor symptoms.

Remember that medication is only part of the overall treatment plan for combating PD. Exercise, physical and occupational therapy, as well as lifestyle changes are also key to living well with PD.

Important: These medication tables are designed as companion inserts to be used with the book Medications: A Treatment Guide to Parkinson's. The medications listed below are prescription medications only and do not include over-the-counter medications. Although this is a comprehensive list of motor medications, it is not all-inclusive.

Levodopa

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Carbidopa/levodopa immediate-release tablets (Sinemet)	10/100, 25/100 or 25/250 mg tablets	150–2,000 mg of levodopa/day in separate doses	Low blood pressure, dizziness, nausea, constipation and behavioral changes	For symptoms of Parkinson's (slowness, stiffness, tremor, etc.)
Carbidopa/levodopa immediate-release orally disintegrating (Parcopa)	10/100, 25/100 or 25/250 mg tablets	150–2,000 mg of levodopa/day in separate doses	Same as above	Same as above (may be appropriate for people with difficulty swallowing)
Carbidopa/levodopa controlled-release (formerly Sinemet CR)	25/100 or 50/200 mg tablets	200–2,400 mg of levodopa/day in separate doses	Same as above	For symptoms of Parkinson's (slowness, stiffness, tremor, etc.)
Carbidopa/levodopa extended-release (Rytary)	23.75/95, 36.25/145, 48.75/195 or 61.25/245 mg capsules	855–2,340 mg of levodopa/day	Same as above	Same as above

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Carbidopa/levodopa/entacapone tablets (Stalevo) [see: entacapone in COMT-Inhibitors section]	12.5/50/200, 18.75/75/200, 25/100/200, 31.25/125/200, 37.5/150/200 or 50/200/200 mg tablets	150–1,200 mg of levodopa/day	Same as above plus diarrhea and discolored urine (due to entacapone)	Replacement for immediate-release carbidopa/levodopa for "on/off" fluctuations
Carbidopa/levodopa enteral suspension (Duopa) via surgically implanted tube in small intestine	4.86/20 per mL	Up to 2,000 mg of levodopa over 16 daytime hours	Low blood pressure, dizziness, nausea and constipation	For the treatment of "on/off" fluctuations in advanced Parkinson's
Levodopa inhalation powder (Inbrija)	42 mg per capsule	84 mg (2 capsules) inhaled by mouth up to 5 times/day as needed	Same as above plus cough	For intermittent, sudden "off" episodes in combination with carbidopa/levodopa

Dopamine Agonists

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Ropinirole (formerly Requip)	0.25, 0.5, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 mg tablets	9–24 mg total/day in 3 separate doses	Low blood pressure, dizziness, nausea, leg swelling, confusion, sleep attacks and behavioral changes, including compulsive behaviors	For symptoms of Parkinson's (slowness, stiffness, tremor, etc.) and restless legs syndrome (RLS)
Ropinirole extended-release (formerly Requip XL)	2, 4, 6, 8 or 12 mg tablets	8–24 mg once/day	Same as above	Same as above
Pramipexole (Mirapex)	0.125, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, 1 or 1.5 mg tablets	1.5–4.5 mg total/day in 3 separate doses	Same as above	Same as above
Pramipexole extended-release (Mirapex ER)	0.375, 0.75, 1.5, 2.25, 3, 3.75 or 4.5 mg tablets	1.5–4.5 mg once/day	Same as above	Same as above



Dopamine Agonists

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Rotigotine (Neupro)	1, 2, 3, 4, 6 or 8 mg patch	4–8 mg once/day	Low blood pressure, dizziness, nausea, leg swelling, confusion, sleep attacks and behavioral changes, including compulsive behaviors, and possible skin irritation	For symptoms of Parkinson's (slowness, stiffness, tremor, etc.) and restless legs syndrome (RLS)
Apomorphine HCl injection (Apokyn)	10 mg/mL vial	Typically 0.2–0.6 mL every 2 hours as needed	Same as above plus possible injection site irritation	For intermittent, sudden "off" episodes
Apomorphine HCl sublingual film (Kynmobi)	10, 15, 20, 25 or 30 mg film	10–30mg per dose placed under the tongue, up to 5 times/day as needed, separated by 2 hours	Same as above plus possible mouth/throat irritation	Same as above

MAO-B Inhibitors

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Selegiline (formerly Eldepryl)	5 mg tablets or capsules	5 mg twice/day (with breakfast and lunch)	Nausea, dry mouth, lightheadedness, constipation; may worsen dyskinesia	May be used alone or with carbidopa/levodopa for symptoms of Parkinson's (slowness, stiffness, tremor, etc.)
Rasagiline (Azilect)	0.5 or 1.0 mg tablets	1 mg once/day	Same as above	Same as above
Selegiline HCL orally disintegrating (Zelapar)	1.25 or 2.5 mg tablets	1.25–2.5 mg once/day	Same as above	Same as above
Safinamide (Xadago)	50 or 100 mg tablets	50 or 100 mg once/day	Same as above	May be used with carbidopa/levodopa for "on/off" fluctuations



COMT-Inhibitors

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Entacapone (Comtan)	200 mg tablets	200 mg tablets with each levodopa dose	Increased side effects of levodopa (dyskinesia, low blood pressure/dizziness), diarrhea and discolored urine	Used in combination with carbidopa/levodopa for "on/off" fluctuations
Opicapone (Ongentys)	25 or 50 mg capsules	50 mg once/day at bedtime	Increased side effects of levodopa	Same as above
Tolcapone (Tasmar)	100 mg tablets	100 mg up to 3 times/day Maximum 200 mg 3 times/day	Increased side effects of levodopa plus diarrhea, discolored urine and can cause liver problems	Same as above

Adenosine A2A Antagonists

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Istradefylline (Nourianz)	20 or 40 mg tablets	20–40 mg once/day	Dyskinesia, insomnia, hallucinations and dizziness	Used in combination with carbidopa/levodopa for "on/off" fluctuations

Amantadine

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Amantadine (formerly Symmetrel)	100 mg capsules or tablets	100 mg 2–3 times/day	Dizziness, hallucinations, nausea, confusion, leg discoloration, low blood pressure when standing, dry mouth, constipation and urinary retention	For levodopa-induced dyskinesia and symptoms of Parkinson's



Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Amantadine ER capsules (Gocovri)	68.5 or 137 mg capsules	137–274 mg once/day at bedtime	Dizziness, hallucinations, nausea, confusion, leg discoloration, low blood pressure when standing, dry mouth, constipation and urinary retention	For levodopa-induced dyskinesia and symptoms of Parkinson's
Amantadine ER tablets (Osmolex ER)	29, 193 or 258 mg tablets	129–322 mg once/day upon waking	Nausea, dizziness/lightheadedness and insomnia	Same as above

Anticholinergics

Medication (brand name in parentheses)	Dosages	Typical Treatment	Common Side Effects	Usage in Parkinson's
Trihexyphenidyl (formerly Artane)	2 or 5 mg tablets 2mg/5mL elixir	1–2 mg 2–3 times/day	Confusion, memory issues, hallucinations, dry mouth, blurry vision and urinary retention	For tremor and dystonia, especially in Young Onset PD; should be avoided in older adults
Benzotropine (Cogentin)	0.5, 1 or 2 mg tablets	0.5–2 mg 2–3 times/day	Same as above	Same as above

A wide variety of free publications are also available, including our book, *Medications*. To order, call or email our Helpline: [1.800.4PD.INFO \(1.800.473.4636\)](tel:18004PDINFO) / Helpline@Parkinson.org.

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Notes

