

The Importance of Exercise and Activity for People with Parkinson's

People with Parkinson's who start exercising earlier experience a significant slower decline in quality of life than those who start later. Regular exercise can help combat muscle stiffness, posture changes and weakness; reduce balance, walking and other mobility changes; and manage constipation, which is commonly seen in people with PD.

You can encourage regular exercise and activity in the following ways:

- » **Help your loved one establish a regular exercise routine.** Offer to join the person with Parkinson's for a walk, bike ride or visit to the local health club.
- » **Allow the person with Parkinson's to be as independent as possible**, but help when needed. Certain tasks may now take longer to perform, and PD symptoms can change throughout the day.
- » Loss of automatic movements can make the person with Parkinson's less inclined to move around, so **remind your loved one to change position at least every hour during the day.** People with Parkinson's should avoid long periods of time sitting. Suggest listening to an audiobook while walking around or try watching TV from a treadmill.
- » **Encourage your loved one to pursue hobbies and activities.** Parkinson's disease can cause apathy or loss of motivation, and changes in motor control can make activities your loved one enjoyed in the past more difficult, so he or she may be less likely to participate without encouragement from others.
- » **Seek a referral to a physical therapist** who can provide individual evaluation, recommend an exercise program and help with follow-through.

DID YOU KNOW?

Based on findings from the Parkinson's Foundation's *Parkinson's Outcomes Project*, the largest-ever clinical study of Parkinson's, it is recommended that people with PD engage in at least 2.5 hours of exercise a week for a better quality of life. Help your loved one get up and get moving! Visit [Parkinson.org/exercise](https://www.parkinson.org/exercise) for more tips.