

Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a progressive, degenerative disease that affects an estimated seven to ten million people worldwide. Parkinson's Disease is commonly thought to be an illness prevalent in older people. However, around 4% of cases get diagnosed in patients under the age of 50.

Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease

The symptoms that people have from Parkinson's Disease vary based on the progression of the illness. Not everyone will have the same ailments and complaints. They can change over time as the disease advances. Symptoms typically develop between age 50 and 60. Since this illness emerges slowly, it isn't uncommon for them to go unrecognized by family, friends, and even the person who has the disease.

Muscle Rigidity - Stiff or aching muscles, along with rigidity are common in people with Parkinson's. Reduced mobility and arm swing on one side of the body when walking are the first telltale signs of Parkinson's Disease. This impairment is a result of rigid muscles. Rigidity may interfere with leg muscles, facial muscles, your neck, and other parts of the body. Muscles often feel tired and achy.

Problems with Walking and Balance - Someone diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease is likely to have issues walking and may take small steps or shuffle with their feet close together, slightly bent forward at the waist, and could have troubles turning around. In combination, posture and balance troubles could cause slips and falls. Typically, these complications appear in as the progression of the disease accelerates.

Tremors - Shaking is typically one of the first symptoms Parkinson's Disease patients will experience and will get noticed by family or friends. Shaking often affects the hands, arms, or legs. These tremors can take place when awake, when sitting, standing, or resting. Moving the affected part of the body counteracts the shaking. In the beginning, tremors may only occur on one side of the body. Other body parts that could exhibit tremors include the lips, chin, or tongue.

Parkinson's Disease Causes

While there is no one singular known cause of Parkinson's Disease, aging plays a significant role in the onset of the condition.

Other factors believed to increase the chances of the emergence of this degenerative disease include having a genetic disposition or other family members who have also developed the disease.

In some cases, exposure to environmental hazards such as pesticides, well water, and other chemicals may also play a part in the development of this disease.

Treating Parkinson's Disease

There is no known cure for Parkinson's Disease. However, the symptoms of the disease can get managed with treatments including medication, physical therapy, and ongoing management from a primary care physician and your care team, such as internists, physical therapists, and neurologists.

While Parkinson's Disease affects people typically in their 50's and 60's, there is a chance for the disease to appear at earlier ages.

If you or a loved one is exhibiting typical symptoms of Parkinson's Disease, such as tremors or shaking, it is a good idea to schedule an appointment with your physician as soon as possible.