

Parkinson's

Self-Management Plan

- Follow a healthy lifestyle. Eat a balanced diet.
- Maintain adequate hydration.
- Manage your stress.
- Get regular physical activity/exercise.
- Follow your health care providers' recommendations regarding medications.

Green Flags—All Clear



If you:

- Follow a healthy lifestyle, get physical activity or exercise, eat a balanced diet, manage your stress, and take medications as prescribed

What this means ...

- Good work!

Keep up the great work!

Yellow Flags—Caution



If you have:

- An increase in tremors or involuntary movements
- Fallen, with or without injury
- An increase in weakness or fatigue
- Forgotten or missed taking your medications
- Changes in your sleep patterns
- Nightmares
- Trouble swallowing or frequent episodes of choking
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Hallucinations
- New or increased impulse control disorders (ICDs), e.g., compulsive, or risky behaviors (gambling, sexual behaviors/pornography)

What this means ...

- Your medication may need adjusting.
- Your Parkinson's could be progressing.

Call your health care provider if you or a loved one notice symptoms.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags—Stop and Think



If you:

- Notice a sudden loss of mobility, including an inability to walk or to bear weight
- Have a fall with injury or a fall with loss of consciousness

What this means ...

- You need medical attention.

Call your health care provider's office. You may be instructed to call 9-1-1 or go to urgent care.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: CALL 9-1-1

If you notice a Red Flag, follow up with your health care provider!

Parkinson's Fast Facts

- Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder that predominately affects the *dopamine-producing neurons* (neurotransmitters) in a specific area of the brain.
- Approximately one million Americans are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, making it the second-most diagnosed disease after Alzheimer's. Worldwide, approximately 10 million people are affected.
- Parkinson's is considered a chronic disease, and it may progress over time. Though symptoms develop slowly over the years, they vary from person to person.
- According to the Parkinson's Foundation, at least two of the four following symptoms must be present over time for a neurologist to consider a Parkinson's disease diagnosis:
 - Shaking or tremor
 - *Bradykinesia* (slowness of movement and speed)
 - Stiffness in arms, legs and/or trunk
 - Gait and balance problems
- In addition to movement/motor symptoms, other symptoms may be present, including depression, anxiety, apathy, hallucinations, constipation, drop in blood pressure when standing, sleep disorder, and a loss of sense of smell.
- Impulse Control disorders (ICDs) are closely related to use of *dopaminergic* medications which are used to treat Parkinson's disease.
- Though the cause is unknown, scientists believe the cause to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Though there is no cure, your health care provider might recommend treatment, including medications, surgery, and rehab therapies.

What can you do?

- Consider self-management strategies, as these are helpful in managing a chronic disease.
- Medication management—take medications as prescribed. Note that some medications may cause nausea, so talk with your health care provider if you should take them on an empty stomach or with a small snack.
- Nutrition—eat a whole-food, plant-based diet that includes whole grains, vegetables, fruits, protein-rich foods, nuts, olive oil, fish, and eggs.
- Oral health—Parkinson's can alter face and tongue muscle function, and affect speech and chewing. Also, hand tremors may make it challenging to hold a toothbrush. Talk with a dentist about what toothbrush would work best for you.
- Physical exercise/activity—stay physically active; include exercise (e.g., walking, a balance class, chair exercises) in your daily schedule.
- Psychological strategies—practice relaxation techniques.
- Maintaining your independence by doing what you can reasonably do without over-stressing your body.
- Stay socially active.
- Stay informed and ask questions of your health care provider.

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County—plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County. For information about services or interpretation assistance, call 844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org.



Aging and Disability Services
700 Fifth Avenue, 51st Floor • PO Box 34215
Seattle, WA 98124-4215
Tel. 206-684-0660 • TTY: 206-684-0702
aginginfo@seattle.gov