



NEWLY DIAGNOSED WITH PARKINSON'S

Questions to Ask Your Neurologist

A practical appointment guide for patients and care partners

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ASK EVERYTHING AT ONCE. Circle the questions that matter most today and place your top three at the front of your list.

Before the appointment

- ☐ Bring a complete list of prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and supplements—including doses and times taken.
- ☐ Write down your most important movement and non-movement symptoms, when they began and how they affect daily life.
- ☐ Bring recent test results, relevant medical records and the names of other healthcare professionals involved in your care.
- ☐ Consider bringing a family member or friend to listen, take notes and share changes they have noticed.
- ☐ If a symptom comes and goes, ask whether a short phone video would be useful to your clinician.

My top three priorities

PRIORITY	QUESTION OR CONCERN
1	
2	
3	

1. Understanding the Diagnosis Confirm what is known and what remains uncertain

1. What findings led you to diagnose Parkinson's disease?
2. Are there other conditions or medications that could explain some of my symptoms?
3. Would a second opinion from a movement-disorders specialist be helpful?
4. Do I need any additional testing? If so, what question would the test answer, and would the result change my treatment?
5. Is this typical Parkinson's disease, or are there features that require closer evaluation?
6. What changes should I expect over the next year? What can—and cannot—be predicted for me individually?
7. Should I consider genetic counseling or genetic testing based on my age, family history or background?

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2. Symptoms to Discuss Parkinson's can affect more than movement

8. Which of my current symptoms are most likely related to Parkinson's?
9. Which movement symptoms should I track—such as tremor, stiffness, slowness, balance changes, freezing or falls?
10. Which non-movement symptoms should I report—such as sleep problems, constipation, dizziness, mood changes, fatigue, pain, urinary problems, or changes in thinking or memory?
11. Could any of my symptoms be caused or worsened by another health condition or medication?
12. What symptoms should prompt me to call your office before my next scheduled visit?

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3. Treatment and Medication Build a plan around your symptoms and goals

13. Do you recommend starting medication now? Why or why not?
14. Are any treatments proven to slow or stop Parkinson's progression, or do current treatments mainly manage symptoms?
15. Which symptoms is the recommended medication expected to improve, and which symptoms may not respond?
16. How and when should I take it? Does timing with meals, protein, other medicines or supplements matter?
17. What common or serious side effects should I watch for?
18. How long should it take to notice a benefit, and how will we decide whether the dose is working?
19. What should I do if I miss a dose, feel worse or develop a new symptom?
20. Could this treatment affect sleep, blood pressure, driving, mood, thinking, hallucinations or impulse control?
21. Should any of my current prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines or supplements be changed or avoided?
22. How often should we review or adjust the treatment plan?

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MEDICATION SAFETY Do not start, stop or change a Parkinson's medicine without instructions from the prescribing clinician. Ask whom to contact after hours for urgent medication questions.

My medication instructions

MEDICINE	DOSE	WHEN TO TAKE	WHAT TO WATCH FOR

4. Exercise, Therapy and Daily Life Protect function, safety and independence

23. What type and amount of exercise are appropriate for me, and are there activities I should modify?
24. Should I begin physical therapy now for strength, balance, walking, posture or fall prevention?
25. Would occupational therapy help with dressing, eating, handwriting, work, home safety or tremor-related tasks?
26. Should I have a baseline speech and swallowing evaluation, even if I have not noticed major changes?
27. Are there nutrition, hydration, constipation or weight concerns I should address?
28. Is it currently safe for me to drive, work, travel and exercise independently? How should those decisions be reassessed?
29. What can I do now to support sleep, mood, thinking and overall quality of life?

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5. Building the Care Team Know who will help—and how to reach them

30. Who should be part of my care team besides a neurologist?
31. How often should I return, and what should I track between appointments?
32. Who should I contact between visits, and what is the best way to reach the office?
33. Are there Parkinson's support groups, exercise programs or educational resources you recommend locally?
34. If I am a veteran, should I be referred to a VA Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center or associated site?

NOTES

6. Planning Ahead and Research Stay informed without trying to solve everything today

35. Are there clinical trials or observational studies that may be appropriate for me?
36. Would participating in research affect my regular medical care?
37. Are there legal, financial, employment or disability-planning topics I should begin considering?
38. What emergency and hospital information should I keep with me?
39. What reliable websites, books or organizations do you recommend for patients and care partners?

NOTES

Before I leave the appointment

My next appointment is	
The next action I should take	
Referral(s) or test(s) ordered	
Who to call with questions	

Trusted sources

Parkinson's Foundation: parkinson.org

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/parkinsons-disease

Michael J. Fox Foundation: michaeljfox.org/resources-people-newly-diagnosed-parkinsons

VA Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Centers: parkinsons.va.gov

IMPORTANT This guide is for education and appointment preparation. It does not diagnose Parkinson's disease or replace advice from a qualified healthcare professional. Seek emergency care for urgent or life-threatening symptoms.