Moving BIG Exercises

Parkinson’s Disease (PD) often impacts the feedback system in the brain. You may feel like your body is moving normally but all of your movements are actually very small. You may be taking smaller steps, decreasing your arm swing while you walk, and your writing may be smaller. Research has shown that by exaggerating the bigness of movements over and over, people with PD can retrain their brains and have their movements be more normal.

Exercise plan

- For safety, do these exercises close to a sturdy surface such as kitchen countertop or the back of couch. If you have any balance problems, you can hold onto the counter or couch.
- Do these exercises _____ times each day.

Exercises

- Marching
  - Stand with your feet shoulder width apart while holding on to a sturdy surface with one or both hands.
  - Lift your left knee up as high as you safely can. Then lower it back down.
  - Lift your right knee up as high as you can. Then lower it back down.
  - Repeat 10 to 15 times. Pay attention to the BIG movements.
If you have problems standing, do the exercise while sitting down on a firm chair.

- **Arm Circles**
  - Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Raise your arms out to your side.
  - Rotate your arms forward in circles as BIG as you can. Repeat 15 times.
  - Then rotate your arms backwards in circles as BIG as you can. Repeat 15 times.

If this exercise hurts your shoulders, lower your arms closer to your side and then try it.

If you have problems standing, do the exercise while sitting down on a firm chair.

- **Arm Swings with Stepping**
  - Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.
  - Step forward with your right foot and swing your left arm forward while moving your right arm back.
  - Now step back with your right foot and swing your right arm forward and your left arm back.
  - Swing BIG. Repeat 15 times.
Then switch sides so that you are stepping with your left foot and swinging your right arm forward and repeat.

- **Side Steps**
  - Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Shift your weight to your left and lift your right knee like you are going to march and take a BIG step to the side.
  - Lift up your right knee again and take a BIG step to return to the starting position.
  - Repeat on your left leg.
  - Repeat with both legs 10 to 15 times.
If you have problems standing, do the exercise while sitting down on a firm chair.

- Sit to Stand
  - Sit up tall in a sturdy chair with your feet flat on the floor.
  - Stretch your arms out in front of you and quickly reach forward and stand up.
  - Carefully sit back down. Repeat 10 times.
- **Rotation Stretch**
  - Stand up tall with your feet shoulder width apart. Bring your arms up and out to your sides to ninety degree angles.
  - Slowly rotate towards the right. Hold for 10 seconds, counting out loud as you do.
  - Return to the starting position. Repeat 3 times before rotating to the left.

If this is too hard, you can do this exercise sitting down.
Arm Stretches

- Sit up tall in a sturdy chair.
- Stretch your arms above your head.
- Then take your arms down to shoulder level or a ninety degree angle and stretch.
- Then take your arms straight out in front of you and stretch.
- Then take your arms back behind you. Hold the last pose for 10 seconds, counting out loud as you do.
- Repeat 5 times.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.