Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy for Parkinson’s Disease

Your doctor may order physical and occupational therapy as soon as you are found to have Parkinson’s disease (PD). Research has shown that exercise can slow the progress of PD. Exercise releases chemicals in the brain that protect nerves from dying, and it may preserve the limited dopamine supply in the brain.

You need to stay active and exercise. When you limit your activity, you can lose strength and the ability to function. Exercise prevents the loss of strength and function. Work with your therapist to stay active and involved in daily activities.

Physical Therapy

Based on your needs, your physical therapist (PT) will work with you to help improve:

- Mobility – This may include walking or moving in bed. It may also include transfers such as getting in and out of a car and standing up and sitting down. A PT can also help you learn to use a walker, cane or wheelchair if needed.
- Strength
- Balance and coordination
- Joint range of motion

Bring a family member or friend with you to therapy, so your PT can show them how to help you with certain activities.

More on next page ➤

Learn more about your health care.

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Occupational Therapy (OT)
Your occupational therapist (OT) will help you do daily living skills. Your OT can help you with:

- Limited use of arms or hands
- Problems with vision
- Problems in thinking such as memory, concentration and safety
- Self care such as grooming and dressing
- Special equipment such as wheelchair, splints or casts

Your OT can also help with fine motor skill problems. Fine motor skills are needed to use your fingers to do many things such as:

- Writing
- Buttoning clothes
- Tying laces on shoes
- Double clicking a computer mouse or typing
- Lifting coins from a pocket or purse

Moving BIG
Doing larger body movements repeatedly can help people with PD to retrain their brains to move more normally. An exercise program called LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment) BIG involves physical and occupational therapy for people with PD. The goal is to produce larger body movements to retrain your senses to make movements more normal. To learn more about the program, please talk to your physical or occupational therapist or go to [www.lsvtglobal.com](http://www.lsvtglobal.com).

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](mailto:health-info@osu.edu).