



Parkinson's Disease

What is Parkinson's disease?

- Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disease
- One of the most common adult neurological conditions
- More common in men than women

Symptoms May Include

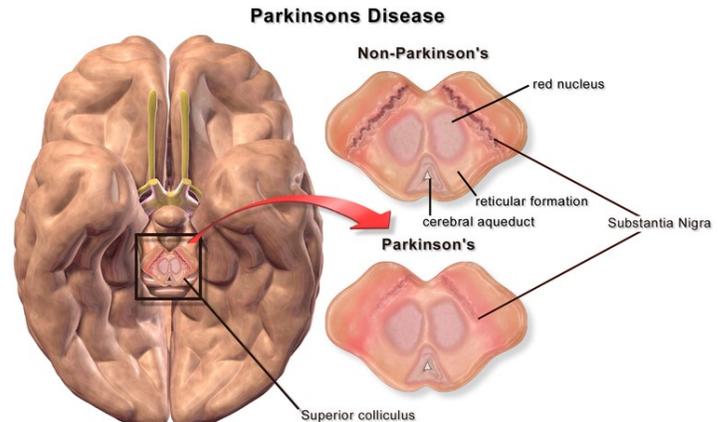
- Movement related issues, both voluntary and involuntary
- Tremors
- Rigidity
- Decreased balance
- Decreased speed of movement
- Speech and swallowing dysfunction
- Decreased facial expressions
- Depression / emotional changes
- Handwriting Changes
- Cognitive changes
- Sleep difficulty
- Fatigue
- Pain
- Blood pressure changes

Causes

- Unknown
- No longer viewed as resulting solely from environmental factors
- Pathology: the death of dopamine producing brain cells, which occurs before signs and symptoms present. Decreased levels of dopamine causes abnormal activity of the brain cells which eventually leads to the symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease.

Risk Factors May Include

- Male gender
- Environmental exposure to toxins such as herbicides and pesticides
- Hereditary link
- Most commonly diagnosed in individuals over the age of 60



Diagnosis

- No Parkinson's specific test exists
- Diagnosed by neurologist on the basis of medical history, signs and symptoms, neurological exam, and physical exam.
- Blood tests and imaging tests to rule out other conditions
- May take a process with multiple specialists to identify Parkinson's disease

Treatment

- Medications to help manage symptoms. Some common types of medication include: Carbidopa-levodopa, dopamine agonists, and MAO B inhibitors
- Invasive procedures
- Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy
 - Help manage the disease by providing therapeutic intervention with strengthening, endurance training, home modifications to improve/maintain independence, reduce impact of symptoms, work evaluations, improve mobility, prescribe mobility devices and adaptive equipment, improve oral motor control, and improve overall independence in self care and life activities.