

= HOW CAN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE AFFECTED WITH PARKINSON'S?

There are many ways to help those affected with Parkinson's. These include:

- Good, tender caregiving
- Care partners making sure the patient is taking medications on time and as directed by their physician.
- Walkers, canes, and other assistive devices should be provided if needed.
- Passionate, encouraging, and empathetic behaviour of their healthcare team is helpful too.

HOW DOES THE PARKINSON'S DISEASE AFFECT SOCIAL LIFE OF A PERSON?

When living with Parkinson's disease, a patient may encounter many obstacles in their social life. Thus, making it difficult to cope with socializing with family, friends, colleagues, and other members of society. They can also become a target of intimidation because of certain symptoms they have.

As Parkinson's advances, patients may have memory issues, hallucination, confusion, speech problems, lack of facial expression, drooling, tremor, gait, poor dental health, and urinary bladder, as well as sexual dysfunction.

As a result of these issues, people may tend to avoid socializing with others, which lowers their self-confidence and may cause depression and anxiety.

Families, care partners and friends of patients should be encouraged to learn more about the disease to help in these situations as they occur. This can make the quality of life for the Parkinson's patients better.



DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Parkinson's patients will double by 2040. Millions of Parkinson's patients around the world are suffering from poverty and...

- Cannot afford to buy their medications
- Cannot afford to purchase a cane, walker, or a wheelchair
- Cannot obtain educational literature about Parkinson's in their language
- Are not able to afford to consult a neurologist and remain undiagnosed and untreated

OUR SERVICES

World Parkinson's Program is the only organization that provides the following unique services to Parkinson's patients:

- Parkinson's medications to those patients who can't afford to buy them
- Canes, walkers & wheelchairs to prevent falls
- Parkinson's educational brochures in many languages
- Free electronic educational newsletter
- Chapters of the World Parkinson's Program in various parts of the world

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PARKINSON'S

TO DONATE, VISIT PDPROGRAM.ORG

This information is not a substitute for medical advice. Consult your Physician before applying this information.

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Frequently asked questions about

REMOVING STIGMA IN PARKINSON'S DISEASE



ENGLISH - 16



www.pdprogram.org

"Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions"- Dr. Rana

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative condition characterized by tremors, slowness of movements, stiffness, and balance problems. In addition, Parkinson's has many non-motor symptoms such as memory or cognitive issues, speech and swallowing problems, depression, and sleep difficulties. It affects almost 10 million individuals around the world.

WHAT PERCEPTION MAY SOME PEOPLE HAVE OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE?

People who do not know much about Parkinson's disease may have many different misconceptions about this condition. Such individuals may treat those affected with this condition differently due to their certain misbeliefs. Some old cultures might believe that Parkinson's is due to being possessed and may emotionally and/or physically hurt the patient, making it hard for them to fit into the society. Another misconception may be the Parkinson's disease is contagious. This belief is wrong as well.

In social functions or parties, people may not sit or eat with them at the same table due to drooling. This may lead to lower self-esteem for those affected with Parkinson's.

Other individuals might believe Parkinson's patients cannot perform intellectually or physically and are unable to contribute positively to the society. They may also be involuntarily removed from their careers even though most of them are able to perform to the expectation of their jobs, especially in the early stages of Parkinson's.

WHAT MAY BE STIGMATIZED ABOUT COGNITIVE AND SPEECH ISSUES OF PARKINSON'S?

There are some cognitive issues that can make it hard for an individual with Parkinson's to carry out complex and demanding tasks.

Some of these issues could be minor, such as misplacing things or there may also be major issues with making important decisions, writing, and poor memory. These problems can limit them from signing legal documents, banking, and holding a very demanding job after several years of diagnosis with Parkinson's disease.

A small number of patients with Parkinson's disease may have issues with hallucinations and anxiety. It is suggested to just gently explain to them when they are in this situation rather than confronting their behavior or embarrassing them.

There are some issues that affect them socially as well. They include speech problems like speaking in a low and soft voice, forgetting names, and word finding problems.

HOW DOES MOOD CHANGE IN PARKINSON'S?

It is not uncommon in Parkinson's patients to experience depression and anxiety. The changes in the body due to Parkinson's can lead to depression and anxiety.

Patients may feel disconnected from friends and family. They may lose interest in everyday activities. Also, they may feel anxious time to time about usual social situations. It takes an overwhelming toll on one's life, living with the symptoms of Parkinson's. Understanding this can help remove stigmatization.

The ways in which people around them, such as their healthcare team, caregivers, family, and friends can help to remove the stigma is to socialize with them and include them in activities they enjoy.

The patient should keep a positive attitude towards getting better through treatment with constantly reminding themselves of their positive qualities. This outlook not only improves the self-awareness in the patients but also, their social life as they do not isolate from society.

WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE TO REMOVE THE STIGMA?

We need to take a more educational approach toward Parkinson's disease. Helping people to learn about this disease can make it easier to understand why a person affected with Parkinson's may act in a certain way.

Giving the person an assurance that you will be there for them can lower their anxiety. Also, if there is something that feels embarrassing, a better approach is helping them to overcome their problem. You can invite them to social events to lessen their anxiety and they should be encouraged to speak for themselves.

HOW CAN THESE STEREOTYPES BE REMOVED?

The education about Parkinson's for the general public is necessary. They can attend health seminars, as well as reading reliable and valid information on Parkinson's is also helpful.

People with Parkinson's can still maintain a good quality of life with proper treatment for several years after diagnosis of Parkinson's. They can make most decisions and can still work and carry on a career depending on their stage of disease.

The people approaching them should treat them as normal as possible and interact with them respectfully. The public should give them a chance to prove themselves as they can be a useful part of society.

The best way to remove the stigma is to be educated on Parkinson's and keep an open mind for Parkinson's patients.