

Managing Your Medications

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- The primary objective of medical management is to maximize control over the “target” signs and symptoms of PD (for example - tremor, slowness, muscle stiffness). Parkinson medications can provide relief of these symptoms.
- This is accomplished by your physician selecting the appropriate drug(s) for each symptom and then adjusting the dose and frequency of drug administration over time. Response to any individual drug may change over time.
- Regular visits and communication between the healthcare team, the patient, and carepartners(s) are necessary to manage symptoms with the fewest side effects possible.
- Individuals with Parkinson’s may take several types of medications throughout the day
- It may be challenging to remember to take pills on time.
- It may be unclear which medication causes which side effect or if a symptom is caused by the condition of medication or the medications.
- Stress, a poor night’s sleep, infection, and changes in co-existing conditions can affect your response to medications. A high protein or high fat meal may interfere with the absorption of carbidopa/levodopa.
- It is important to understand the difference between “on” and “off.” When “on” mobility is good and medications are effective, a return of Parkinson symptoms may indicate an off period or wearing “off of the medication.
- Understand the difference between **tremor** (a PD symptom) and **dyskinesia** (a medication side effect).
- Keeping track of medications is important - Three things to know
 1. What is the name of the medication?
 2. What is it supposed to do?
 3. What are the possible adverse effects (side effects)?
- Staying organized is essential!
 1. Use paper or computer generated schedules (only useful if they are kept updated and checked for accuracy)

2. Use medisets to organize your meds



3. Use alarms as a reminder to take a dose on time (several available commercially).

- Some financial and insurance resources
 1. www.needymeds.org
 2. www.Rxassist.org
 3. Local Shine Counselor
- MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach Program provides unique patient support with medication issues through a personalized approach. Clinical pharmacists and case managers provide medication and financial information. Sponsored by the Mass College of Pharmacy Health Services and the Commonwealth of MA.
1-866-633-1617 visit
<https://www.mcphs.edu/patient-centers/pharmacy-outreach-program>

Additional thoughts

1. Over the counter medications, vitamins, and supplements should be listed and shared with your health care professional
2. Always keep medications out of the reach of children
3. Many medications need prior authorization or approval from insurance carriers
4. Schedule time to refill your prescriptions to avoid last minute worry.