

Parkinson's Plan of Attack

FOUNDATIONS CHECKLIST



Your Parkinson's
diagnosis does not
have to define you
or the life you live

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Welcome, Friend!

I have some questions for you...

What if you could wake up every day and know you're doing everything you possibly could to prevent your Parkinson's symptoms from taking over your life?

Have you wondered if you can be doing more than simply taking medications and waiting for a cure?

Do you find yourself overwhelmed or confused by the amount of information out there about how to live well with Parkinson's?



Whether you're newly diagnosed or you've been traveling this Parkinson's journey for a decade, I want you to know: **There is hope.**

You can **redefine your diagnosis and re-write your Parkinson's story** without relying solely on the pill bottle or waiting for a miracle cure. Like any rewarding journey, it takes commitment and perseverance. It also requires having a clear destination in mind, which is where this guide shines through.



I want to help you begin to **build the foundation of your Parkinson's Plan of Attack**, which will not only give you peace of mind that you're doing everything in your power to improve your symptoms today, but also reshape your future and thrive, despite your diagnosis.



Understanding What's Happening In Your Body

Imagine this... You're walking around your home and you notice a small crack in the kitchen wall. You go outside and can't shut the door because it's stuck. While you're outside you notice one of the walls is slightly bulged and there's water collected on one side of the yard and not the other.

Do you know what's going on? Most of us can recognize a foundation issue in our home, so why can't we recognize it in our body?

Instead of taking the scenario above and patching the kitchen wall, replacing the door, straightening out the bulge and draining the water, we immediately go to the root cause — **the foundation**.

This should also be the case in our health. Some of our most common complaints — fatigue, stiff joints, brain fog, and depression — can all be reflections of a sub-par foundation of health. This is considered the “**root cause**” of disease.

When you begin to construct a **Plan of Attack** around re-building your foundation (i.e.: **addressing the “root causes” of disease**) instead of replacing doors and draining water (i.e.: **addressing the “symptoms” of disease**), then your house (**your body**) begins to thrive again.



How Damaged is Your Foundation?

With Parkinson's, (for some reasons unknown to us and other reasons we very much understand and can control), the part of the brain that is responsible for producing the neurotransmitter dopamine degenerates.

Dopamine is responsible for:

- Coordinating your body movement
- Making memories and helping you learn
- Motivation
- Helping you experience pleasure and process pain
- Keeping you awake and alert during the day
- Increasing creativity

Typically a person won't become symptomatic until 60-80% of those cells have been damaged, which means you have approximately 20-40% of your cells remaining at the time of diagnosis.

Our plan focuses around that 20-40%.





What is a Parkinson's Plan of Attack?



There are **3 Vital Components** that you'll need to include in your **Parkinson's Plan of Attack** in order to take a balanced and comprehensive approach to your Parkinson's symptoms:

#1 MAXIMIZE the dopamine you have circulating in your system.

#2 PROTECT the undamaged brain cells that still remain from further damage.

#3 SUPPLEMENT with additional strategies that help you function at an optimal pace and maximize your quality of life.



There are numerous strategies under each component that you can use to begin to repair your health foundation, prevent it from getting worse in the future, and compensate for any permanent damage your brain has undergone.

It can take quite some time to walk through all of those strategies and can be overwhelming to try and incorporate them all at once.

So in this guide I'll just walk you through the first steps you need to know to build the foundation of your Parkinson's Plan of Attack.

#1 MAXIMIZE

Your main tool here is **Exercise**.

WHY?

#1. Exercise is the key that unlocks your Dopamine Dam

so you're better able to use the naturally occurring dopamine in your system which allows you to move, think, and feel better.

#2. Exercise changes the way our brain is wired and creates new connections between our brain and body. This is called





neuroplasticity and neurogenesis. By exercising the right way, you can re-teach your brain to walk fluidly, balance efficiently, and coordinate your movements.

#3. Exercise also causes the release of BDNF which protects your brain from future damage. This is called **neuroprotection**.

WHAT KIND OF EXERCISE IS BEST?

Your Parkinson's exercise routine should include these **7 Elements**:

BIG, POWERFUL MOVEMENTS - This directly counteracts the small, slow movements that come with reduced levels of dopamine.

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGING - If it's not challenging you, it ain't changing you! Your muscles should get tired. You should be out of breath. It's hard but doesn't hurt.

MENTALLY CHALLENGING - Incorporate activities that make you multi-task and challenge your mind and body at the same time.

SPECIFIC TO YOUR PARKINSON'S SYMPTOMS - Certain symptoms like rigidity, stooped posture, freezing, small movements,



and lack of arm swing when walking are most effectively treated with specific exercise strategies beyond simply walking or riding a bike.

SOCIAL - Our brains were designed to thrive when we're surrounded by people, and research supports we're healthier, happier, anymore likely to achieve our goals when we're part of a group. It also brings a sense of connection and belonging.

ACCOUNTABLE - Find someone to check in on you and help you stay accountable to your exercise program.

FUN - Give yourself permission to have fun, laugh, and smile when you're working out. It will pay dividends!

HOW OFTEN?

The more, the better. Seriously.

Daily exercise of **30 minutes or more** that incorporates the 7 elements above will give you the best results.

Just like how you take your medication without missing a dose, you should not miss your daily dose of exercise.



At the very minimum, you need to be getting **150 minutes of vigorous exercise each week.**



***NOTE:** While Parkinson's comes with some common symptoms overall, every person is different. This is where it's so important to work with a Parkinson's trained PT to give you a

personalized program for your specific symptoms/challenges. Then check in every 6-12 months to update your program.

PROTECT

A big tool in this realm is **brain-boosting Nutrition.**

WHY?

Your brain and your gut are directly connected.



When you're eating poorly, inflammation levels rise and your gut's microbiome and the lining of your gut can become damaged and dysfunctional. **High levels of inflammation** have also been linked to neurological disorders such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Multiple Sclerosis, and mental health issues like depression.

You swallow medicine. You also swallow food. It's common sense that the food you swallow has just as much of an impact on the way you feel, move, and think as the pills you swallow.

"WHAT SHOULDN'T I BE EATING?"

4 Foods to Dump ASAP

1. SUGAR & SUGAR ALTERNATIVES

- This delightful treat is one of the most dangerous for your brain. It's linked to almost every chronic disease including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and more. What's worse is that the sugar alternatives (**Splenda, aspartame, and the like**) are actually even more damaging.
- Avoid added sugar or sugar alternatives in any of its forms and aim for <30g total per day. A safer replacement is Stevia leaf.



2. DAIRY

- The **protein A1 casein** is damaging to your gut. Also, the pasteurization process destroys vital enzymes and warps the protein molecules so they are hard for you to digest. This raises the inflammation levels in your body.
- Switch to a **carrageenan-free** milk substitute like **almond or coconut milk**. A high quality brand I enjoy is Califia Farms.

3. FRIED FOODS

- When food is fried, especially in unhealthy oils like vegetable oil or shortening, it raises inflammation in your body and produces acrolein. **Acrolein** accumulates in dopaminergic neurons, modifies alpha-synuclein, and is directly associated with PD progression.
- **Grill, sauté, or roast instead of fry** and use healthier cooking oils like grass-fed butter, cold-pressed coconut oil, cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil, or avocado oil.



4. GRAINS & GLUTEN

- High levels of carbohydrates from grains and processed foods skyrocket your blood sugar. In addition, grains such as wheat, barley, and rye and most processed foods contain a sticky protein called gluten that can also raise inflammation levels. Chips, pastas, noodles, and breads are common culprits and would be best to be avoided.
- Try replacing your carbohydrates from grains and processed foods with fresh vegetables. Zucchini spiraled makes a great pasta. Cauliflower "riced" makes for a great rice substitute or pizza crust. A pile of crispy roasted Brussel sprouts can be a satisfying side dish instead of chips. Get creative! Your brain is worth it.

"WHAT SHOULD I BE EATING?"

5 Foods to Add ASAP

1. FRESH VEGETABLES & FRUIT

- Aim for **6-9 cups** of raw, fresh, colorful veggies and fruits each day. These can be cooked down (**and thus, less volume**) via steaming, sautéing, roasting, or thrown into a blender for smoothies.



- Include leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables, and colorful veggies and berries.

2. **HEALTHY FATS**

- Your brain thrives on healthy fat, so aim for 3-5 servings each day.
- Includes olives, extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, soaked/sprouted nuts, avocados, and grass-fed butter.

3. **WILD-CAUGHT FISH**

- Omega-3s are a treat for your brain and found in high amounts in wild-caught seafood. Aim for 2-3 servings (4oz) per week.
- Good options include wild-caught salmon, sardines, anchovies, tilapia, shrimp, cod, oysters.
- Avoid bluefin tuna, orange roughy, shark, swordfish, and king mackerel as they are all high in mercury.

4. **NON-GLUTEN GRAINS & LENTILS**

- These should be used in smaller amounts (a handful a few times per week) and include quinoa, wild rice, beans, and lentils.



- Soak them overnight before cooking to break down the phytic acid all grains are wrapped in that is an anti-nutrient that can block the absorption of minerals in your gut.

5. FERMENTED FOODS

- Replenishing your gut's microbiome is a key to improved overall health and brain health.
- Try sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, organic tempeh. Probiotic yogurt, though it's a dairy product, can also be beneficial if it's made from sheep or goat milk, is organic and grass-fed.

SUPPLEMENT

These are strategies that boost your dopamine levels, compensate or adapt for lost dopamine or function, or are symptom-specific.

The main strategy in this area are **traditional Parkinson's medications**.

Whether you're taking medications or not even considering it, let's talk about their role in your Parkinson's Plan of Attack.



“DO I NEED TO TAKE MEDICATION?”

Parkinson's medications should supplement an already sound **Plan of Attack**, not build the foundation of it.

Medications definitely have their place, especially if they're allowing you to feel well enough to start an exercise program, sleep more soundly, or feel motivated enough to start making some changes in your diet, and so on.

However, they may not be entirely necessary depending on your symptoms, your age, your stage and severity of the disease, and your level of physical activity.

REMEMBER: Parkinson's medications do nothing to slow the progression of the disease. Only **exercise** has been shown to do that (**with far fewer side effects!**). Medication simply helps you mask your symptoms (**which can be really, really helpful as mentioned above**) by restoring your body's dopamine levels temporarily.

The most important consideration is how much the symptoms interfere with your ability to perform daily activities.

If you're limited by stiffness, slowness, or tremor in a way that's decreasing your QOL, and you can't fully participate in your exercise program, then it's likely beneficial for you to start a medication regimen.



A great book to learn more about Parkinson's medications is "[The New Parkinson's Disease Treatment Book](#)" by Dr. Eric Ahlskog.

An overview of the most common Parkinson's medications is below, however the best thing to do is to discuss your options with your **Movement Disorder Specialist or Neurologist**.

(This should not be used to substitute for professional medical advice.)

Parkinson's Plan of Attack

FOUNDATIONS CHECKLIST



	LEVODOPA	DOPAMINE AGONISTS	ENZYME INHIBITORS	ANTI-CHOLERGENICS
General or Brand Names	Sinemet Parcoba Duodopa Inhaled L-Dopa (clinical trials)	Parlodel Mirapex Requip Neupro Apokyn	MAO-B Inhibitors - Selegiline - Rasagiline - Safinamide COMT Inhibitors - Tolcapone - Entacapone	Trihexyphenidyl Benzotropine Orphenadrine Procyclidine Biperiden
Most Effective For:	Bradykinesia Tremor Rigidity Freezing of Gait (to some degree) Dystonia Anxiety / Panic	Those diagnosed <65 years old May postpone onset of motor complications and dyskinesias	MAO-B Inhibitors - Can improve motor symptoms in early stages of PD - Can reduce motor complications COMT Inhibitors - Typically prescribed in more advanced stages of PD to manage the "wearing off" period of their levodopa	Those with bothersome tremor Age <70 No significant akinesia or difficult walking
Side Effects	Motor complications Dyskinesias (LID)	Sedation Swelling in legs Hallucinations Compulsive disorders	Involuntary movements Nausea	Dry mouth Blurred vision Constipation Dizziness Urinary retention Confusion

This in no way shape or form designed to pressure you into taking medication. My goal is to help inform you about the tool of medication so you can use it how you feel is best in your Plan of Attack.



Congratulations!

You made it.

Grab your sneakers and your green smoothie 'cuz it's time to get started.

The faster you take action, the quicker you'll see results.

So get to it!

Is there more that goes into building a Parkinson's Plan of Attack?

YES, but with these powerful strategies you can start to shift the trajectory of your Parkinson's journey in a major way.

If you're ready to dive deeper and take it to the next level with even more research-based strategies, check out:

WWW.INVIGORATEPT.COM/PLAN