

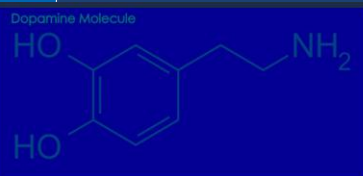


Taking Control of Your Health

A Monthly Newsletter from Antonella Martino, May 2017

Parkinson's Disease and Nutrition

By Antonella Martino



PD - a neurodegenerative brain disorder

- progresses slowly in most people
- Most often symptoms take years to develop
- brain slowly stops producing a neurotransmitter called dopamine
- Dopamine reduction leads to a progressive inability to regulate movements, body and emotions

(www.parkinson.org)

The exact etiology and development of Parkinson's disease remains a mystery to science. We can assume a mix of factors contributes: genetic predisposition, lifestyle, and environmental and medicinal toxins. Studies have determined that 20% of Parkinson cases have a connection to medications in these categories: antiemetic agents, antipsychotics, anticonvulsants, and others. Fortunately, Parkinson's like symptoms related to the use of a certain medication subside once use stops. However, these agents often go unidentified for lack of adequate education and of evaluation of the disease's causes and development. Currently, no specific diagnostic test exists to confirm the presence or absence of Parkinson's disease; we depend on observations of



signs and symptoms.

For effective treatment, avoid common toxins such as perfumes, cosmetics, deodorants, household cleaners and heavy metals. Processed and packaged foods contain many preservative chemicals and should not be consumed. Additionally, many farming methods add problematic elements to our diet: hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, etc.



Good nutrition and a healthy intestinal flora are key components to a successful treatment and optimal medication therapy outcomes. Eating a variety of locally grown, fresh raw foods rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, enzymes, amino acids, fatty acids and healthy proteins and carbohydrates will sustain a healthy body. It's essential to become educated on choosing foods well.

Use natural cleaning products like vinegar or lemons. Make your own cleaners. Choose organic shampoos, toothpastes, deodorants and cosmetics. Replace feminine

hygiene products like tampons with safer alternatives. Look for fragrance-free products, and avoid using fabric softeners.

For Parkinson's patients, exercise is vital for maintaining a daily balance and mobility, in addition to a sense of well-being. Exercise improves gait, tremors, flexibility, grip, and motor coordination; it may even slow the disease's progression.

Exercise makes your brain use dopamine, which helps control our brains' pleasure centers and our emotional responses. Additionally, speech therapy can improve the quality of life.



Pharmacological treatment can cause side effects such as nausea, dizziness, constipation, low blood pressure, sedation, hallucinations, agitation and muscle cramps, among others. When possible, address these without medications, preventing interactions that can affect the effectiveness of your medicines. Based on your diagnosis, health status and age use the lowest effective dose for the shortest duration.

Family and caregivers should learn about the course and effects of Parkinson's on their loved ones. They should be actively involved in therapy management and in communication with healthcare providers to maximize medical decisions.

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