A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO PARKINSON'S
If you have just been diagnosed or know somebody who has, you’ve probably got a lot of questions and perhaps some worries. That’s where Parkinson’s UK can help.

We’re the UK’s Parkinson’s support and research charity. We’re committed to finding a cure and improving life for everyone affected by Parkinson’s. We provide a range of information and support through our 370 local groups, website and free, confidential helpline manned by expert staff and nurses.
A range of medicines are available to help manage the symptoms, and your specialist or Parkinson’s nurse (if you have one) will help you find the best ones for you. While someone may be helped by one medicine, it may not work for others. Some people may need larger doses or a combination of medications – others may need to take smaller doses but more often.

As time goes on, people may need to change their medication. Physiotherapy, speech and language and occupational therapy can also help. Surgery may also be an option for some people whose symptoms have stopped responding to medication.
How Parkinson’s affects someone can change from day to day, and even from hour to hour – symptoms that may be noticeable one day may not be a problem the next.

Although at times life can be difficult, many people with Parkinson’s continue to lead active, fulfilling lives.
As well as difficulties with movement, people with Parkinson’s might experience other symptoms such as tiredness, pain, depression, anxiety, problems with memory and constipation. These are often referred to as non-motor symptoms and can have an impact on people’s day-to-day lives.
The symptoms someone has and how quickly the condition develops will differ from one person to the next. Although there’s currently no cure, a range of medicines and treatments are available to manage many of the symptoms.

Parkinson’s is not infectious and doesn’t usually run in families. For most people, their life expectancy won’t change much because of Parkinson’s. We don’t yet know why people develop Parkinson’s.
Around one person in every 500 has Parkinson’s. That’s about 127,000 people in the UK. Most people who get Parkinson’s are aged 50 or over, but younger people can get it too.
People get Parkinson’s because some of the nerve cells in their brains that produce a chemical called dopamine have died. Lack of dopamine means that people can have great difficulty controlling movement. Sometimes people can ‘freeze’ suddenly when moving.

Parkinson’s can also cause some people’s hands and bodies to shake. This can make everyday activities, such as eating, getting dressed, or using a phone or computer, difficult or frustrating.
You can find out more about Parkinson’s and the support Parkinson’s UK offers – including our UK-wide network of information and support workers and local groups – by visiting our website parkinsons.org.uk

You can also have a look at our booklets Parkinson’s and you, Living with Parkinson’s or The carer’s guide. The booklets are available to download as PDFs from our website or you can order a paper copy.

To order, visit parkinsons.org.uk/publications call 0845 121 2354 or email resources@parkinsons.org.uk
Every hour, someone in the UK is told they have Parkinson’s. Because we’re here, no one has to face Parkinson’s alone.

We bring people with Parkinson’s, their carers and families together via our network of local groups, website and free confidential helpline. Specialist nurses, our supporters and staff provide information and training on every aspect of Parkinson’s.

As the UK’s Parkinson’s support and research charity we’re leading the work to find a cure, and we’re closer than ever. We also campaign to change attitudes and demand better services.

Our work is totally dependent on donations. Help us to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson’s.

**Parkinson’s UK**

Free confidential helpline 0808 800 0303
Text Relay 18001 0808 800 0303
Monday to Friday 9am–7pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

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