

Parkinson disease (or Parkinson) is the most common form of Parkinsonism, a group of motor system disorders. It is a disease that slowly gets worse over time. It is caused by the loss of brain cells that make dopamine. Dopamine is a substance that helps with smooth and coordinated muscle movement. Parkinson often has these symptoms:

- Tremor or trembling of the arms, jaw, legs, and face
- Stiffness or rigidity of the limbs and trunk
- Slowness of movement (bradykinesia)
- Problems with balance and coordination

Causes

The cause of Parkinson is unknown. Experts believe the symptoms are linked to a chemical imbalance in the brain caused by brain-cell death. Parkinson is chronic. Symptoms grow worse over time.

Symptoms

These are the most common symptoms of Parkinson:

- **Rigid muscles:** Stiffness when the arm, leg, or neck is moved back and forth.
- **Resting tremor:** Tremor (involuntary movement from contracting muscles) that is most obvious at rest.
- **Bradykinesia:** Slowness in starting movement.
- **Postural instability:** Poor posture and balance that may cause falls or gait problems.

Treatment

So far, there is no cure for Parkinson. But your healthcare provider can plan treatment based on the severity of the symptoms and other factors. You may need:

- Medicine
- Surgery
- Complementary and supportive therapies, such as diet, exercise, counseling, stress management, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy

