



Power Over Parkinson's
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Sleep and Parkinson's Informational Guide

How is sleep impacted by Parkinson's?

Sleep has been shown to be one of the most common symptoms individuals with Parkinson's disease can face, and ultimately are not limited to just one specific sleep disorder (Stefanie & Hogle, 2020). Some common sleep disorders individuals with Parkinson's disease may face are insomnia, excessive daytime sleepiness, restless leg syndrome impacting sleep quality, disturbances in REM sleep, intense or vivid dreams, sleep apnea, as well as sleep impacted by quality of psychological symptoms such as depression or anxiety (McNamara, 2019). Researchers believe that some of the significant causes that impact an individual's sleep are changes in the chemicals in the brain, medications, or psychological symptoms (Cleveland Clinic, 2021). This significant impact on sleep can impair an individual's ability to participate in daily activities, deprive them of meaningful occupations they enjoy, and affect their quality of life overall.

Common Sleep Syndromes Defined

Insomnia: Insomnia is a sleep disorder in which individuals can experience abnormal difficulties falling asleep, staying asleep, and waking up and not being able to fall back asleep (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2022)

Excessive Daytime Sleepiness: Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS) affects the individual's ability to stay awake, alert during periods of the day that are considered wake periods; in addition, to feeling drowsy or overwhelming feeling for sleep during daytime hours (Shen et al., 2018).

Restless Leg Syndrome: Restless Leg Syndrome is a syndrome that affects the individual's legs, in which; causes an uncontrollable urge to move their legs. This usually occurs during the evening hours or times of rest affecting the individual's quality of sleep (Pietrangelo, 2018)

REM Disturbance/Vivid Dreams: Individuals may experience abnormal REM disturbance during their sleep resulting in vivid and frightening dreams (Poryazova et al., 2013). This can leave the individual feeling tired throughout of the day or emotional and mentally exhausted.

Sleep Apnea: Sleep apnea occurs when individuals breathing starts and stops periodically throughout the duration of sleeping causing excessive snoring or gasping for air (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2022)

Psychological Symptoms: Individuals who have different psychological disorders or symptoms such as anxiety and depression may have more difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or feeling completely rested after sleeping.

Tips To Help Improve Sleep Quality

1. **Create a sleep schedule.** Establish a time that you are going to wake up each morning and go to sleep each night. Example, choose to wake up at 8am and go to sleep each night at 9pm. Choosing a specific time to keep your body on schedule can prevent oversleeping in the morning, prevent excessive sleeping throughout the day, and allow for a restful night sleep
2. **Limit Caffeine intake.** Caffeine has shown to play an impact on the circadian rhythm of individuals who drink it closer to bedtime and affect an individual's ability to fall asleep at night. Caffeine is also considered a diuretic and can increase the consumption of urine made in the body, waking you up throughout the night to use the restroom. Opting for alternatives such as decaf tea or coffee or limiting the intake of caffeine before bedtime can assist with the possible impacts of sleep disturbances due to excessive caffeine consumption.
3. **Get some exercise.** Exercise has been shown to help with psychological and physiological symptoms and improve your overall mental well-being.
4. **Limit blue light before bedtime.** Simple things such as putting down your phone or limiting television before bed can assist with falling asleep.
5. **Use a device for extra white noise.** Using a device such as a sound machine or a fan can provide you with extra white noise and can help with eliminating distractions that may prevent you from fall asleep.
6. **Eliminating light to the room.** Using things such as blackout curtains or eye masks can help eliminate streetlights, or the sun to help you sleep better.
7. **Clear your mind.** Practices such as yoga or meditation before bedtime can help relax your mind and body and help destress from the day. There are apps that you can download on your phone such as the Calm app or Headspace: Mindful Meditation. Often through these apps meditation guides can be utilized for free.
8. **Check with your doctor.** Talk with your doctor about symptoms you have been having to allow them to assist you better.

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