

If the oral medications don't help, the medications that can be injected into the penis, and certain devices that can increase the blood flow into the penis can be used. Dopamine agonists in some cases may lead to abnormal behaviors such as compulsive hypersexuality. In such a case, your physician needs to be informed, so the medication can be altered.

WHAT ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING SEXUAL FUNCTION?

If you are taking medication for a condition other than Parkinson's, you should consult with your physician to make sure it does not affect your sexual function as a side effect.

Women may experience issues associated with menopause. These need to be addressed appropriately since they usually reduce sexual function.

Active participation in your treatment and complying with medication and reporting any concerning symptoms with your healthcare team is very helpful.

One should involve in regular exercise, keep a proper height and weight ratio, and optimal control for the medical condition such as diabetes is important.

Maintaining your physical appearance and good oral hygiene for your partner is also important.



DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Parkinson's patients will double by 2031. Millions of Parkinson's patients around the world are suffering from poverty and...

- Cannot afford to buy their medications
- Cannot afford to purchase a cane, walker, or a wheelchair
- Cannot obtain educational literature about Parkinson's in their language
- Are not able to afford consulting a neurologist and remain undiagnosed and untreated

OUR UNIQUE SERVICES

World Parkinson's Program is the only organization which provides the following unique services to Parkinson's patients around the world:

- Parkinson's medications to those patients who can't afford to buy them
- Canes, walkers & wheelchairs to prevent falls
- Parkinson's educational brochures in many languages
- Free electronic educational newsletter
- Chapters of World Parkinson's Program in various parts of the world

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PARKINSON'S TO DONATE, VISIT PDPROGRAM.ORG

This information is not a substitute of medical advice. Consult your Physician before applying this information.

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Frequently asked questions about **PARKINSON'S DISEASE & SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION**



ENGLISH - 10



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"Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions"- Dr. Rana

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative condition characterized by tremors, slowness of movements, stiffness, and balance problems. In addition, Parkinson's has many non-motor symptoms such as memory or cognitive issues, speech and swallowing problems, depression, and sleep difficulties. It affects almost 10 million individuals around the world.

HOW IS SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION RELATED TO PARKINSON'S?

Sexual dysfunction occurs in many individuals with Parkinson's. Many symptoms of Parkinson's disease may lead to difficulty of developing and maintaining social and intimate relationships. Some of these symptoms such as drooling, dry skin, speech problems, depression, psychosis, paranoia, lack of motivation, slowness of movements, and delayed reaction time may affect a person's life negatively, making it difficult to establish relationships with others. As a person ages, the sexual function declines but if a person has Parkinson's, the rate at which the sexual function declines may be faster. For men, the most frequent problem is attaining and maintaining an erection. Women may experience a decrease in libido. A number of factors including autonomic dysfunction, anxiety, depression and urinary dysfunction may aggravate this problem.

Some of the symptoms of Parkinson's such as slowness of movements, fatigue and tremor, directly interfere with sexual activity. Since Parkinson's affects motor performance it may become difficult to remain sexually active. A couple may not be able to sleep on the same bed if the symptoms are severe enough. Sexual dysfunction can also occur as a result of changes in roles in a relationship.

Some of the symptoms mentioned above may affect cosmetic appearance in Parkinson's which may be especially significant for women. Some women may develop social withdrawal and feel that they are less attractive. This may affect their involvement with their spouse. As Parkinson's progresses in a person, their partner may become their primary carepartner. Sometimes, these energy demands and adjustments disrupt relationships.

Other coexisting medical conditions such as diabetes and depression may affect sexual function. In addition, the drugs used to treat high blood pressure and some other medical conditions may also affect sexual function.

WHAT MAY BE CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION?

- Poor self esteem
- Negative effect on relationship
- Feeling angry or aggressive
- Development of guilt feeling

HOW IS SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION TREATED?

Sexual dysfunction is like any other health concern. You need to discuss it with your healthcare team so that they can take the necessary steps to treat it. However, sometimes it is difficult for people to speak about such problems.

You may be referred to a urologist for further assessment of sexual dysfunction. Urologist may rule out other causes of erectile dysfunction such as prostate problems. Urologist will also review all the medications used for other medical conditions such as beta blockers and antidepressants which may cause sexual dysfunction. The following are some practical tips:

WHAT ARE NONPHARMACOLOGICAL METHODS TO HELP THIS PROBLEM?

- Regular sexual activity helps to maintain your sexual drive (Libido), and can also keep your relationship close. If sexual activity is less frequent, your interest may wane and your relationship may become uncomfortable.
- Having a relaxed environment at the time of sexual activity
- Frank discussion with your partner
- Psychosexual counseling
- Devices such as Vacuums and vibrators may help
- Exploring the methods other than intercourse as the intimacy with your partner does not necessarily mean sexual activity.

ARE THERE ANY MEDICATION WHICH CAN HELP?

- Medications used to treat Parkinson's especially dopamine agonists (pramipexole, ropinirole, apomorphine) may help in improving the sexual drive.
- Depression can be a cause of sexual dysfunction, if suspected, it should be treated. However some of the drugs used to treat depression may cause sexual dysfunction as a side effect.
- Medications such as Sildenafil or Viagra, Vardenafil, Tadalafil, Yohimbine, Alprostadil, surgical implants such as Semi-rigid rods and Hydraulic prosthesis are very helpful but should only be used under guidance of your physician. Some of these medications may have significant side effects such as headaches, facial flushing, and upset stomach, blurred vision, increased sensitivity to light and drop in blood pressure.