

PARKINSON SOCIETY  
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

# Self Management Toolkit

for people impacted by Parkinson's  
disease

[pssso.ca](http://pssso.ca)

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# INTRODUCTION

When you or someone you love is diagnosed with Parkinson's, the first question often asked is "Where do I go?" Our answer is simple: *home*. Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario is *home*. Home for all those living with Parkinson's Disease in Southwestern Ontario. Home for you to find services, workshops, and groups dedicated to growing the support and community around Parkinson's Disease. Home for education and research initiatives built on spreading awareness, care, and support for Parkinson's Disease.

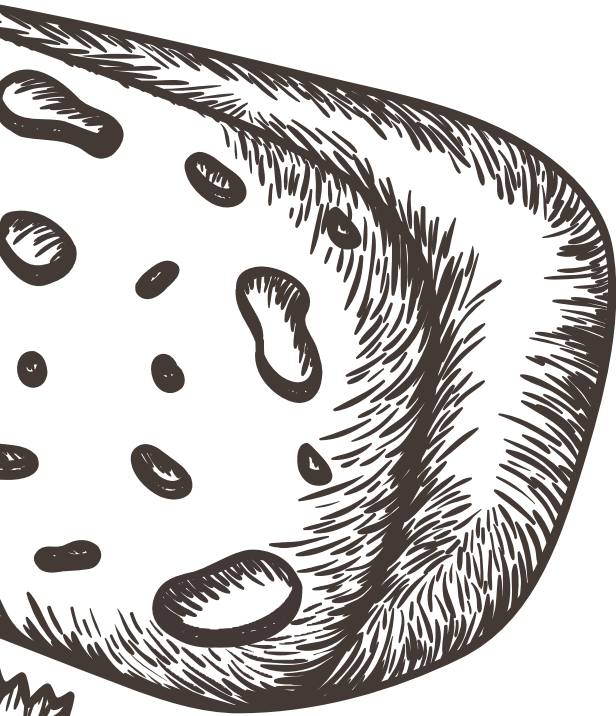
But most importantly, *home* for You.

Please note all information provided in this toolkit is for information purposes only. Please be sure to ask your healthcare professional before addressing any of these topics on your own.



## HEALTHY EATING

There is currently no treatment for Parkinson's Disease so food acts as an alternative and natural remedy



# HEALTHY EATING: WHAT TO EAT

Good Foods	Foods that should be consumed in moderation	Foods to Avoid
Fruits: high in <i>antioxidants, vitamins, minerals (magnesium), tyrosine</i> (found in bananas and watermelon), <i>fiber</i> , improves gut health, anti-inflammatory	Seafood	Red meat
Whole grains	Dairy	Sweets (like cookies and candies)
Olive Oil	Chicken/ turkey	Processed foods
Seeds and Nuts	Eggs	Excess protein
Plant-based food		Iron
Fava beans		High citrus and acidic food
Omega-3		Alcohol
Water		Chewy foods
Green or ginger tea or bone broth		

## ANTIOXIDANTS

- 1.Reduces dopamine cells lost which can increase dopamine in the brain, reducing symptoms such as dementia and confusion
- 2.Promotes healing of cells
- 3.Boosts the immune system by protecting it from free radicals which prevent oxidative state and can damage DNA and cell structures. Reduction in oxidative stress can help reduce mental decline and thus help with symptoms

## FIBER

- 1.Reduces constipation (a common symptom of Parkinson's)

## VITAMIN C

1. Helps brain develop
- 2.Neuroprotective measures

## MAGNESIUM

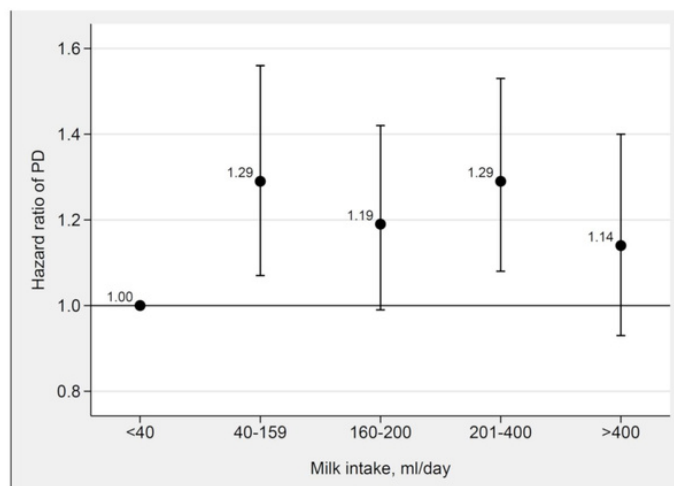
- 1.Lessens muscle cramps and spasms
- 2.Reduces anxiety and insomnia

## EXCESS PROTEIN

1. Makes it difficult to absorb the right levels of medicine to control symptoms

## DAIRY

1. Increases risk of developing Parkinson's disease



## PROCESSED FOODS

1. Lacks fiber
2. High in salt- bad for brain health and increases blood pressure which worsens symptoms

## CHEWY FOODS

Patients usually have difficulties chewing and swallowing, which may worsen with age. Thus, avoiding chewy food prevents choking. Solution: have cooked vegetables rather than raw, stew meats and vegetables, puree and mash foods

## ACIDIC FOODS/CITRUS

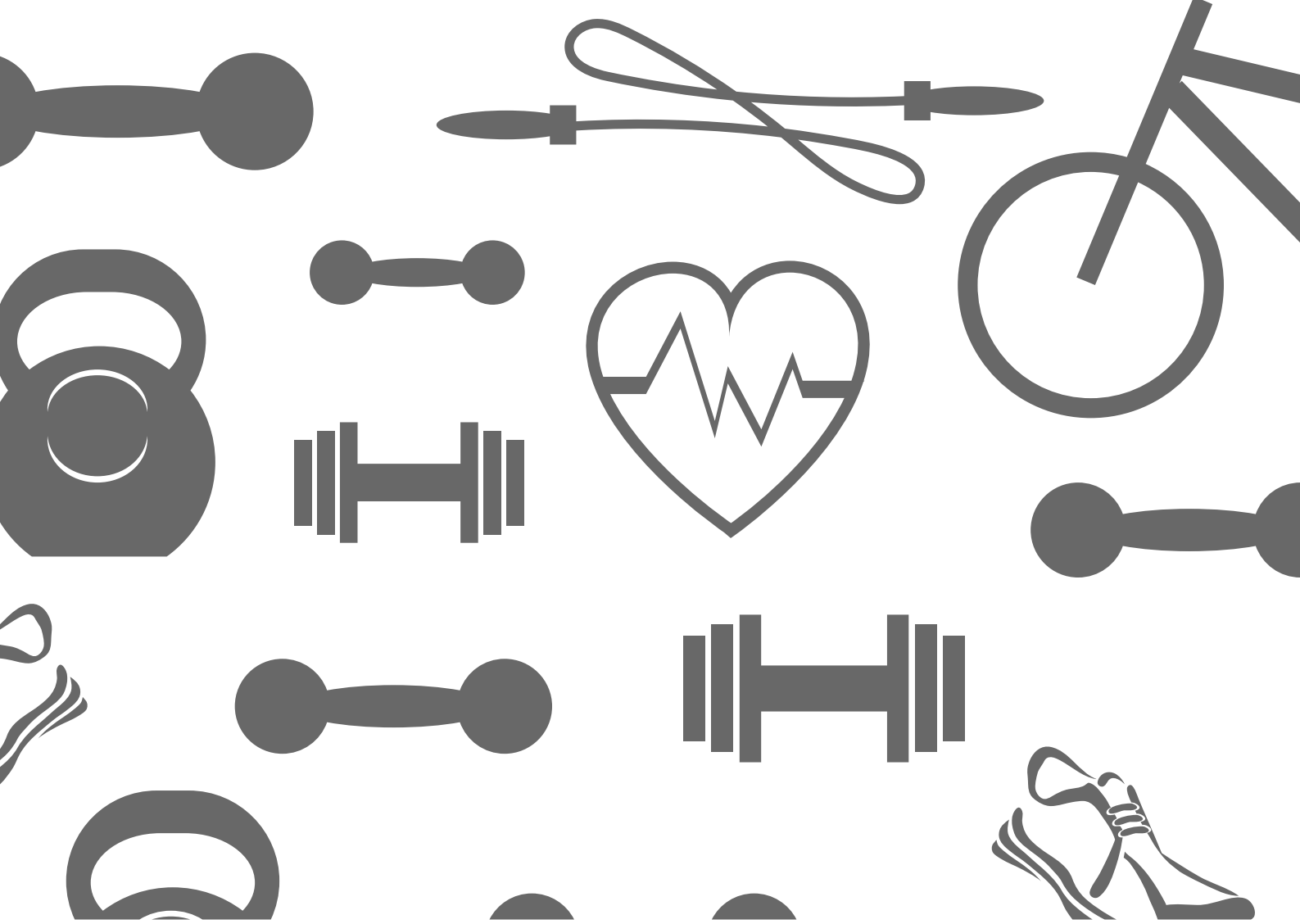
1. Nausea is a common side effect of medications for older patients and acidic foods can increase nausea
  - a. To ease nausea:
    - i. Don't mix hot and cold
    - ii. Eat small but regular meals
    - iii. Keep head elevated
    - iv. Chew careful
    - v. Avoid citrus

## PESTICIDES

Pesticides double the risk of developing Parkinson's disease with repeated exposure, especially during neurodevelopment. Effects of pesticide:

1. Damages dopaminergic systems
2. Triggers the death of dopaminergic neurons
3. Mimics Parkinson's Disease symptoms (in animals)
4. Negatively affects genes that protect dopaminergic neurons' functioning





## MOVEMENT

Exercise can reduce falls as it increases your mobility, and improves strength, balance, and gait.

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However, it is important to use the right mobility devices otherwise, you can have an increased risk of falls.

Physiotherapy can help engage in exercise and manipulates movement which relieves muscle stiffness and joint pain.

Some exercises you can engage in include:

- Tai Chi: improves muscle strength, balance, and flexibility while improving cognitive functioning
- Pilates: improves coordination, balance, posture, and muscle endurance
- Yoga: helps reduce motor symptoms such as tremors
- Boxing: enhance daily quality of life and even build impressive power, strength, flexibility and speed

# LEAVE THE STRESS BEHIND

Mental health is an essential piece of the puzzle for overall health. We eat right to fuel our body, we exercise to help keep fit - we need also to take good care of our mind.



Part of what we have already shared in this resource will be a key contributor to your mental health.

We know that our gut-brain connection is strong and so eating right is an essential piece of mental health. We also know that movement helps our mental health and emotional release.

More and more research is being done on mental health and so we encourage you to seek guidance from a professional on what may be right for you. In the meantime, here are a few ways to continue to support your mental health.

## COUNSELLING

1. There are a number of forms of counselling including CBT, DBT and EMDR for various scenarios. Speak to a licensed professional to find what may support you the best.

## BREATHING EXERCISES

1. Deep breathing, box breathing, alternate nostril breathing and more are all amazing ways to help mental health and anxiety/depression.

## FIND COMMUNITY

1. Connect with one of PSSO's Support Groups to build relationships with people going through similar experiences
2. Join a program like Louder Clearer, Music Choir or Coffee Klatch where you can share in an activity or experience but also build connection

## GET CREATIVE

1. Using the frontal cortex of our brain stimulates good feelings
2. Consider a paint class - there's usually one in your community called "Paint Night"
3. Take a cooking class
4. Try something outside the box that you've never tried before like a mime class or pottery
5. Most of all, don't let what you think you can't do stop you from trying!

# ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

One of the hardest things to do for ourselves is to advocate. You know your body and your mind the best - so when you have the opportunity to advocate for yourself, make the most of it.

1. Take the time to prepare and make sure you have all your questions answered.
2. Don't settle - if you have a differing opinion from your healthcare professional, it's okay to seek a second opinion.
3. Know that your opinion matters. Do your research, build yourself a network of supportive organizations, people and healthcare professionals that will be there to support you.

## RESOURCE APPENDIX

1. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/parkinsons-disease/fighting-parkinson-disease-with-exercise-and-diet>
2. <https://parkinsonsdisease.net/stories/what-to-eat-and-what-to-avoid-when-managing-parkinsons-disease>  
<https://www.homecareassistanceamarillo.com/types-of-food-elderly-people-with-parkinsons-shouldnt-eat/>
3. <https://www.healthline.com/health/parkinsons-and-diet#foods-to-eat>  
<https://parkinsonscare.org.uk/fruits/#:~:text=Bananas%20along%20with%20watermelon%20are,help%20to%20reduce%20the%20symptoms>
4. <https://parkinsonfoundation.org/blog/a-complete-parkinsons-diet-guide>
5. Parkinson Quebec booklet
6. <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/12/9/2763>
7. <https://briangrant.org/how-pilates-helps-parkinsons/#:~:text=Pilates%20is%20a%20series%20of,with%20other%20forms%20of%20exercise.>
8. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7814935/#:~:text=Tai%20Chi%20has%20multifaceted%20benefits,of%20Parkinson's%20disease%20%5B10%5D.>
9. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/yoga-for-parkinsons-disease#:~:text=Yoga%20therapy%20can%20have%20physical,a%20person%20living%20with%20Parkinson's>

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