

PD & Sleep

Sleep is an important part of living well. People living with Parkinson disease (PD) often experience problems with sleep. Some are associated with PD itself, while others may be linked to the medications used to treat the symptoms of PD. Problems that people living with PD *may* have with sleep include the following:

- trouble *falling* asleep and/or trouble *staying* asleep
- sleepiness during the day including falling asleep suddenly (“sleep attacks”)
- vivid dreams or nightmares; acting out dreams
- talking, yelling or kicking while sleeping
- frequent waking up to go to the bathroom
- jerking, cramping or moving of the legs
- trouble turning or shifting in bed

If you are having trouble with sleep, make sure your doctor/healthcare team is aware of the specific problems you are having.

- Sleep difficulties may be related to the medications you are taking for PD. Your doctor may be able to change the dose, type of medication or timing of medication to help your sleep.
- You may learn tips to better cope with these problems from your healthcare team.
- If you have a bed partner, it is important to include them in this conversation as their sleep may be affected by your sleep challenges.

Depression is very common in PD, and can also cause sleep disturbance. Depression may be associated with:

- fatigue
- a change in physical activity
- a change in social interaction
- a tendency to sleep all the time or not at all

Be sure to talk to your doctor/healthcare team if you think you are depressed. Managing depression may improve your sleep.

Tips that may help you get a good night’s sleep:

- establish a sleep routine – go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- avoid drinks containing caffeine within 6 hours of bedtime
- use the bedroom for sleeping not reading, watching TV, using the computer or working

- drink a glass of warm milk before going to bed if getting up to use the bathroom at night is not a problem for you
- if you have trouble getting in/out of bed or with turning in bed, satin sheets and/or pajamas may be helpful
- exercise during the day, but avoid vigorous exercise just before going to sleep
- try not to take long naps during the day
- take a warm – not hot – bath
- have a massage or participate in other relaxing activities