

# Duodopa

## Treatment Options



### What is Duodopa?

Duodopa encompass both the pharmacologic and surgical components of Parkinson disease treatment. Utilizing the very effective levodopa/carbidopa combination, but delivering it in gel form; the medication is delivered into a person's system via a small portable pump and tube (called percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy jejunal tube or PEG-J tube) that connects directly into the jejunum or upper area of the small intestine. This process allows the body to receive medication **simultaneously** and **continuously** for 16 hours throughout the day, which allows the amount of drug in one's bloodstream to be more constant, reducing disabling motor fluctuations (ie: ON/OFF periods).

### Who is Duodopa for?

Not everyone is a candidate for this treatment option; those with a hypersensitivity or allergy to levodopa/carbidopa and those who have a history of stomach and/or intestinal problems, including though not limited to swelling, obstructions, impactions, or their pancreas prevents placement of a tube are not a good candidate for Duodopa. Duodopa is a more effective treatment for people with advanced Parkinson's, when treatment with other medications no longer deliver satisfactory control of symptoms.

### About the Duodopa Procedure:

Doctors may choose to give a trial of the medication by placing a temporary tube through the nose into the small intestine before moving forward with the procedure of PEG-J placement. This will be used to see how well someone responds to the medication, as well as reach the best dose for the symptoms experienced. Once the pump is started, a larger dose is given in the morning to quickly reach the correct amount of medication needed, followed by a continuous delivery of medication throughout the day until bedtime. The medication itself is contained in a hard, plastic cassette that is attached to the pump allowing the gel to be pumped directly into the small intestine. There is daily care and cleaning required at the insertion site and the tube to reduce any chance of infection. Doctors will control the dosage and treatment plan by programming the pump and may be adjusted as required.

### Duodopa Side Effects:

In all medications and/or surgery there can be side effects. As this medication is delivered using a pump-tube delivery system, complications may occur from the surgical procedure, the tube and the medication itself. The following are the most common side effects: pain at the incision site, redness, potential for infection, upset stomach and weight loss. These risks can be minimized with good communication and regular contact with your doctor.

Though the idea of undergoing a surgical procedure can be intimidating, these innovative technologies have proven effects for those suffering from Parkinson's; talk to your neurologist if this treatment is something you might be interested in.