

Parkinson's Disease

What is Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's disease is a brain disorder. It leads to shaking and stiffness. It also leads to difficulty with walking, balance, and coordination.

What Causes Parkinson's Disease?

The cause is unknown. It occurs when nerve cells in the brain that control movement become impaired and/or die. These nerve cells are called neurons. Normally, these neurons make an important brain chemical. It is known as dopamine. When the neurons die or become impaired, they make less dopamine. This causes the movement problems of Parkinson's. Scientists do not know what causes these cells to die.

Symptoms

There are four main symptoms:

- Tremor (trembling) in hands, arms, legs, jaw, or head.
- Stiffness of the limbs and trunk.
- Slowness of movement.
- Impaired balance and coordination. Sometimes leading to falls.

Other symptoms may include depression and other emotional changes. Some have difficulty swallowing, chewing, and speaking. Some have urinary problems or constipation. Some have skin problems. Some have sleep disruptions.

Treatment

There is no cure for Parkinson's disease. But meds, surgical treatment, and other therapies can often relieve some symptoms.

