



# Nutrition for Parkinson's Disease

Leading a healthy lifestyle is important for managing Parkinson's Disease. Follow tips from the list below and you will be on your way to good health.

- **Eat 3 meals a day.** Eating during the day will give you more energy and help you to feel better. Eating more often can also help prevent feelings of nausea and poor appetite.
- **Maintain a healthy body weight.** Most people with Parkinson's experience unwanted weight loss. If you have unwanted weight loss, add snacks between each meal.
- **Eat slowly.** Many people with Parkinson's experience chewing, swallowing, and coordination difficulties which requires more time to eat a meal. Plan your day around meal times giving yourself plenty of time.
- **Eat a variety of food groups.** Eating a variety of foods such as: whole grains, vegetables, fruit, milk/dairy, and meat/beans will help you get enough vitamins, minerals and calories.
- **Increase Your Intake of Calcium and Vitamin D.** People with Parkinson's are at an increased risk for osteoporosis, a disease caused by low bone-mineral density. To prevent broken bones eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Diet alone may not provide enough calcium and vitamin D. Ask your provider if you need a supplement.

## **Good sources of calcium:**

- Low fat dairy products (milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, etc).
- Deep green vegetables (broccoli, collard greens, spinach, kale, etc).
- Calcium fortified breads and cereals.
- 100% fruit juice fortified with calcium.

### **Good sources of Vitamin D:**

- 15-30 minutes in the sunshine.
- Low fat dairy products fortified with Vitamin D.
- Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, tuna, herring, trout).
- 100% fruit juice fortified with Vitamin D.

- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Aim for drinking 6-8 cups of non-caffeinated fluids every day. Water and other fluids are needed to prevent constipation and to keep the body working well.

### **Tips for drinking more fluids:**

- Have a bottle of water with you at all times.
- Use a squirt bottle or straw if it makes it easier for you to drink.
- Keep a bottle or pitcher of water in the fridge at all times for cool refreshing water at any hour.
- Soups, ice cream, popsicles, and gelatin count as fluids.

- **Eat More Fiber.** Many people with Parkinson's experience constipation. Eating more fiber will help. Remember to increase your fluids with an increase in fiber.

### **Good sources of Fiber:**

- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Bran cereal and muffins
- Oatmeal
- Beans (kidney, baked, navy, etc.)
- Corn
- Peas
- Carrots
- Bananas
- Prunes

- **Be active.** Exercise improves mobility, flexibility, balance and mood. It can also help prevent constipation. Do as much activity as your stage of Parkinson's allows you to do. Work with your physical therapist to find exercises that you enjoy and will help to keep you moving.

### **Possible exercises include:**

- Walking
- Swimming
- Arm circles
- Shoulder shrugs
- Dancing
- Biking
- Leg lifts
- Arm curls
- Stretching