

## Advice for managing symptoms of anxiety

- Do regular exercise, such as walking, swimming and yoga.
- Try relaxation techniques or meditation such as Mindfulness.
- Try to maintain a healthy and balanced diet. Avoid drinking too much caffeine and alcohol as these can make the physical symptoms worse.
- Keep a diary of your mood, your medications and your Parkinson's symptoms.
- Talking to your family, friends or care staff about how you are feeling may help to reduce anxiety and help others to understand how you are feeling.

### Useful websites and resources

[www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)  
[www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)  
[www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)  
[www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

**Parkinson's UK Local Advisors**  
**0808 800 0303**

Infection prevention and control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention and control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites.

Further information is available on our website.

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If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call Rayners Hedge on 01296 831980

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**Community  
Neurological  
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## Parkinson's Disease and Anxiety

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

## Emotional Wellbeing

When facing a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease, it is common to experience a wide range of emotions such as anxiety or depression. But, feelings of anxiety can also be a clinical symptom of Parkinson's disease, just like rigidity or a tremor, and with the right support and treatment, the symptoms can be managed effectively.

Symptoms of anxiety include:

- **Feelings of unease, such as worry or fear**
- **Feeling breathless**
- **Dizziness**
- **Sweating**
- **Racing or pounding heart**
- **Trembling**
- **Nausea and stomach cramps**
- **Dry mouth**
- **Muscle tension**
- **Restlessness**

You may also experience more:

- **Movement symptoms**
- **Gait difficulties**
- **Freezing episodes when walking**
- **Dyskinesia – involuntary movements more common in advanced Parkinson's**

## Anxiety and Parkinson's

If you experience symptoms of anxiety, it is important to establish what could be causing it.

Anxiety is a natural reaction to situations which we find threatening or difficult.

Having concerns about living with a long term condition may cause anxiety.

Anxiety may also be caused by changes in brain chemicals that are responsible for controlling and regulating mood.

Some people with Parkinson's experience anxiety when their medication is wearing off and find that their symptoms improve when they take their medication.

However, symptoms of anxiety can occur before medication wears off, meaning that symptoms can fluctuate in an ON/OFF pattern.

## Treatment Options

Treating anxiety is an important part of living well with Parkinson's disease, and is just as important as treating movement symptoms.

When anxiety is treated effectively, people with Parkinson's feel better, move better and live better.

If you or a loved one with Parkinson's experiences anxiety, it is important to speak with your doctor.

Fortunately, there are options available for treating anxiety including:

- You might talk about anxiety with a Psychologist. Talking therapies available include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or Counselling sessions.
- You may consider group therapy, such as the **Parkinson's and Anxiety group** held at **Rayners Hedge** and **Amersham Hospital**.
- Medication, such as antidepressants, known as SSRI antidepressants.