

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Parkinson's disease in most cases affects people who are more than 60 years old, and though research has been done on this disease, it causes still remain unknown. The disease is diagnosed based on the symptoms displayed by the patient. More than 7 million people suffer from this disorder in the United States of America and the disease causes more than 100,000 deaths annually

What is Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's disease is a nervous system disorder that is progressive and that affects the movement abilities of an individual. Being a progressive disease, the symptoms begin gradually and in most cases, they begin with a tremor that cannot be noticed. Tremors are the most noticeable symptoms of the disease, but also the disorder causes stiffness in the different organs which are used for movement, slowing down movement.

Who Gets Parkinson's Disease?

- ❖ Both men and women can suffer from this condition.
- ❖ The disease mostly affects people who are 60 years or older.
- ❖ The risk of having this condition increases with age.

There are also other factors which can increase the risk of getting infected by this condition, the factors include:

- ✓ Exposure to pesticides, individuals who have been exposed to pesticides are at an increased risk of getting the disease.
- ✓ History of head injury.
- ✓ H. Pylori infection.
- ✓ Genetics is also another factor which can increase the chances of developing the disease.

Are You at Risk?

Average Risk:

- Both men and women.
- Above 60 years old.

Medium Risk:

- Individuals who have been exposed to pesticides for long periods.
- Multiple head injuries over a prolonged period of time.

High Risk:

- People with family history of the disorder.
- Individuals who have been affected by the H. Pylori disease.

The symptoms of the diseases are not easily noticeable, especially at the early stages, there is monitor any changes which happens in the body, especially the organs that are used for movement.

Need for Medical Check Up

For people who are aged 60 years and above, they need to make sure that they visit medical facilities for check ups so that any unusual change in their health can be detected earlier, monitored and managed as required. There are treatment interventions which can be used to ensure that the disease is well managed.

WITH AGE, FREQUENT MEDICAL CHECK-UPS ARE NECESSARY

What are the Symptoms?

The main symptoms for this disorder include:

- ❖ **Tremor:** this is usually slight shaking which begins in a limb, hands or fingers. Even when the hand is at rest, tremors might occur.
 - ❖ **Rigid Muscles:** different parts of the body might experience muscle stiffness and this can be painful and limits the movement of an individual.
 - ❖ **Slowed Movement:** movement can become difficult and time consuming as muscle stiffness limits the range of movement of an individual.
 - ❖ **Changes in Writing:** since the hand muscles become rigid, writing might become difficult for people suffering from the disease.
 - ❖ **Loss of Automatic Movements:** the poor coordination of muscles makes it difficult for people suffering from the disease to make automatic movements.
 - ❖ **Speech Changes:** there are changes in the way an individual speaks and this is because the usual inflections will be affected by the poor muscle coordination.
- Health care professionals are able to identify these symptoms and make a proper diagnosis so that they can begin treating the individuals to avert the negative impacts of this disease.

Prevention

The cause of the diseases has remained unknown, because of this, it is quite difficult to find ways of preventing the disease. However, according to some research, regular exercising can help in minimizing the chances of getting the disease.

Treatment of the Disease

The disease can be treated through different medications which are used to handle the symptoms of the disease. The medications are meant to improve the symptoms and improve the quality of life of the patients. The medications which can be prescribed include: Carbidopa-levodopa, carbidopa-levodopa infusion, MAO B inhibitors, Dopamine agonists, Catechol O-methyltransferase inhibitors, amantadine and anticholinergics. The disease can also be treated through surgical procedures such as deep brain stimulation.

Resources

Mayo Clinic:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/parkinsons-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20376055>

Parkinson's Foundation:

<https://www.parkinson.org/>

National institute of Neurological Disorders:

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov>

National Institute of Aging:

<https://www.nia.nih.gov>

More Information:

Parkinson's Disease Information Page

IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISING CANNOT BE IGNORED

