

DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN PARKINSON'S DISEASE

DEPRESSION

Facts

- Depression is very common in Parkinson's disease (PD).
- Depression can be seen years prior to the first symptoms of PD.
- Depression is a major factor impacting the quality of life for a person, family, and other relationships.
- Dopamine is a brain chemical that controls movement and has impact on the emotional state.
- Medication levels being too low may lead to feelings of depression and apathy.

Symptoms

- Persistent sadness with or without crying
- Disinterest in activities
- Poor attention and focus
- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Lack of energy and motivation - expressing a desire to do something but not actually doing it

ANXIETY

Facts

- Anxiety is common with PD.
- Panic attacks are common with anxiety.
- People with PD experience the "on/off" phenomenon. During the "off" time, the medicine is not working, and the physical symptoms are bad. During the "on" time, the medicine is working, and the physical symptoms are good. Anxiety may result from the back-and-forth between these symptoms.
- Medication levels being too low may lead to periods of anxiety.

Symptoms

- Feelings of apprehension
- Being uncomfortable with tasks or activities

TREATMENTS FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

- Depression and anxiety are not a sign of weakness and should be discussed with the provider or nurse.
- Men tend to play down depression and anxiety more than women.
- When brain chemistry isn't quite right or balanced, depression and anxiety are very frequent and may be treated with medication.
- Adjustments to the dose or timing of PD medications may help control anxiety and depression.
- Read the website documents found in the Mood section of the website for more information.