

Thank You for your Participation

The Results Are In!

Remember: Between October 2017-2018 you shared your experiences with us to help us identify important factors that will help people with Parkinson's disease have improved access to exercise and/or physical therapy after diagnosis.

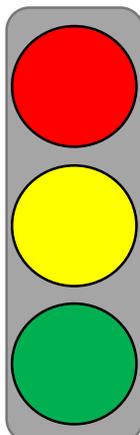
We asked for your help because prior research showed that Physical Therapy (PT) varies between different expert centers.

- People with PD are **most likely to be sent to physical therapy in middle to later stages** of Parkinson's disease (Hoehn and Yahr Stages 3-4).
- European guidelines and American expert clinicians agree that **people with PD can benefit from PTs providing exercise advice early in the disease**, as well as strategies to improve walking and balance as they become problems.



Your Likelihood to Participate in Physical Therapy and Exercise Depends on the People Involved: Your Doctors, Your Physical Therapists, and Yourself

1. **Knowledge:** About insurance, PT, exercise, and PD
2. **Beliefs:** Value/importance, time, and convenience
3. **Weighing the pros and cons:** Cost, work, time, support, and abilities
4. **Internal personal factors:** Motivation, fatigue, fear/stigma



If someone is overwhelmed and newly diagnosed, the doctors rely on the “art” of medicine to help decide if and when they should recommend physical therapy. This may delay the referral process until someone is considered “ready,” meaning they might miss out on proactive advice from PT until later.

The process of getting to PT can be difficult to manage or slow due to location of clinics, complexity of scheduling, follow ups with appropriate referrals, insurance limitations, and communication between all parties. Communicating well with your medical team can help address these process issues.

Ways that help improve participation in exercise: A physical therapist can help provide personalized exercise recommendations whether or not you need their help for walking and balance. Ask your doctor/neurologist if there is an expert PT near their clinic for appointments the same day as your doctor/neurologist visit. You could also ask for help finding an expert PT in your local community.