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Common Asked Question in Parkinson's



What are the Common Causes and Risk Factor in Parkinson's?

The exact cause of Parkinson's disease still remains uncertain, it usually occurs due to a multifactorial including:

- ❖ Age: Parkinson's usually affects people > 60 years old.
- ❖ Deficiency in dopamine, a neurotransmitter facilitating nerve signal transmission.
- ❖ Degeneration and impairment of neuronal terminals responsible for the synthesis of Norepinephrine, crucial for neural impulse transmission, voluntary nervous system control, and blood pressure regulation.

What are the Common Causes and Risk Factor in Parkinson's?

- ❖ Exposure to hazardous substances.
- ❖ Genetic predisposition.
- ❖ Prior head traumas.
- ❖ Viral infections affecting the nervous system.
- ❖ Certain pharmacological agents known to elevate disease risk by diminishing dopamine levels or blocking its receptors, such as certain medications used in the management of psychiatric disorders.



Can Parkinson's disease be inherited?

Not all genetic cases of Parkinson's disease are hereditary. Minority cases only have the potential to be transmitted. However, genetics may increase the risk of Parkinson's disease among siblings when one family member is affected by the disorder. Such cases often manifest at a considerably younger age.



What is the Life expectancy of Parkinson's disease?

Parkinson's disease itself doesn't consider as a fatal disease. However, affected individuals become more susceptible to severe and life-threatening infections. Therefore, the life expectancy of individuals with Parkinson's disease is typically shortened compared to the general population.

Does Parkinson's affect memory?

Mild cognitive impairment may be developed in patients with Parkinson's disease, yet not all cases will progress to dementia. Cognitive impairment usually occurs gradually and subtly, although in some instances, it may progress rapidly.

How Quickly does Parkinson's Progress?

Motor fluctuations can be experienced by patients within a time frame ranging from 5-10 years after the Initial diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. It is important to note that the progression of Parkinson's disease is unpredictable and can vary significantly among individuals, displaying a wide range of clinical manifestations.

Note:

- ❖ **Stage 1:** Unilateral involvement only.
- ❖ **Stage 2:** Bilateral involvement without impairment of balance.



How Quickly does Parkinson's Progress?

- ❖ **Stage 3:** Mild to moderate bilateral disease, some postural instability, physically independent.
- ❖ **Stage 4:** Severe disability, still able to walk or stand unassisted.
- ❖ **Stage 5:** Uses wheelchair or bedridden unless assisted and The Movement Disorders Society Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale (MDS-UPDRS) as an Instrument for quantification of Parkinson's severity.



What are the Prevention methods of Parkinson's disease?

Primary prevention of Parkinson's disease quite challenging since most significant risk factors for Parkinson's are considered non modifiable such as:

- ❖ Aging process.
- ❖ Genetics.
- ❖ Pesticide exposure
- ❖ Dairy products consumption
- ❖ Residing within rural areas have shown an increased risk of Parkinson's disease incidence



What are the Prevention methods of Parkinson's disease?

Environmental factors contribute in reducing the risk of developing Parkinson's such as:

- ❖ Drinking coffee.
- ❖ Physical exercise.
- ❖ Use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.



When to seek help?

Making a decision to seek medical attention in case of Parkinson can be complex and relies on several factors. Parkinson's is characterized by its core motor manifestations including bradykinesia, rest tremor and rigidity, in case patients already diagnosed with Parkinson experience rapid progression and worsening of such symptoms, this might be alarming and could indicate the need to approach medical help.



When to seek help?

Note:

Certain red flags might raise suspicion and the need for Immediate such as rapidly progressive gait impairment resulting in difficulty walking and frequent falls, speech and swallowing difficulties indicative of early bulbar palsy, signs of autonomic failure:

- Orthostatic hypotension
- Sexual dysfunction
- A decreased ability to sweat
- Elevated blood pressure when lying down
- Changes in gastrointestinal and urinary habits
- Dystonia
- Cognitive decline

When to seek help?

medical attention It is important to mention that in some instances where the disease activity is stable and patient symptoms are well managed, and they are not interfering with their daily living immediate medical attention in such cases is not advised. However, having regular follow ups to monitor disease progression is crucial to check for patient's adherence to medications and it also aids in early detection of red flags or abrupt worsening of disease.



Sources and References:

www.moh.gov.sa

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All pictures used from canva.com

Review and audit:

The content of this booklet was reviewed by consultants of the Department of Neurology at King Fahd University Hospital.

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