

NUTRITION FOR PARKINSON'S

Diet Choices for Neuroprotection

Recent research has found that habitual diet patterns correlate with PD symptom progression over time. Specific foods have been associated with...

Reduced PD progression:¹

- Fresh Vegetables & Fruits
- Nuts & Seeds
- Beans
- Fish (non-fried)
- Olive oil & Coconut oil
- Red wine
- Fresh herbs and Spices
- Coffee and Green tea^{2,3}

Increased PD progression:¹

- Canned Fruits & Vegetables
- Soda (diet and regular)
- Artificial Sweeteners
- Fried foods
- Beef & Chicken
- Ice cream, Yogurt, & Cheese

The “green” foods largely comprise the MIND diet, which has been found to benefit PwP.⁴ These plant foods are rich in flavonoids, which may be protective for the brain.⁵

Helpful food habits:

➡ Use **wet, low heat cooking methods**, especially with fats and proteins, to avoid creating damaging pro- oxidants.⁶

➡ **Time restricted eating** may help reset the immune system and mitochondria for brain health.⁷ Try keeping 12+hrs without food between dinner and breakfast.

➡ Work with a certified nutritionist for **personalized support!**

Nutrition for Levodopa

Protein decreases the effect of levodopa.⁸ Sufficient protein is necessary for health as we age, so protein redistribution is preferred to reducing protein intake.

➡ **Separate protein-rich meals** and levodopa doses by ≥ 1 hour. One way is to save high protein foods (like meats) for dinner.

Levodopa can increase homocysteine, an amino acid in the blood associated with risk of cognitive impairment, cardiovascular disease, and osteoporosis in PwP.^{9,10}

➡ Ask your doctor to **check your homocysteine** and B vitamin levels, and consider supplementing **B12, folate, and B6**.^{8,11}

Fiber increases the effect of levodopa, possibly by slowing absorption to support a sustained peak.⁸ Fiber is also excellent for constipation!

➡ Eat ample fiber from **whole plant foods** and consider a fiber supplement. Speak with a nutritionist for personalized suggestions!

One small study found eating a spoonful of soybeans with levodopa can increase “on” time and decrease dyskinesia.⁸

➡ Try **soybeans** as edamame, tofu, tempeh, or miso paste!

The Microbiome

The trillions of microbes in our gut support neurotransmitter production, immune system function, and gut integrity, but they are often imbalanced in PD.¹² “Leaky gut” and reduced beneficial microbe-derived short-chain fatty acids have been associated with PD severity.^{13,14}

➔ **A diet rich in colorful plant foods** is a great way to feed the microbiome. Talk with a qualified professional about sequence-based testing to identify personalized targets for balancing your microbiome.

The Environment

Several environmental toxins have been associated with PD:

- **Pesticides** – many have been linked with PD, and their effects may be amplified when combined.¹⁵
- **Heavy metals** – PwP may absorb more heavy metals into the brain, making normally manageable exposures unsafe.¹⁶
- **Pesticides** – many have been linked with PD, and their effects may be amplified when combined.¹⁵
- **Solvent** – these “forever chemicals,” found in some tap water and in dry-cleaning, have been strongly linked with PD.¹⁷

➔ Vitamin D deficiency has been associated with PD. While studies find supplements don’t help symptoms, getting enough Vitamin D from the sun can.¹⁸

➔ **Avoidance is best!** Choose organic, avoid high-mercury fish, filter your water, minimize dry cleaning, and check your home for lead.

➔ Work with a qualified health practitioner for **clinical detoxification support** if you suspect toxic exposures may play a role for you.

➔ **Spend 15 minutes in the sun three times per week!**

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