

Latest treatments for Parkinson's disease

Researchers still have much to learn about Parkinson's disease. As researchers continue to work hard in the fight against this disease, the lessons they learn may lead to new, innovative treatments. Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder that affects dopaminergic neurons in the substantia nigra area of the brain, advises the Parkinson's Foundation. Even though the disease itself is not fatal, PD is a serious condition one which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rates as the 14th most common cause of death in the United States due to the disease's related complications. PD symptoms affect autonomous functions and the ability to move limbs. The Mayo Clinic notes that most people with PD may show little or no expression, speech may become slurred, arms may not swing when one walks,

and stiffness and gait issues may become apparent. PD can affect balance and posture as well. There is no cure for PD, but there are many different treatments that can slow its progress and reduce symptoms. WebMD says new treatments for PD give individuals continued hope. Here's a look at some of the potential options. Stem cell usage: Stem cells can turn into any type of cell, and there is hope that they can transform into the dopamine-producing neurons used to treat PD. But there is increased risk of involuntary movement from too much dopamine with this treatment. Stem cell therapy also may present ethical and moral issues with some patients.

Glial Cell Line-Derived Neurotrophic Factor treatment: Researchers at the University of Bristol have used robot-assisted

neurosurgery to implant a special delivery system that releases a new drug called glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor into the brain cells of Parkinson's patients. The researchers found that, after 18 months of treatment, all participants showed moderate to large improvements in symptoms compared to before they started the study.

PTB protein therapy: Senior researcher Xiang-Dong Fu, a professor at the University of California, San Diego, studies a protein known as PTB, which influences which genes in a cell are turned on or off. It also tells the genes within a cell whether they should become neurons or not. Fu found that silencing PTB might produce new neurons in a diseased brain. Drug treatments: Researchers are investigating



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drugs that block the action of glutamate, an amino acid that destroys nerve cells, in addition to the role coenzyme Q-10 may play in slowing the progression of PD. Parkinson's disease affects millions

of people and may gradually steal movement and expression from a person's life. New treatment possibilities are continually being explored to improve quality of life and slow down the disease.

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