

The

Liker Health Report



Keeping People Focused on Staying Fit & Healthy

Summer 2023

Detecting Parkinson's Disease

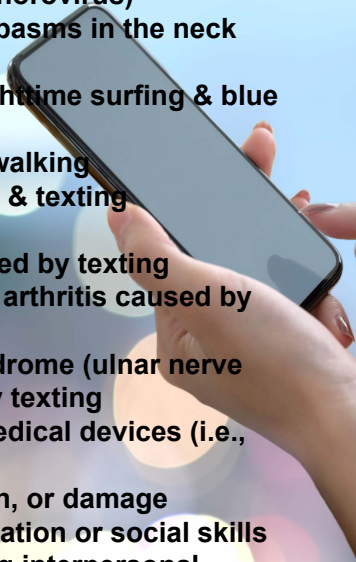
Yes, There's an App for That

Parkinson's disease (PD) is typically diagnosed by observing and evaluating a patient's symptoms over time. Currently, there are no biomarkers for this neurodegenerative disease, so no blood tests can be utilized to make a definitive or early diagnosis. Brain imaging tests, such as an MRI or ultrasound are sometimes used for the purpose of ruling out other neurological conditions, rather than diagnosing PD. Unfortunately, PD symptoms (muscle tremors, limb rigidity, slow movement, change in voice) develop gradually and can remain unnoticeable until the disease has progressed significantly. However, there is renewed hope for PD patients.

Advances in healthcare are often driven by new technology, and smart technology (smartphones, smartwatches, fitness bands) has a potentially game-changing role in PD according to medical researchers and AI scientists. Several companies have developed apps that work with smartphones and wearable devices to track the cues that when analyzed together can offer the earliest signal of PD development. The PD cues include hand steadiness, voice characteristics, facial expressions in photographs, and emotional content of text messages. In the fall of 2022, the FDA approved **Parky**, an app for the iPhone and Apple Watch which uses motion sensors to identify involuntary movements and tremors. A similar app called **StrivePD** is also available on the App Store. These apps generate graphs of the abnormal movements which can be provided to the patient's healthcare practitioner for symptom management and disease progression tracking, as well as patient compliance with medications. Parkinson's patients should check with their doctor for guidance on the most appropriate smart tech for them.

"Side Effects" of Smartphone Use

- Contamination with surface bacteria or viruses (i.e., *E coli*, norovirus)
- Neck tightness or spasms in the neck muscles
- Poor sleep from nighttime surfing & blue light exposure
- Injuries caused by walking & talking or walking & texting
- Distracted driving
- Trigger thumb caused by texting
- Exacerbated thumb arthritis caused by texting
- Cubital Tunnel Syndrome (ulnar nerve irritation) caused by texting
- Interference with medical devices (i.e., pacemaker)
- Eye discomfort, pain, or damage
- Impaired communication or social skills
- Poor or deteriorating interpersonal relationships



RESEARCH PEARLS:

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Researchers at the University of California, San Diego reported in *Aging & Mental Health* the results of a randomized clinical trial examining the effects of tai chi and health education in adults (60+) with hypertension. The 12-week study was a community-based, in-person group that practiced tai chi (TC) and received healthy aging practice-centered education (HAP-E). Participants self-reported symptoms and levels of depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, gratitude, resilience, mental health, and physical health.

The hypertension-intervention study was designed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Small declines in health were observed at the first follow-up during COVID-19 but stabilized at the second follow-up. TC conferred a greater benefit on mental health, although HAP-E was beneficial. Seventy percent of participants reported that the intervention improved their psychological resilience to COVID-19.

Reducing Toxin Load

Enhance the Body's Innate Detox Capability

In today's world, it's becoming more difficult to avoid man-made chemicals and environmental toxins. And while there's no shortage of "detox diets" promoted by everyone from social media influencers to celebrities, scientific evidence is relatively scant. However, the human body's own detoxification system can certainly benefit from dietary habits which help reduce the overall toxin load. These five daily choices are safe, sensible, science-supported, and simple to implement:

#1 – DRINK MORE WATER. Staying hydrated is critical to detoxification because water flushes out waste byproducts generated by the body's metabolic processes; these are removed through urine, sweat, and respiratory droplets. Drinking liquids also promotes regularity, which rids the G.I. tract of toxins in the feces.

#2 – GET ENOUGH QUALITY SLEEP. Sleep supports detoxification because it's the period of time when the brain does its "cellular housekeeping" Cellular debris and waste byproducts from the prior day's metabolic processes are either disposed of or recycled during sleep; this allows the brain to be refreshed upon waking the next day.

#3 – WORK UP A SWEAT THROUGH EXERCISE. The body rids itself of toxins naturally by sweating, so not only does regular exercise remove harmful toxins, it also increases oxygen and nutrient delivery to the body's cells.

#4 – CUT BACK ON SUGAR & PROCESSED FOODS Sugar, processed foods, and fast foods compromise the health of the liver and kidneys which are key to detoxification. Processed and fast foods are typically a haven for non-organic, poor-quality ingredients.

#5 – EAT MORE ANTIOXIDANT-RICH FOODS. Antioxidant-rich plant-based foods help the body fight oxidative stress and reduce damage caused by free radicals and toxins. This eating style assists the organs responsible for natural detoxification.



GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY ADULTS

- ✓ 2 liters of filtered water daily
- ✓ 5-10 servings of fruits, vegetables & nuts daily
- ✓ 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep nightly
- ✓ 150-300 minutes of moderate intensity exercise or 75-150 minutes of vigorous intensity exercise weekly

Your diet is a bank account. Good food choices are good investments.

Bethenny Frankel

Dear Dr. Liker...

Are over-the-counter pain meds relatively harmless, or should I be concerned?



Unfortunately, not all pain medications that are available over-the-counter (OTC) are considered to be without side effects. All medications, whether prescription or non-prescription, affect different people differently. First and foremost, read the package insert, box, or bottle prior to taking any OTC medication so you'll know what precautions or side effects you should be aware of; how long to safely use it; and when to call your doctor if you experience a problem.

As for OTC pain medications (analgesics), the most common ones that people take are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen, or acetaminophen (i.e., Tylenol). NSAIDs can irritate the lining of the gastrointestinal tract, which has two potentially serious side effects. First, it can increase the permeability of the G.I. lining and second, it can cause bleeding. Tylenol does not irritate the G.I. lining, but it can cause liver damage or even death in people who have liver disease or who consume alcohol in large quantities.

If you take OTC pain medication, (1) try to take it for the shortest duration possible, and (2) seek non-drug pain solutions, such as acupuncture, chiropractic, heat/cold therapy, biofeedback, meditation, or relaxation techniques.

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