

As with any resource, take from it what resonates with you and move away from anything that feels overwhelming. Skim the chapters, digest a few pages at a time or scan the patient profiles. Don't read it cover to cover and imagine that a life with Parkinson's has been condensed into a short book. Put it down if it upsets you or you find yourself obsessing over the content, placing labels on your disease or fearing the worst about your Parkinson's. Remind yourself that you have your own version of Parkinson's. Some people prefer to concentrate on the "here and now" of their disease whereas others want to plan for a possible — not inevitable — road ahead. Whichever camp you fall into, this book contains information for you. Focus on what speaks to you.

This guide tries to lend structure to a highly variable disease by painting a broad picture around the most common experiences people tell us they encounter along the way. Remember, you won't have all the experiences in this book. Not everyone will reach the middle or later stages of PD or have the same degree of symptoms.

You'll find the information arranged in the following manner:

- » **Getting to Know Parkinson's Disease:** the emergence of symptoms, initial diagnosis and early years of living with disease.
- » **Paving a Path with Parkinson's Disease:** the progression of symptoms (to different degrees in different people); perhaps continued adjustment to life with PD; and, for some, when medication

is started for symptom management (although this can, of course, be earlier or later).

- » **Looking Ahead with Parkinson's Disease:** the advancing years of Parkinson's in which symptoms may be fairly significant and medication complications could be present. Not everyone with Parkinson's reaches this stage; even those who do won't experience everything that's discussed.

People living with PD today have reason for great optimism about their own futures with Parkinson's and that of the entire Parkinson's community. Research is rapidly moving forward, bringing us closer to a deeper understanding of the disease, concrete ways to diagnose and measure PD, better symptomatic therapies and ultimately, a cure. New symptomatic medications are making it through the drug development pipeline to pharmacy shelves. Therapies that could potentially modify the course of disease are in clinical trials. Parkinson's surgical procedures and devices are improving. Options are continually expanding to support you and your ability to live life with Parkinson's to the fullest at every step of your journey.

We hope this guide (and its accompanying website and video suite at michaelfox.org/PD360) inspires you to get (or stay) actively involved in your care, engage in new ways with the PD community and live well with Parkinson's for many years to come.

HOW THIS BOOK WAS CREATED

This book and the accompanying multimedia materials arose from conversations that repeatedly identified a need to broaden understanding of Parkinson's disease, including options for living well for those newly diagnosed or navigating new symptoms as the disease progresses, as well as those caring for a loved one with the disease. While we strive to capture the diversity of living with Parkinson's, we know we cannot represent every experience of this complex and varied condition.

Content development was led by Rachel Dolhun, MD, a movement disorder specialist, board-certified neurologist and vice president, medical communications at the Foundation.

We are grateful to Claire Henchcliffe, MD, D.Phil., of Weill Cornell Medicine for her expert medical review of the book and to Karen Jaffe, MD, and Soania Mathur, MD, members of the Foundation's Patient Council, for their evaluation of the book as people living with Parkinson's.

Special thanks to the four members of the Parkinson's community who lent their challenges, hopes, images and journeys with Parkinson's disease to this project: Lisette Ackerberg, Jimmy Choi, Michael S. Fitts and Richie Rothenberg.