

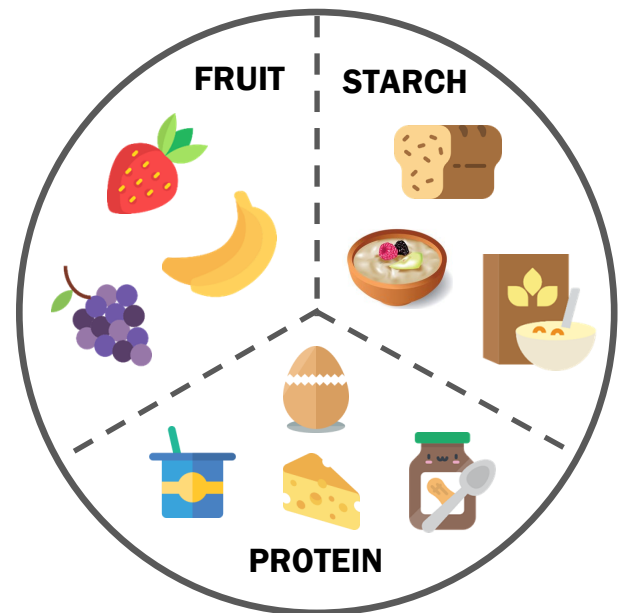
Parkinson Disease & Nutrition

Nutrition plays a very important role in the management of Parkinson's disease (PD). People with PD may experience constipation, food-medication interactions, difficulty swallowing and weight loss. Establishing and maintaining good eating habits can help manage these issues and improve overall well-being while navigating Parkinson's.

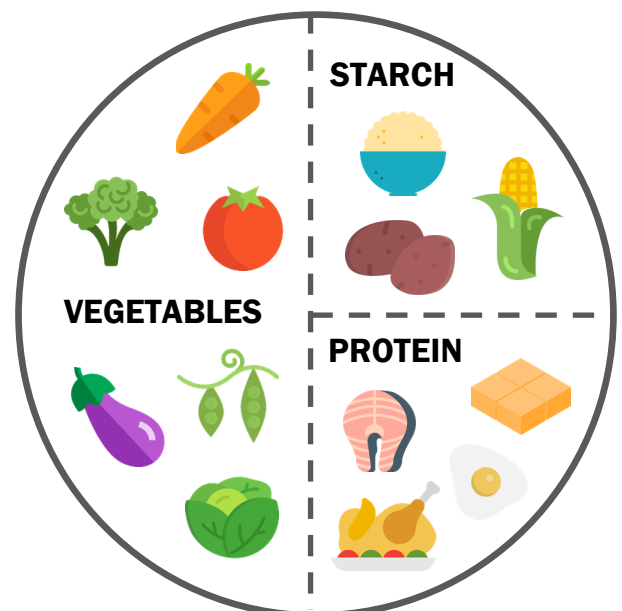
BUILDING A HEALTHY PLATE

- **Eat more fruits and vegetables.** Eating colorful fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber and most are low in calories. Aim to fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- **Make at least half of your grains whole.** Look for whole grains listed as the first or second ingredient – try oatmeal, popcorn, whole-grain bread and brown rice. Limit refined grain-based desserts and snacks, such as cakes, cookies and pastries.
- **Eat healthy fats and limit unhealthy fats.** Foods with healthy fats include nuts, olive oil, avocado and fish. Foods with unhealthy fats include butter, red meat and palm oil.
- **Choose a variety of lean protein foods.** Mix up protein foods to include seafood, beans and peas, nuts and seeds, eggs, low-fat dairy, and lean meats and poultry.
- **Eat less added sugar.** Added sugars are sugars and syrups put in foods during preparation or processing. The major sources of added sugars are regular soft drinks, candy, cakes, cookies, pies and fruit drinks.

Breakfast






Lunch / Dinner



MANAGING CONSTIPATION

- **Eat foods that are high in fiber.** Fiber is the part of plant foods that the body can't digest. When you eat foods that are high in fiber, the extra bulk helps keep stools soft and speeds digestion. Gradually increase your fiber to allow your body to adjust. High fiber foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds.
- **Drink more water.** Drinking water helps reduce gas, bloating, and constipation. Liquids help to process fiber, so drink more fluids if you are eating more high fiber foods. Aim for six to eight glasses of water or unsweetened beverages per day.
- **Be as active as possible.** Exercise helps constipation by decreasing the time it takes food to move through your digestive tract. Even if you take a light walk once a day or do seated exercises, activity can help establish a regular bowel pattern.

Tips to Increase Fiber

- ✓ **Make snacks count.** Combine whole grain cereal, nuts, and dried fruits to create a tasty, high-fiber snack.
- ✓ **Don't forget the beans.** Add them to soups and salads, try them in a burrito or chili, or choose hummus or a bean-dip for a snack. 
- ✓ **Begin your day with a fiber boost.** Choose breakfast cereals with at least 3 g of fiber per serving, opt for whole wheat toast, add a sprinkle of nuts or seeds to your cereal or yogurts, or grab a handful of fiber-rich berries. 


LEVODOPA & PROTEIN

One of the most important medications used to treat PD is levodopa combined with carbidopa (Sinemet). Levodopa is a protein building block so it competes for absorption with proteins from food. Eating a high protein meal reduces the likelihood of effectively absorbing levodopa, so it may be necessary to plan the timing of meals and medication. Talk to your doctor before trying any of these tips:

- **Take levodopa 30 to 60 minutes before eating a meal.** This allows the medication to be quickly absorbed before the food can interfere. If taking the medication without food causes stomach upset, try taking it with a graham cracker or soda cracker.
- **Consider eating less protein.** Altering the amount of protein you eat is usually only necessary in later PD stages when motor fluctuations are prominent. Work with a nutritionist to understand how to distribute high protein foods throughout the day and ensure you're eating enough protein to maintain health.