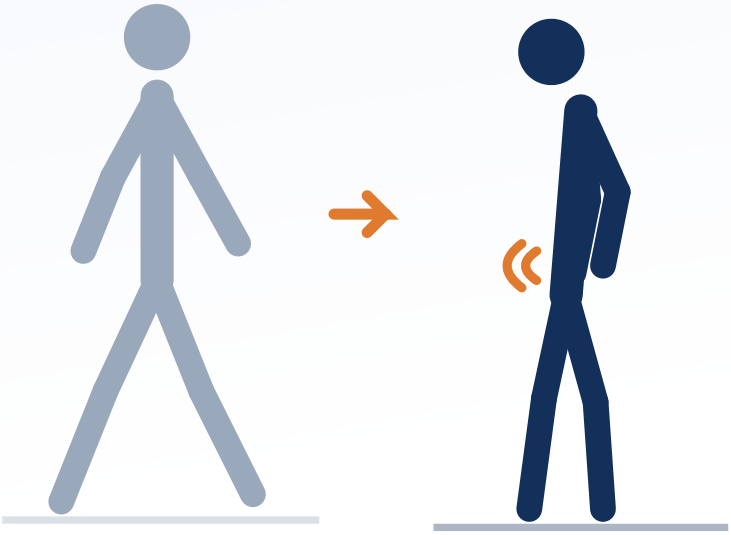
A simple guide for patients and families

Parkinson's Disease



Dr Anand Diwan

Consultant Neurologist · Adults & Children

Brain, spine, nerve & muscle specialist

MBBS, DNB (Neurology) · MMC Reg. No. 88279

Scan to book your appointment

Conditions treated at our clinic

- Epilepsy and seizures (fits)
- Stroke and paralysis
- Migraine and frequent headache
- Vertigo, giddiness, loss of balance
- Parkinson's disease, tremor, slowness
- Memory loss, dementia
- Neck and back pain, sciatica, spondylosis
- Numbness, tingling, nerve pain (neuropathy)
- Muscle weakness (myopathy)
- Head injury after an accident
- Sleep problems
- Children: seizures, developmental delay, slow walking or talking

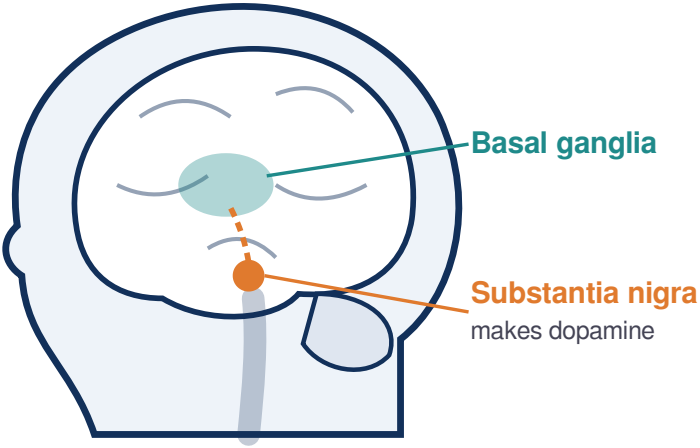
Tests at Narayani Hospital, under one roof

EEG · Video EEG · EMG / NCS · VEP · BERA · VNG (vertigo test) · CT brain · CSF test · All blood tests

Not everyone needs tests. When they are needed, Dr Diwan explains which ones and why.

What is Parkinson's disease?

Parkinson's disease is a slow, long-term condition of the brain that mainly affects **movement**. It is also called *kampavaat* (shaking palsy).



Deep inside the brain, a small area called the **substantia nigra** makes **dopamine** — a chemical messenger that helps us move smoothly and keep our balance. In Parkinson's these cells slowly reduce, dopamine falls, and movements become slow, stiff or shaky.

Why does it happen?

The exact cause is not yet fully known. Ageing of brain cells, some genes and factors in the environment together play a part.

Good to know

- It usually starts after the age of 60, but sometimes begins in younger people.
- It is **not contagious** — it does not spread from person to person.
- In most families it is **not inherited**.
- Like diabetes or blood pressure, it cannot be cured yet, but it **can be controlled well** with treatment that continues for life.
- Most people stay active and independent for many years with the right care.
- It is named after Dr James Parkinson, who described it in 1817.

Movement signs

Signs begin slowly and usually on **one side** of the body first. Later the other side may also be affected.



Tremor at rest

Shaking of a hand, leg or chin when it is resting. It lessens while using the hand, e.g. holding a cup.



Slowness

Bathing, dressing, eating and walking take longer than before.



Stiffness

Arms, legs and neck feel tight. The body may ache.



Walking & balance

Small shuffling steps, bending forward, less arm swing, falls. Some people suddenly ‘freeze’ while walking.

Movement signs



- No facial expression
- Bent posture
- Stiffness
- Less arm swing
- Tremor
- Poor balance

Hidden (non-motor) signs

Some of these can appear **years before** the tremor. Tell your doctor about them.

- Acting out dreams in sleep — shouting, kicking
- Loss of smell
- Soft, low voice
- Drooling of saliva, choking while swallowing
- Low mood, worry, poor sleep
- Forgetfulness (in later years)
- Constipation
- Small, cramped handwriting
- Less facial expression
- Giddiness on standing up
- Frequent or urgent urination

Not every tremor is Parkinson's. Tremor can also come from thyroid, anxiety, some medicines or ‘essential tremor’. A neurologist can tell the difference.

How is it diagnosed?

- Diagnosis is made mainly by the **neurologist's examination**. No single blood test or scan proves Parkinson's.
- An **MRI or CT scan** of the brain may be advised to rule out other causes.
- Some illnesses look like Parkinson's at first (‘Parkinson-plus’ conditions, medicine side effects). Tests help tell them apart.
- In the early stage diagnosis can be difficult. **Regular follow-up** and how well medicines work help confirm it.

Preparing for your visit

- Bring a family member who sees you every day.
- Bring a list of all medicines, with the times you take them.
- A short phone video of the tremor or walking helps.
- Bring all old reports and prescriptions.

Treatment: medicines

There are many good medicines. The medicine and dose are chosen for **each person** — by age, symptoms, stage and other illnesses. Often more than one medicine is used.

Levodopa	(with carbidopa or benserazide) — the most effective medicine
Dopamine agonists	ropinirole, pramipexole
MAO-B inhibitors	rasagiline, selegiline, safinamide
COMT inhibitors	entacapone, opicapone — given with levodopa
Amantadine	for tremor and extra jerky movements
Trihexyphenidyl	sometimes for tremor in younger patients

Rules for medicines

- Take medicines **on time**, every day. Use an alarm.
- Levodopa works best **30 minutes before** a meal or 1 hour after.
- **Never stop or change** the dose yourself — stopping suddenly can be dangerous.
- Report giddiness, seeing things, excess sleepiness, or urges to gamble, shop or overeat.
- Tell **every doctor** you have Parkinson's — some medicines for vomiting or mental illness can worsen it.

More than medicines

Physiotherapy & exercise

Keeps muscles flexible, improves walking and balance, and prevents falls.

Speech & swallowing therapy

Helps a soft voice and choking while eating.

Deep brain stimulation (DBS)

Surgery that helps **selected** patients with severe symptoms or side effects. It reduces symptoms and medicine doses, but does not cure the disease.

Exercise: keep moving every day



Walk with big steps, swing your arms



Stand up: slide forward, ‘nose over toes’, push with hands



Stretch arms up — 10 times, twice a day

Exercise: keep moving every day

- Walk 30 minutes daily — walking is the best exercise.
- Keep feet apart, lift your feet, put the heel down first.
- Turn slowly in a wide circle — do not twist on one spot.
- Use a firm chair with arm rests.
- Yoga, stationary cycling and dancing also help.



If your feet ‘freeze’

- Stop, stand tall, take a breath.
- Count ‘1-2-3’ aloud or walk to music.
- Imagine a line on the floor and step over it.

Make your home safe

Remove loose rugs and wires

Keep a night light on

Grab bars in bathroom and toilet

Food and drink

- Eat a balanced diet with vegetables, fruit, dal and whole grains.
- Drink plenty of water — 8 glasses a day, unless your doctor says otherwise. This prevents constipation.
- If levodopa works less after meals, ask your doctor about spreading protein (dal, milk, paneer, egg, meat) — more in the evening meal.
- Sit upright while eating; take small bites.
- Do not start vitamins, tonics or herbal medicines without asking your doctor.

For family and caregivers

Be patient — slowness is part of the illness, not laziness. Let the patient do things for themselves. Look after your own health too.

Remember

- Drink plenty of water.
- Keep walking every day.
- Never change medicines or doses without your doctor.
- Visit your doctor regularly.
- Report any new problem or side effect.
- Most symptoms improve with treatment.
- Don't lose hope!



Get help urgently if

- Symptoms suddenly get much worse
- High fever with severe stiffness or confusion — especially after missing medicines
- A fall with injury, or choking while eating

My medicine timetable

Write each medicine and the exact time. Show this page at every visit.

Medicine	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night

Questions for my doctor

My notes (good and bad times of the day, falls, side effects)

Next visit date: _____

Appointments

Monday to Saturday · Closed on Sundays

Narayani Hospital

Consultation, tests & admission

Shree Vallabh Nagar, behind Chaan Hotel, near Mumbai Naka, Nashik 422009
Consult 11 am – 3 pm · Tests 10 am – 5 pm
Hospital open 24 hours for emergencies

☎ **0253 2224411**

Dr Anand Diwan Neurology Clinic

Evening consultation

11 Yashika Plaza, near Satyam Sweet, Govind Nagar, Nashik 422009
Consult 6 pm – 8 pm

☎ **0253 2472111**

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Or book on WhatsApp

83900 00385 · 93702 54026

WhatsApp is for booking appointments only.

narayanihospitalfrontdesk@gmail.com
www.diwanneurology.com

Read more online

Dr Anand Diwan · MBBS, DCH, DNB (Pediatrics), DNB (Neurology), PGDDN · MMC Reg. No. 88279

This booklet gives general information and does not replace medical advice. In an emergency, go to the nearest hospital.