

What is Progressive Supranuclear Palsy?

What is Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP)?

Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP) is the second most common type of Atypical Parkinsonism resulting in gradual deterioration of brain cells at the base of the brain that control balance, walking, coordination, eye movement, speech, swallowing and thinking.

Symptoms of PSP usually begin after age 60 and often include loss of balance, changes in personality, weakness of eye movements (especially looking downward), weakened movements of the mouth, tongue and throat, slurred speech and difficulty swallowing.

PSP conditions vary from patient to patient. The most common form of PSP can be characterized earlier on by a loss of balance while walking. Another form of PSP can exhibit less emphasis on balance and behavior changes and more on tremor. With PSP, there is also specific damage to the nerve cells that control the muscles that move the eyeballs resulting in blurring and an inability to aim the eyes properly because of the weakness of the muscles.

The problems with vision, speech, and swallowing are much more common and severe in PSP than in Parkinson's. Patients with PSP usually stand up straight and tend to fall backwards while those with Parkinson's usually are bent forward.

Some resources you may consult for PSP education and support:

Cure PSP

www.psp.org

PSP Society of Canada

www.pspocietycanada.ca

PSP Association

www.pspassociation.org.uk