

What is Atypical Parkinsonism?

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Parkinsonism is a condition characterized by several key motor features including shaking/tremor, muscle stiffness, slow movement and a shuffling or slow walk.

Atypical Parkinsonism disorders, also called Parkinson-plus disorders, are progressive diseases that present some of the signs and symptoms of Parkinson's disease, but generally do not respond well to drug treatment with levodopa. They are associated with abnormal protein buildup in the brain.

With Atypical Parkinsonism, the patient has Parkinsonism and other features which may include early balance problems/falling, poor reaction to the drug levodopa, early cognitive problems, impaired control of blood pressure/bowel/bladder, and difficulty in performing complex limb movements.

Atypical Parkinsonism disorders include:

Lewy Body Dementia (LBD), involving alpha-synuclein protein build up in brain cells

Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), involving tau protein build up affecting the frontal lobes, brainstem, cerebellum and substantia nigra of the brain

Multiple System Atrophy (MSA), involving alpha-synuclein protein build up affecting the autonomic nervous system, substantia nigra and cerebellum of the brain

Corticobasal Syndrome (CBS), involving tau protein buildup affecting the cerebellum and basal ganglia of the brain, and one side of the body more than the other

Some resources you may consult for Atypical Parkinsonism education and support:

Parkinson Canada

www.parkinson.ca/about-parkinsons/atypical-parkinsonisms/

Brain Support Network

www.brainsupportnetwork.org/education/atypical-parkinsons/