

## **Fighting Fatigue: Enhancing Energy and Endurance**

Maintaining an active lifestyle is an important step in living well with Parkinson's. Research has shown approximately one third of individuals with Parkinson's report fatigue may be a limiting factor in their daily routine. There are a number of factors that contribute to feeling tired, a lack of energy, or decreased endurance. Consider the following for coping with or minimizing the effects of fatigue in daily activities:

### **Factors Contributing to Fatigue:**

- Lack of exercise or sedentary lifestyle
- Increased effort required due to slowness, muscle stiffness, or tremor.
- Greater concentration to perform tasks that are no longer "automatic"
- Sleep disturbances resulting from muscle cramping, "restless legs", or difficulty turning in bed.
- Changes in mood or feelings of depression may sap energy levels.
- Fluctuations in mobility related to level of PD medications.

### **Useful Steps to Maximize Energy and Endurance:**

- Seek to identify and minimize/eliminate the major sources of stress and fatigue in your daily routine
- Avoid over-scheduling... learn to say no to added responsibilities or tasks you don't enjoy
- Perform regular exercise – both physical and mental – to build endurance and stamina
- Make sure you schedule adequate time for rest and sleep into your daily routine
- Plan tasks and gather supplies to save un-necessary steps
- Take frequent breaks
- Delegate or hire help for tasks you find particularly stressful or tiring
- Take advantage of convenience products, foods and gadgets
- Recognize your limits to avoid over-exertion
- Plan highest levels of activity at times you are well rested and medications are working well

### **Involving Your Team**

Consult with an occupational therapist for an assessment and individual recommendations for energy conservation and enhancement.

