



# Southport Physiotherapy Centre

Suite E Third Floor, 34 High Street  
SOUTHPORT QLD 4215

Ph: 07 5591 4333  
Fax: 07 5591 4399

## Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease affects 1 in 29 Australians who are older than 54 years.

It is both chronic and progressive.

Parkinson's disease is a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system that often impairs motor skills and speech.

It belongs to a group of conditions called movement disorders and is characterised by tremor or trembling in hands, arms, legs, jaw and face; rigidity or stiffness of the limbs and trunk, slowness of movement, impaired balance and co-ordination. Sufferers may have increasing difficulty walking or talking or completing other simple tasks.

People with Parkinson's disease require broad-based management including patient and family education, support group services, general wellness maintenance, exercise and nutrition.

There is no cure for Parkinson's disease.

There is promising therapy called Deep Brain Stimulation, where electrodes are placed into the brain and connected to a small electrical device that can be externally programmed.

A typical gait pattern involves short steps, shuffling, and stooped posture.  
Other features include very small handwriting and mask-like face.

Exercise can be beneficial for maintaining and improving mobility, flexibility, balance and range of movement.

There is generally a very high rate of falls in people with Parkinson's.

It has been estimated that more than 50% will fall and 20% will have a serious fracture within the first 10 years of diagnosis.

Parkinson's disease is more common in the older population and older people have a higher rate of osteoporosis so are at greater risk of fractures and injury.

People who suffer with Parkinson's disease have difficulty performing more than one task at a time such as walking while talking, writing while listening to a phone, turning around when walking, reaching out to grasp an object when standing.