

## **HOW TO GET THE BEST VALUE FROM THIS BOOK**

When we are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, we are often bombarded with enormous amounts of information, most of it ranging from depressing to dire, with little or no advice about what we can do to feel better or become healthier.

When diagnosed in 1995, I was tempted, at first, to rely on acknowledged medical experts to give me answers to my questions and advice on how to relieve my symptoms, function better and feel more "normal". I was disappointed, as all I heard from these experts was that they did not know what caused Parkinson's disease, there was no hope of recovery and I could do nothing to help myself. Drugs were the only answer.

I had no access to the internet in 1995, but was still overwhelmed by the amount of information about Parkinson's disease that I found in books, studies, journals, research papers and statements from a variety of medical practitioners. My first task was to find the tiny seeds of positivity and hope amongst the huge pile of technical and experimental information I read.

These days, there are thousands of pages of information on the internet, books written by doctors, researchers and hopeful patients, fabulous amounts of research information available on sites like PubMed, and diagnosed celebrities telling their stories to entice us to give money to their foundations or charities.

It can all be really confusing.

This book is intended to reduce the confusion and give you, the person diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, the opportunity to

explore options to improve your state of wellbeing. It also offers healthcare practitioners the opportunity to increase their knowledge base with information about causes and recovery from an author who has both experienced advanced Parkinson's disease himself and helped many others to reverse their symptoms.

You may be someone hungry for knowledge and wanting to know everything NOW! If so (and that is like me), start at the beginning and read through to the end, making notes or highlighting as you go.

However, if the thought of reading 440 pages and absorbing so much information is daunting, here are some ideas to make it easier.

### **Person with Parkinson's disease**

If you want to begin your journey to better health now, start at **Section 3**, Chapters 12 through 16, and make the changes advised to your food choices, supplements, lifestyle and activities.

You will find it easiest to begin with food. Start with breakfast, get that right, then move onto your other meals. With food sorted, you will find it easier to begin supplementation (there are suggestions for the most important supplements) and activity.

Chapters 17 through 19 give details of other strategies that will help you improve your health. Work through those step by step, setting goals to adopt a new strategy each two weeks.

When you feel that you can manage the basic changes in this section, it is time for you to read Section 2 (WHAT CAUSES PARKINSON'S DISEASE?) and discover what has caused your symptoms. You can then adopt the strategies specific for the pathways that have led to your state of unwellness. Writing some notes about your family and life history will help and, if you need more clues, read Chapter 11 (FINDING THE AETIOLOGICAL PATHWAY) for help.

## **Healthcare practitioner**

You already have many skills that can help a person with Parkinson's improve their state of health. However, if you want to understand the aetiology of symptom patterns, as I do, so you can advise and prescribe more effectively, but are time-poor, Section 2 (what causes Parkinson's disease?) is the place to start.

Chapters 6 through 10 include research from Western allopathic medicine and complementary/alternative medicine on the causes of neurodegeneration, plus my clinical experience of over twenty years. Chapter 11 gives some strategies for discovering aetiological pathways for those patients who present with complex and confusing symptom patterns.

Once you have knowledge of what has caused your patient's journey from good health to poor health, and broken through the camouflage of differential symptom diagnosis and polypharmacy, you can adopt or adapt the strategies in Section 3 to help your patient achieve the best possible health outcomes.

**Section 1** is there for all those who want to know more about the history of Parkinson's disease and its treatment, common attitudes and some basic differences between the approaches offered by Western allopathic medicine and complementary/alternative medicine. This section is for the adventurous and the curious, and may help patients and practitioners to understand why I needed to write this book.

I hope you will all read **Section 4** when you are ready to ponder the divide in health care throughout the Western World and consider your individual response to those challenges.

**CHAPTER 5**

**COMPLEMENTARY/ALTERNATIVE  
MEDICINE APPROACHES TO PARKINSON'S  
DISEASE – AN OVERVIEW**

Complementary/alternative medicine practitioners are often unwilling to treat patients diagnosed with Parkinson's disease as there is little offered in the universities and colleges to encourage a view of assisting wellness.

The most common attitude from teachers is that we can only mitigate symptoms by offering alternatives to common Parkinson's disease drugs, albeit with less adverse effects than pharmaceutical drugs.

During the twenty years following my recovery in 1998, I approached several colleges in Australia and USA offering my research, experience and services to bring clearer and expanded knowledge to the discussion about Parkinson's disease and its treatment. My own college engaged me as a guest lecturer for final-year students where I was able to tell my story and explain the principles behind holistic treatment of Parkinson's disease, and I continued this work until the college closed. No other Australian college or university has evinced any interest in this work. Standard complementary medicine texts in Australia quote the Western allopathic medicine view of Parkinson's disease as a dopamine deficiency disorder, but they do emphasise the importance of gut health, nervous system support and mitochondrial health, which is a great advantage over Western allopathic medicine texts.<sup>1</sup>

My approaches to some of the largest and most respected colleges in USA were met with a total lack of interest. While those I spoke with were courteous, my follow-up correspondence was ignored. One of my challenges in approaching such institutions was/is lack of academic qualifications. It is unfortunate that, within the hallowed halls of complementary/alternative medicine education, a PhD in almost anything health-related carries much more weight than experience and results. I hope this will change in time.

There is some potentially useful research emanating from one of these colleges, but its impact is reduced by a limited aim and poor study design. Much, if not all the information to be gained from this study is already available from a variety of other studies and research projects, perhaps not as coherently, but still available, and the money spent on this Parkinson's disease study could well have been directed towards looking at one of the aetiological pathways and ways to reverse the illness results of that pathway.

However, even though I am critical of the limited view of complementary/alternative medicine academia, there is some excellent work done in supporting those diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and helping them achieve a higher quality of life.

Therapies supporting gut function, immune system and mitochondria are a general focus, while therapies mitigating drug adverse effects help many patients. Detox protocols (when not over-rigorous) are helpful to many, and can assist in reversing one of the major aetiological pathways.

Many complementary/alternative medicine practitioners are able to provide body work (Bowen therapy, massage, Feldenkrais and others), exercise direction (Pilates, yoga, boxing, high-intensity interval training, directed exercise regimens), emotional and psychological support, and may encourage self-help activities

such as meditation, singing and dancing.

Advantages of complementary/alternative medicine include general lack of toxicity (assuming prescriptions comply with current research), a more holistic approach to health, a more common application of the Hippocrates principle of “first do no harm”, repair of some body systems which improves overall health and so reduce the impact of Parkinson’s disease symptoms, and a general willingness to engage with and listen to patients in clinic.

Disadvantages are a lack of willingness to focus on aetiological pathways, so reducing the helpful impact of therapies, extra costs for the patients as most public health funds and private health insurance pay little or nothing for complementary/alternative medicine treatments, and unwillingness on the part of most Western allopathic medicine practitioners to engage with or correspond with complementary/alternative medicine practitioners; this reduces the possibility of excellent outcomes through utilisation of combined therapies.

One rather unpleasant disadvantage is the plethora of “quacks” claiming to be complementary/alternative medicine therapists with answers. Now, there are certainly “quacks” in Western allopathic medicine, although we could consider these to be ignorant bigots rather than quacks perhaps. Complementary/alternative medicine quacks claim to have “cures” for many illness, including Parkinson’s disease, offer expensive multi-level marketing “remedies”, and/or sell their own brands of formulas and supplements without any evidence of efficacy or safety. These are despicable human beings who deserve condemnation. The same can be said about Western allopathic medicine practitioners who refuse to see the evidence of patients improving their health, close their eyes to Western medical research proving many complementary/alternative medicine principles, and continue to condemn patients to lives of misery.

We must weed out quacks and pretenders, and use “people power” to change the attitude of doctors to one of hope and helpfulness.

Parkinson’s disease is a set of symptoms that may be “incurable”, but the fact remains that we can reverse the illness process and become well.<sup>2</sup>