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Pelvic Health Therapy for Sexual Health in Parkinson's Disease

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She/Her/Hers

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Pre-Discussion Points

Role of pelvic health physical therapist

Anatomy images; sexual health devices shown

Statistics refer to cis-male and cis-female genders

Support and resources are available for **EVERYONE**



What does “Sex” mean to you now?



Defining Sex

It is always changing

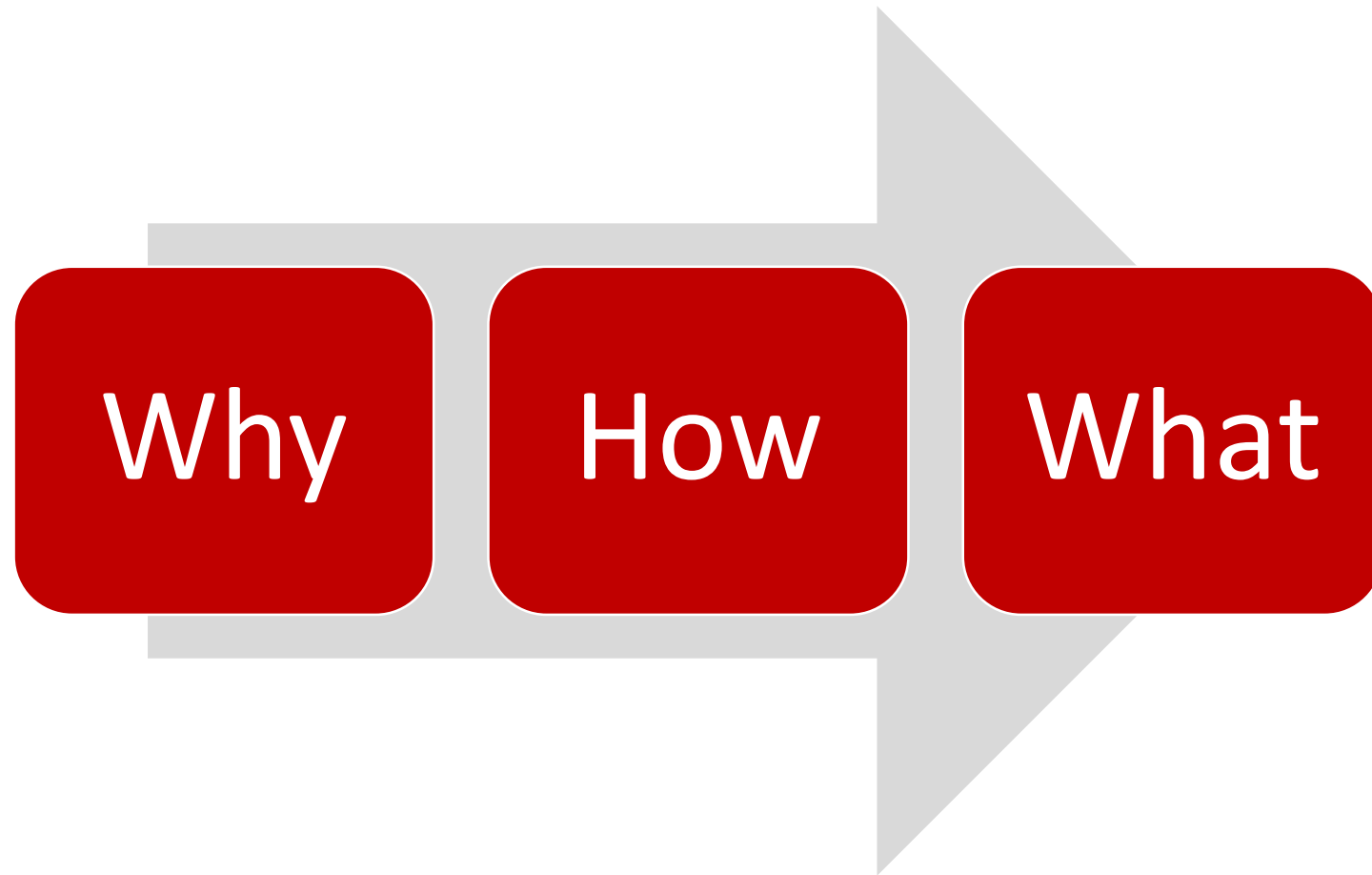


Intercourse: sexual activity with penetration

Outercourse: sexual activity without penetration; massage, kissing, foreplay, oral stimulation, erogenous zones

Intimacy: the experience of strong feelings; closeness, connection, bonding

Let's Talk About Sex and How PT Can Help...





Why is it important to discuss sexual health?

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Impact on Bowel, Bladder, & Sexual Function in Parkinson's Disease

“Common” versus “Normal” mindset

- Questionnaire study method
- 115 PD vs. 391 control
 - Ages 30-70
 - 6 years or > diagnosis
 - Stage 3 Hoehn & Yahr
 - Dopamine replacement medication taken

Prevalence in Women with Parkinson's Disease

COMPLAINT	PD Women	Control
Urinary Urgency	42%	15%
Daytime Frequency	28%	0%
Nighttime Frequency	53%	2%
Stress Incontinence	34%	30%
Urge Incontinence	25%	7%
Slow Start to Stream	23%	19%
Weak Stream	59%	38%
Starting/Stopping Stream	20%	8%
Straining	28%	12%
Fullness After Urination	38%	20%

COMPLAINT	PD Women	Control
Constipation	63%	8%
Difficulty Expelling Stool	61%	52%
Stool Incontinence	6%	0%
Diarrhea	22%	11%

COMPLAINT	PD Women	Control
Decrease in libido	84%	58%
Decrease in sexual intercourse	55%	20%
Decrease in orgasm	29%	36%
Sexual dissatisfaction (QOL)	8%	6%

Prevalence in Men with Parkinson's Disease

COMPLAINT	PD Men	Control
Urinary Urgency	54%	22%
Daytime Frequency	16%	0%
Nighttime Frequency	63%	10%
Stress Incontinence	3%	2%
Urge Incontinence	28%	6%
Slow Start to Stream	44%	30%
Weak Stream	70%	43%
Starting/Stopping Stream	41%	36%
Straining	31%	18%
Fullness After Urination	43%	38%

COMPLAINT	PD Men	Control
Constipation	69%	3%
Difficulty Expelling Stool	57%	25%
Stool Incontinence	10%	5%
Diarrhea	21%	10%

COMPLAINT	PD Men	Control
Decrease in libido	83%	22%
Decrease in sexual intercourse	88%	18%
Decrease in orgasm	87%	20%
Decrease in erection	79%	20%
Decrease in ejaculation	79%	19%
Sexual dissatisfaction (QOL)	28%	25%

Predictors of Sexual Dysfunction in Parkinson's Disease

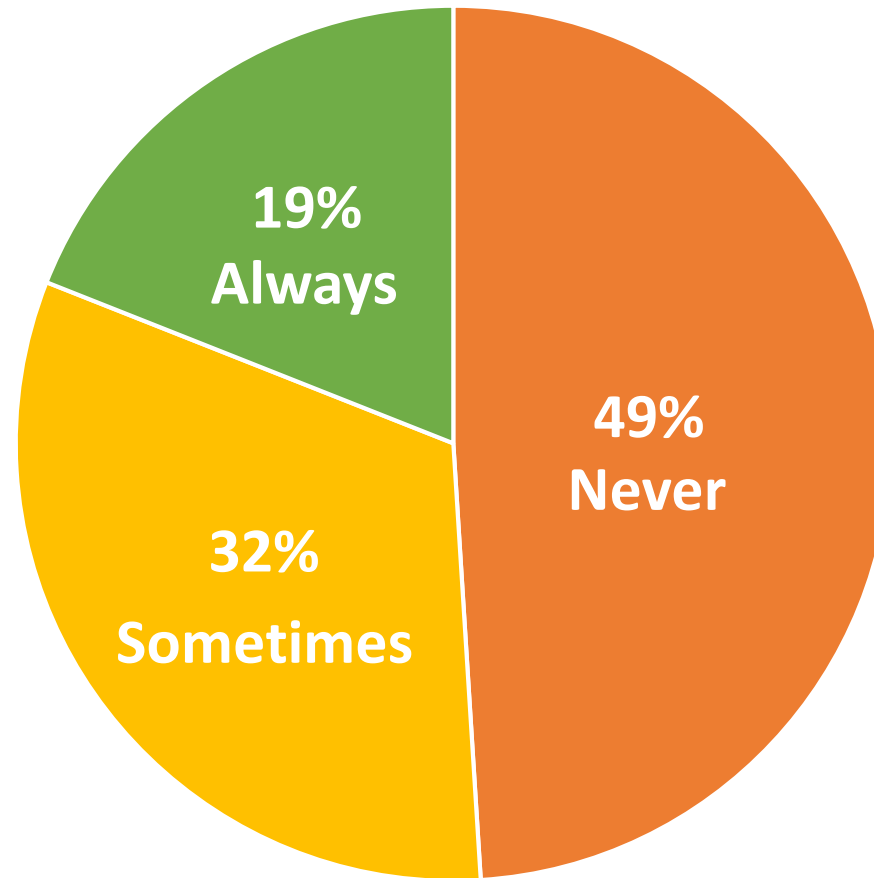
Motor and Non- Motor Functions

Kyphotic posture
Postural instability
Falls
Pain
Core and leg weakness

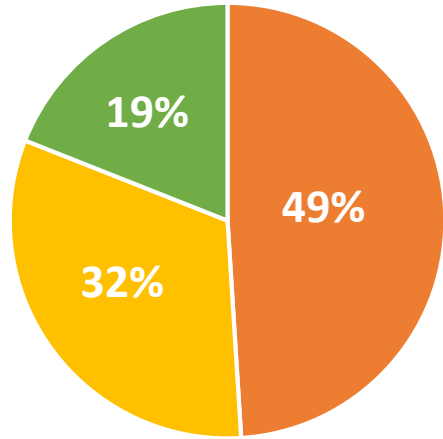
Anxiety
Depression
Insomnia
No sexual activity > 1 month
Low libido

Constipation
Incontinence
Erectile dysfunction
Vaginal atrophy
Nocturia

How often is sexual health in PD discussed with a medical professional?



■ Never ■ Sometimes ■ Always ■



■ Never ■ Sometimes ■ Always ■

< 40%

**If screened,
how often is
there follow
up for
treatment
options?**



**How does Parkinson's Disease affect sexual health?
(directly and indirectly)**

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Tremors
Freezing
Rigidity & Stiffness
Bradykinesia / Slowness
Diminished Facial
Expression
Immobility



Mood
Body image
Fatigue
Concentration & memory
Sensation
Pain
Sweating
BP
LUTS

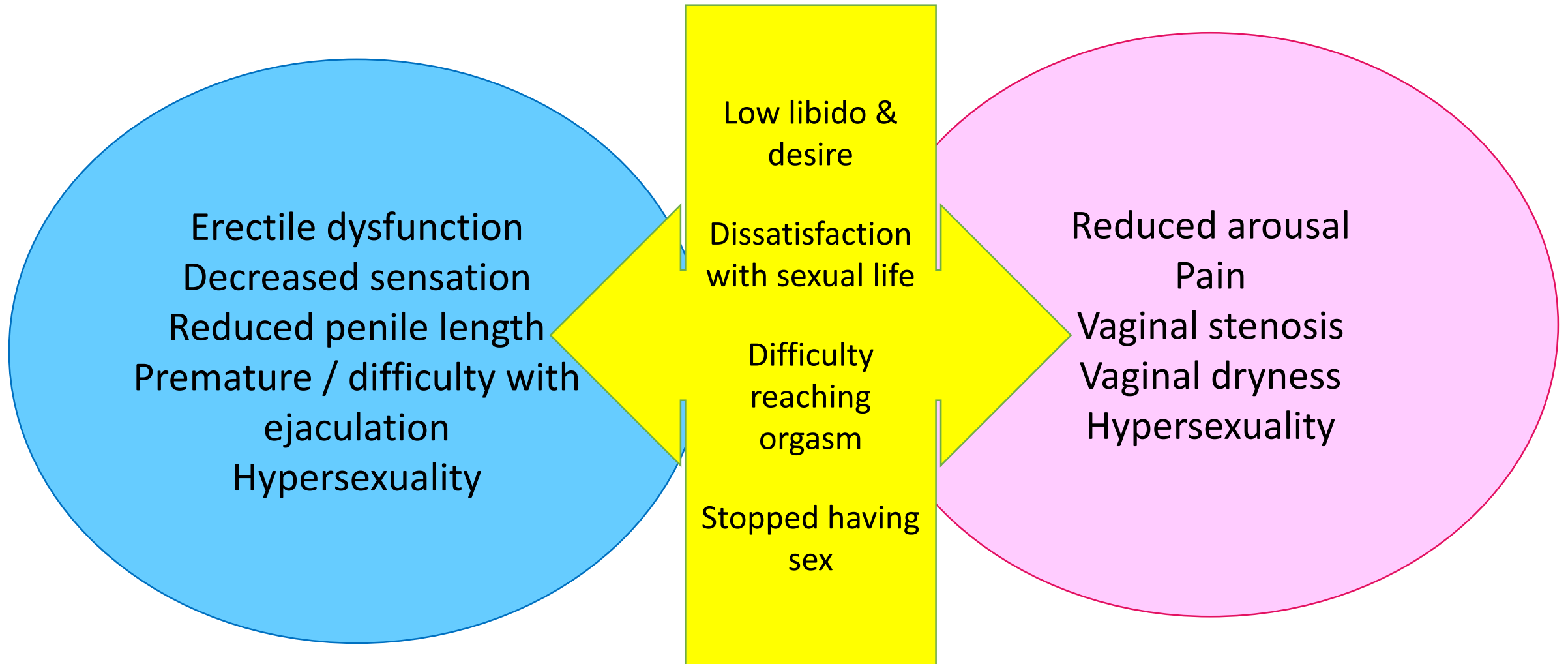
Cycle of sexual dysfunction in Parkinson's Disease

Reduced communication
Relationship dynamics
Affect partner
Bed separation

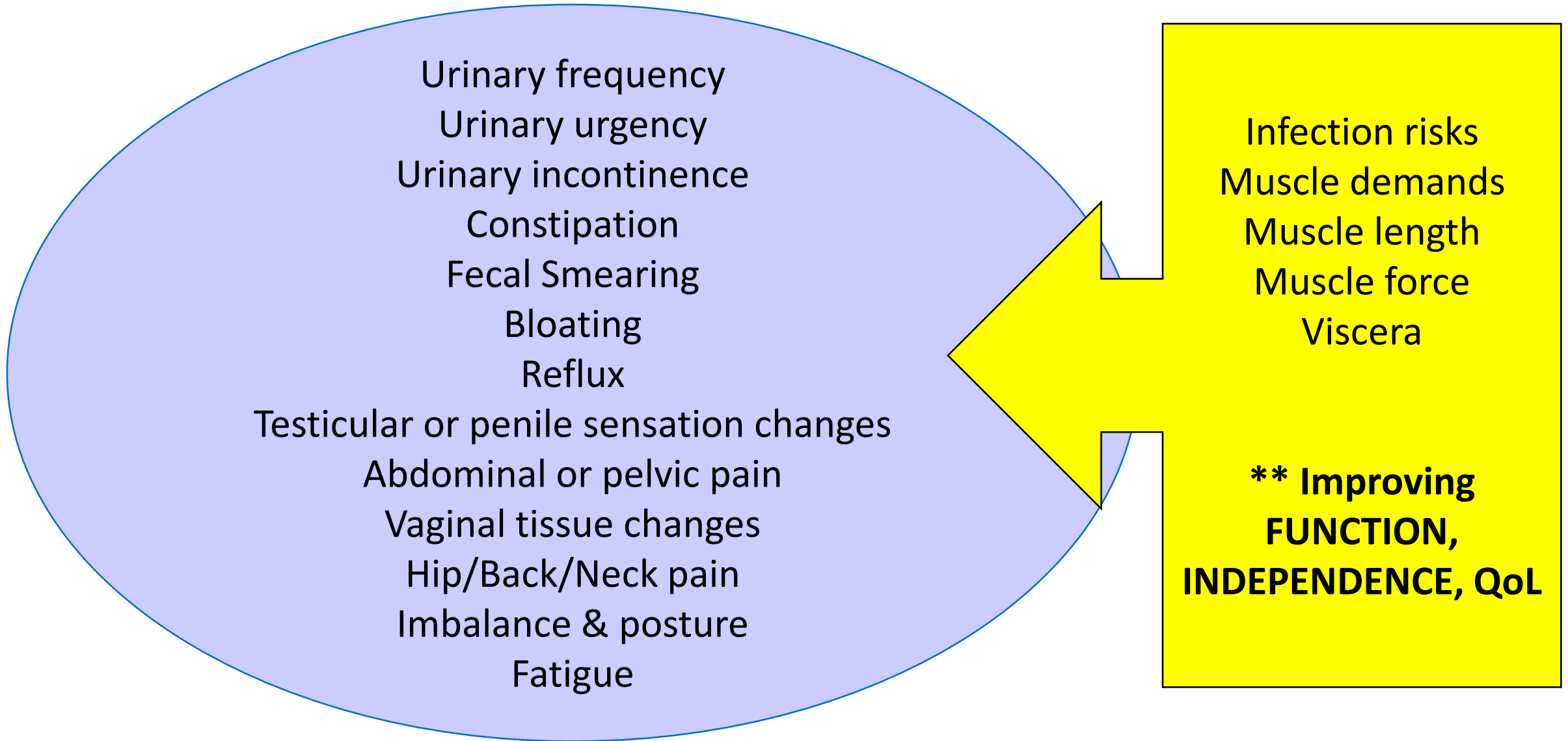


Impaired touch
Changes in arousal
Anorgasm
Reduced erection
Need for exploration in sexual
habits and positions
Role changes in relationship
Altered frequency of sex
* Hypersexuality with meds

Common Impairments Associated with Sex in PD



Common Impairments Associated with Sex in PD





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What can Pelvic Health PT do to help?



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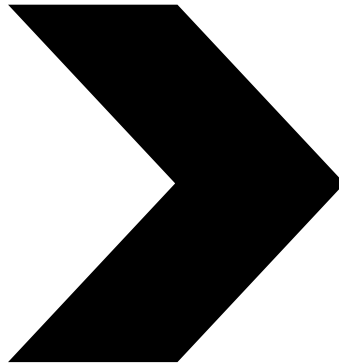
Education: Re-explore Sex & Intimacy

Suggestions

- Identify what you are seeking with sex; identify limited beliefs
- Communication
- Discover your and your partner's "love language" or forms of intimacy
- Explore erotic zones for you and partner
- Adapt with timing, environment, stimulation, positions
- Use of lubricants, c-rings, genital stimulation devices
- Methods to achieve and maintain erections; reduce pain; navigate anatomical adaptations
- Time invested: personal, couple, intimate, sexual

Pelvic Health PT Treatment Approaches

Arousal
Erectile Dysfunction
Vaginal Tissue Changes
Pain
Orgasm



Pressure modulation for: posture, muscle balance, strength

Proprioceptive training & establish safety in body for self and then for with partner

Bowel control
Bladder control
Continence
Pain

Education

PFMT

Viscera/neuro-musculoskeletal work

— Kegels are usually NOT the answer

8/10 x need muscle down training & coordination





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Build Your Support Team



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Who can help with sexual health in PD?

Multidisciplinary Management

- Primary Care
- Neurology
- Urology
- Urogynecology
- Gynecology
- Pelvic Health Therapists
- Counseling
 - Sex Therapists
 - Sexual Health Counselors
 - Couples Counselors
 - Individual Therapies
- Psychiatry

Online Resources

How to find professionals in your area

- Parkinson Disease Foundation: www.Parkinson.org
- Society for Sex Therapy and Research: <https://sstarnet.org>
- American Association for Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists: www.aasect.org
- Sexual Medicine of North America: www.smsna.org/patients
- APTA Academy of Pelvic Health:
<https://aptapelvichealth.org/ptlocator/>
- Herman and Wallace Pelvic Health Institute:
<https://hermanwallace.com/practitioner-directory>
- International Society for Study of Women's Sexual Health:
<https://www.isswsh.org/>

Sex can sometimes lead to your greatest adventures

Support is here





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