

September 14, 2025

***What do you call a turtle chef?
...A slow cooker!***

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

“
 “Do not confuse my bad days
 as a sign of weakness. Those
 are actually the days I'm
 fighting my hardest.”
 ”

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE

Click the icon for a kick-butt workout
 with Coach Betsy:

HKC Strength Class



HKC Parkinson's Fitness Class



GLP-1 receptor agonists and the future of Parkinson's

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We've all heard of GLP-1 receptor agonists such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Exenatide and Monjouro because they've been advertised for weight loss! But these GLP-1 medications may have a few tricks up their sleeves beyond slimming waistlines, particularly when it comes to Parkinson's (PD). Recent research indicates that these medications could have a role to play in supporting brain health and possibly in the future treatment of Parkinson's disease (PD). However, before we go on, a quick word of caution: while this early research is exciting, long-term studies are limited, and much of this potential is still in the experimental stage. Still, science is intriguing and worth exploring — so let's take a closer look.

GLP-1 stands for glucagon-like peptide-1, a hormone that helps regulate blood sugar and appetite. Medications that act on GLP-1 receptors improve how the body processes sugar and can reduce inflammation (Bendotti et al., 2022). While that might sound like a benefit limited to diabetes, GLP-1 receptors are also found in the brain. Emerging research suggests that activating these receptors may help protect neurons, reduce toxic protein buildup, and improve communication between brain cells - all of which are major challenges in Parkinson's Disease (Kalinderi et al., 2024).

So, how does this connect to Parkinson's? One of the hallmarks of PD is the progressive loss of dopamine-producing neurons, resulting in motor symptoms and cognitive changes commonly seen in the disease. Early studies in both animals and humans have shown that GLP-1 drugs may slow this neuronal loss, while improving brain metabolism and reducing oxidative stress (Hölscher et al., 2018; Hölscher, 2020), all of which are crucial for maintaining healthy brain function (Hölscher et al., 2018; Hölscher, 2020).

Some small clinical trials using drugs such as Exenatide have reported improvements in motor symptoms and daily functioning for people with Parkinson's, raising optimism about their potential role in treatment (Aviles-Olmos et al., 2013; Athauda et al., 2017). However, there are a few studies that have found no clear evidence that these drugs improve motor symptoms, confirming that more research is needed to clarify the effects of the drug on overall PD symptoms (Vijiaratnam et al., 2025).

Parkinson's also affects thinking, mood, and energy levels in addition to dopamine levels or motor symptoms. Because GLP-1 agonists act on the brain-gut axis, they may help with non-motor symptoms such as fatigue, memory issues, and even food cravings. (Kalinderi et al., 2024)! This makes them a potentially unique therapy that targets both brain health and overall metabolic health—two areas closely linked in PD. However, these drugs are not yet approved for routine Parkinson's treatment. Larger, long-term trials are still needed to confirm their safety and effectiveness. So, it's best not to think of them as a standard option just yet, unless prescribed for other conditions. Therefore, it's not time to ask your doctor about Ozempic injections just yet unless you need them for other issues.

In closing, the research is promising. GLP-1 receptor agonists offer a compelling example of how medications developed for one condition can offer unexpected benefits for another. In the case of Parkinson's Disease, these drugs highlight the value of looking beyond traditional dopamine therapies and symptom management and exploring ways to protect and support overall brain health. The future of Parkinson's care may not only focus on easing symptoms but also slowing the progression of the disease itself—and GLP-1 drugs could play a key role in that shift.

References:

Athauda, D., Maclagan, K., Skene, S. S., Bajwa-Joseph, M., Letchford, D., Chowdhury, K., Hibbert, S., Budnik, N., Zampedri, L., Dickson, J., Li, Y., Aviles-Olmos, I., Warner, T. T., Limousin, P., Lees, A. J., Greig, N. H., Tebbs, S., & Foltynie, T. (2017). Exenatide once weekly versus placebo in Parkinson's disease: a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. *The Lancet*, *390*(10103), 1664–1675. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)31585-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)31585-4)

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

~Monday, 11am Hamil-Kerr Strength class ([zoom](#))

~Saturday 11am Hamil-Kerr Parkinson's Fitness ([zoom](#)) Coach Betsy

~Thursday, 3pm [Zoom](#) PD Spin, Ragsdale YMCA

~Thursday, 12pm In Person PD Spin, Spears YMCA

~ **In-person Parkinson's Spin Class at YWCA of Highpoint**

Tuesday and Thursday- 12:00-1:00

~**In-person Parkinson's Spin Class at Ragsdale YMCA**

Tuesday and Thursday- 10:15

In-person / zoom Parkinson's Dance with Hilary Savage – 1pm second and fourth Wednesday of every month. If you plan on attending in person, please join Hilary at PurEnergy, 1905 Ashwood Ct and for those of you joining via zoom, here is the zoom link <https://zoom.us/s/81028088770>

In-Person Tai Chi with Michele

Michele's 1pm Tai Chi class takes place on the first and third Wednesday of every month at Michele's beautiful new studio - ProActive Therapy and Wellness, - 6579 Lake Brandt Rd, Summerfield ~[Rock Steady Boxing - Greensboro \(in person\)](#)

~[Rock Steady Boxing of Archdale \(in person\)](#)

~[A.C.T. By Prince Deese](#)

~For information on in-person 1:1 training in your home, contact Alesia Pendleton pendleton.alesia@gmail.com

~Parkinson's Stretch Class at Rock Steady Boxing, Greensboro (spouses welcome)- Friday at 11:30am

~Will Powell- 336-706-0271

ONLINE RESOURCES

~Michael J Fox Foundation: www.michaeljfox.org

~Davis Phinney Foundation: [Live Well with Parkinson's TODAY - Davis Phinney Foundation](http://LiveWellwithParkinsons.com)

~Parkinson's & Movement Disorders Alliance: www.pmdalliance.org

~Parkinson's Association of the Carolinas: www.parkinsonassociation.org

~Michael J Fox Foundation: www.michaeljfox.org

~Davis Phinney Foundation: [Live Well with Parkinson's TODAY - Davis Phinney Foundation](http://LiveWellwithParkinsons.com)

~Parkinson's & Movement Disorders Alliance: www.pmdalliance.org

~Parkinson's Association of the Carolinas: www.parkinsonassociation.org

And of course, reach out to me anytime.

Yours, Coach B

Rock Steady Boxing Certified Coach
Certified Parkinson's Disease Fitness Specialist
ISSA Certified Personal Trainer

