

PHYSIOTHERAPY



PARKINSON'S DISEASE

PHYSIOTHERAPY – An approach to its prevention and recovery

João Felício

POPULATION

ageing has led to an increase in the number of neurodegenerative diseases, among them Parkinson's disease. In Portugal, although there is no exact statistical data, it is estimated that the disease affects approximately 15,000-20,000 individuals.

World Parkinson's Day is celebrated on April 11 each year. During this month, it is important to remember the consequences of this disease in the mobility of patients and also what help can be provided to prevent and treat this disease.

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disease characterised by decreased dopamine production due to a degeneration of dopaminergic neurons located in the substance *nigra*, resulting in an inability to maintain a voluntary sequence of movement.

The most common symptoms of this disease are slow movements (bradykinesia), stiffness of the joints, tremors at rest and postural instability.

These symptoms have a negative impact on the patients' motor functionality affecting all aspects of their daily activities, movement, posture, balance, risk of falls, osteoporosis and/or cardiovascular diseases and gait, resulting in a decline of the patient's social participation and quality of life.

However, nowadays these patients can and should



undergo a rehabilitation programme in order to reach a maximum functionality level, with health professional specialists in this area of medicine, namely physiotherapists.

Physiotherapy is one of the areas of rehabilitation that intervenes in neurological lesions, preventing and minimising its devastating effects.

Physiotherapy foment's functionality and the return of the individual to his normal routine with the greatest possible independence.

Several approaches are currently practiced in the rehabilitation for these patients, but training

muscle strength, balance, coordination, cognitive and functional activities are the most used as they meet the physical needs of these patients.

The Hospital Particular do Algarve and its rehabilitation team of physiotherapists can provide an effective response to both in-patients and out-patients that have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

Contact the Hospital Particular do Algarve and see a physiotherapist, who will answer all your queries related to your motor and functional condition, with the aim of minimising the effects of this disease.

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João Felício is a physiotherapist and specialist in neurological and vestibular rehabilitation at Hospital Particular do Algarve in Alvor.

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