

Handwriting Tips

Some people living with Parkinson's may experience difficulty with handwriting.

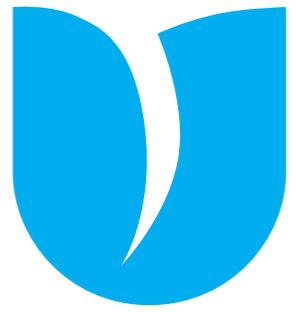
Common Problems include:

- 💡 The size of handwriting becomes smaller (micrographia)
- 💡 The writing becomes 'spidery' and difficult to read
- 💡 Hand tremors make it too difficult to write

Solutions to Handwriting Problems

- 💡 Choose a good, easy flowing pen- one that glides over the paper
- 💡 Use pen grip (round or triangular shape) or a larger size pen to keep your hand more relaxed
- 💡 Use a clipboard or non-slip mat to prevent the paper from slipping
- 💡 Practice your handwriting using lined paper. Use the lines as a guide to write at a constant size
- 💡 Think **BIG** and concentrate on the **size** and **form** of each letter. This can be hard to do at first but is very effective in improving legibility. Conscious attention is required for the performance of well-learned motor skills that have been performed automatically prior to the onset of Parkinson's. Focus on one letter or word at a time
- 💡 Write short sentences at a time. Take regular rest breaks to reduce fatigue
- 💡 Rest your hand if it is beginning to feel "tight". Do simple stretches to exercise your hand
- 💡 Break larger words down into syllables, and break sentences down by halving them, or into individual words or letters





- 💡 Sit at a desk that is a good height for you, in a chair well positioned with your feet flat on the floor and maintain a good posture
- 💡 **STOP** after 3-4 words or if you notice your words are becoming small or bunched up. Avoid hurrying or trying to write longer passages if you are stressed.
- 💡 **THINK** about your letter size, about the words or letters before you write them, and **PLAN** bigger, and spaced out letters
- 💡 **DO** restart your writing
- 💡 After writing a line, stop, relax and breath deeply, stretch using wide arm movements and then recommence writing
- 💡 It may be easier to print letters rather than use cursive writing (since cursive writing involves longer, more complex movements)
- 💡 Keep practicing— some people have found it very useful to sit down and write a paragraph a day from a book or magazine to maintain their writing ability
- 💡 The use of a computer can be helpful especially if there is a need for writing documents
- 💡 Doing exercises by writing in the air using BIG, exaggerated, movements. You may like to hold a hairbrush. Repeat it several times
- 💡 Practice helps. Remind yourself to slow down, aim BIG and pause often!

Involving your team

An occupational therapist can provide an assessment and individual recommendations of your handwriting.

**For more tips on living well with Parkinson's call
1800 644 189**

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