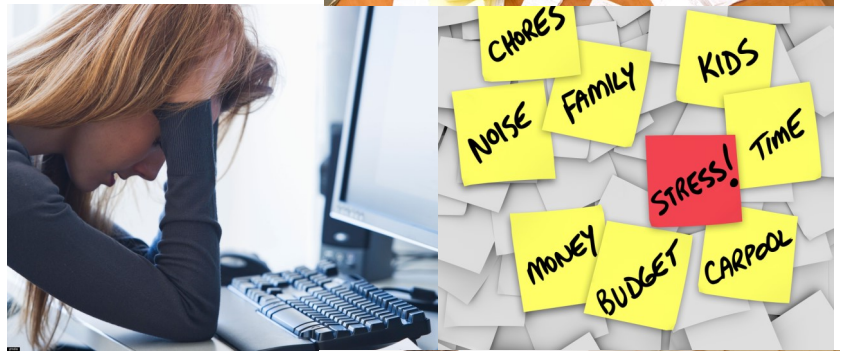


- **Not all stress is bad.** Some experiences that are generally considered positive can lead to stress, such as having a baby, going on vacation or moving. These stressors are short term and usually do not affect our health.
- **There are ways to manage stress.** There are lifestyle changes you can make to help prevent the feeling of being overwhelmed. This includes self-help and care that may include a physical or therapist.
- **If you are overwhelmed by stress, ask for help from a health professional.** We all react differently to a stressful situation. What is stressful to one person may not be stressful to another. Almost anything can cause stress and for some people, just thinking about something can cause stress. Sometimes there is no identifiable cause. Mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, can make people feel stressed more easily than others.



LIFE EVENTS THAT CAN TRIGGER STRESS MAY INCLUDE:

- ✓ Lack of money
- ✓ Illness
- ✓ Family problems
- ✓ Excessive noise, overcrowding
- ✓ Moving
- ✓ Neighbors
- ✓ Relationship problems
- ✓ Driving in traffic



SYMPTOMS CAN INCLUDE:

- ✓ Muscle aches
- ✓ Pain in the back or chest
- ✓ Fainting
- ✓ Stomach problems
- ✓ Smoking
- ✓ High blood pressure
- ✓ Headache
- ✓ Drug and alcohol use
- ✓ Sweating
- ✓ Heart disease
- ✓ Anger
- ✓ Breathing faster
- ✓ Sleep disturbance
- ✓ Nail biting



MANAGEMENT

This includes lifestyle choices you can take to manage or prevent the feeling of being overwhelmed, such as:

- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Breathing and relaxation
- ✓ Reducing intake of alcohol and drugs
- ✓ Talking
- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Support networks
- ✓ Prioritizing
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Stress techniques can help to by removing or change the source of stress

The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.

- William James



DIAGNOSES

A doctor will usually diagnose stress by asking you about symptoms and life events that you have experienced. Treatment may include therapy that can help induce relaxation that may include reflexology and aromatherapy. Doctors will not usually prescribe medication for coping with stress unless the patient has an underlying illness such as depression or anxiety.



**ALWAYS
REMEMBER THAT
IF YOU FEEL ALONE
TO TALK TO A
PROFESSIONAL
AND ASK FOR
HELP!**



WHAT IS 22Q DELETION SYNDROME?

Also known as **22q**, it has been said to be *“the most common ‘rare’ syndrome you’ve never heard of.”* This genetic syndrome is also known by DiGeorge Syndrome, Velocardiofacial syndrome (VCFS), and Shprintzen Syndrome. You may be quite surprised to learn that it is the second most common genetic cause of intellectual disabilities, second only to Down Syndrome. It is conservatively estimated that 22q occurs in as many as 1 in every 4000 live births.

WHERE DOES THE NAME COME FROM?

22 refers to the chromosome where the change occurs (it is a small chromosome in every cell in the body); q refers to the long arm of the chromosome; 11.2 is the location on that chromosome; deletion means a piece is missing from one of the pair of chromosome 22; and syndrome refers to a collection of features.

HOW IS 22Q SYNDROME DIAGNOSED?

Each person diagnosed with 22q syndrome may present a unique set of over 180 symptoms, and no two individuals are likely to have the same presentation of symptoms. Some symptoms are readily apparent at birth, during infancy and early childhood which is the time many genetic syndromes are diagnosed. However, some symptoms do not emerge until years later. To further complicate the diagnostic process, many of the features of 22q are not unusual to infants and young children. Ultimately, the diagnosis is made through genetic testing.

LET’S TAKE A LOOK AT JUST A SAMPLING OF THE OVER 180 SYMPTOMS THAT MAY OCCUR:

- Hearing loss, chronic middle ear infections, and palate abnormalities (i.e., cleft palate) resulting in hypernasal speech
- An overbite of the upper jaw and chronic dental cavities
- Heart defects including Tetralogy of Fallot (a group of 4 specific heart defects), interrupted aortic arch and ventral septal defects
- Frequent respiratory problems including pneumonia, asthma, and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Dysphagia, constipation, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and gallstones
- Changes in the renal system and renal failure in adulthood
- Skeletal abnormalities, especially in childhood, involving the spine and ribs
- Seizures and low calcium blood levels are frequently seen
- Intellectual disability
- A wide array of mental health issues, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), depression, anxiety disorders, and Schizophrenia
- Low calcium blood levels due to hypoparathyroidism, an uncommon condition in which the body secretes abnormally low levels of parathyroid hormone, or PTH. PTH is key to regulating and maintaining a balance of your body's levels of two minerals — calcium and phosphorus.
- Autoimmune disorders including juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, Grave’s Disease, neutropenia, and hemolytic anemia
- Immune deficiencies, chronic ear and respiratory infections

TESTING AND PROPER DIAGNOSIS OF 22Q IS IMPORTANT FOR MANY REASONS, INCLUDING THE PROPER HEALTH SCREENING AND SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE PERSON’S LIFESPAN.

For more information on 22q, please visit these websites:
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/digeorge-syndrome/symptoms-causes>; <https://ghr.nhs.nih.gov/condition/22q112-deletion-syndrome>;
<https://22qfamilyfoundation.org>; <https://vkc.vanderbilt.edu/etoolkit/physical-health/health-watch-tables-2/22q11-2-deletion-syndrome/>

APRIL IS PARKINSON'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disease that gradually robs individuals of control over their movements. This happens when the nerve cells in the brain break down or die and are no longer able to make enough of a brain chemical called Dopamine. A specific region in the brain that regulates movement depends on Dopamine to function at peak efficiency. When there is not enough Dopamine, movement becomes uncoordinated and slowed down. The exact cause is unknown, but it is thought that genetics and environmental issues may play a role.

It is estimated that there are currently about one million Americans diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, with 50,000 Americans being diagnosed yearly. Although most people develop this disease at about age 60, 5% to 10% develop an "early onset" form of the disease which begins before age 50. Parkinson's disease affects 50% more men than women.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of Parkinson's disease can vary from person to person. For many individuals, early symptoms are subtle and may go unnoticed. As the disease progresses, symptoms worsen. The primary symptoms of Parkinson's disease include:

TREMOR OR SHAKING — The tremor usually begins on one side of the body, and may affect hands, arms, fingers, legs, feet, head or jaw. The tremors characteristically occur when the hand or limb is at rest. A "Pill-rolling" tremor is the back and forth rubbing of the thumb and forefinger.

STIFFNESS, RIGIDITY OF THE MUSCLES — This can occur in any area of the body and very commonly, the muscles of the arms, legs, and trunk are affected. As a result, limited range of motion and pain occurs in these parts of the body.

BALANCE, COORDINATION AND POSTURE IMPAIRMENTS — Posture may become stooped, problems with balance and coordination can increase the risk of injury from falls.

SLOWNESS OF MOVEMENT — Overall movement may gradually appear to become slower and slower, and more time is required to do tasks and activities.

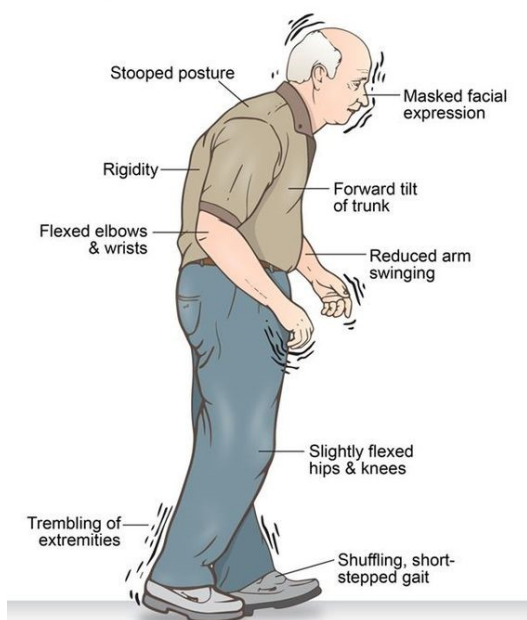
SPEECH PROBLEMS — Parkinson's disease can cause a change in the way a person speaks. Speech can become slowed and slurred, and there may be much hesitancy before talking.

OTHER SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- It may become difficult to write, resulting in slow and small handwriting.
- Some individuals may lose the ability for automatic/unconscious movement such as smiling and blinking which can cause the face to lack expression.
- Often, people with Parkinson disease develop what is referred to as a "parkinsonian gait" that includes taking



Typical appearance of Parkinson's disease





small shuffling steps, leaning forward, and reduced swinging of the arms.

- There may be many other problems that can be attributed to Parkinson's disease. Some people experience constipation, difficulty with bladder control, swallowing difficulty, sleep problems, and depression.
- In the later stages of the disease, problems with thinking or cognition can occur.

DIAGNOSIS

Parkinson's disease can be difficult to diagnose. Currently there are no blood tests to make a diagnosis. A person who is suspected of having a neurological disorder is usually referred to a neurologist who will complete a neurological examination and look at the person's medical history. Frequently, brain scans and blood tests may be done in an effort to rule out other diseases.

TREATMENT

Parkinson's disease is chronic (persists over a long period of time) and progressive (symptoms grow worse over time). Although some people become severely disabled, others may experience only mild symptoms. While there is no cure for Parkinson's disease at this time, medications can provide significant relief from symptoms. The main medication therapy for Parkinson's disease is levodopa, also called L-dopa, which works by increasing the level of dopamine in the brain. There are many other medications that can also be used to help alleviate symptoms of the disease.

Deep brain stimulation may be performed in those who do not respond to medications. This involves surgically implanting electrodes into the brain and connecting them to a small electrical device implanted in the chest. This device stimulates the brain to stop symptoms such as tremor, rigidity, and slowness of movements. Additional therapies such as physical, occupational, and speech therapies can help with ambulation and voice concerns.

A well rounded treatment plan including medications, therapies, exercise, healthy eating, managing stress, and staying socially connected can lead to a fulfilling and productive life for many years.

For more information on Parkinson's disease, see these websites: www.parkinson.org; www.michaeljfox.org; www.mayoclinic.org; www.apdaparkinson.org.



CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES MENTIONED IN THIS EDITION OF "IT'S YOUR HEALTH"

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/digeorge-syndrome/symptoms-causes>

<https://ghr.nhs.gov/condition/22q112-deletion-syndrome>

<https://22qfamilyfoundation.org>

<https://vkc.vanderbilt.edu/etoolkit/physical-health/health-watch-tables-2/22q11-2-deletion-syndrome/>

www.parkinson.org

www.michaeljfox.org

www.mayoclinic.org

www.apdaparkinson.org



SLEEP WELL TAKE CARE AND GOOD NIGHT

GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!

Sleep is essential to feeling refreshed and rested, and is an indispensable part of a healthy lifestyle.

The secret to a better night's rest could be changing or reducing the dosage of your medication. Doctors prescribe medications with the best intentions, but many common medications, both prescription and over the counter, can interfere with sleep as a side effect.

Some medications, including those for high blood pressure and asthma, can keep you up all night with insomnia, while others, like cough, cold, and flu medications, can disrupt sleep. Additionally, certain medications, such as antihistamines, can cause daytime drowsiness. In fact, sleepiness is one of the most common side effects of medications.



MEDICATIONS THAT CAN AFFECT SLEEP INCLUDE:

- Anti-arrhythmics (for heart rhythm problems)
- Beta blockers (for high blood pressure)
- Clonidine (for high blood pressure)
- Corticosteroids (for inflammation or asthma)
- Diuretics (for high blood pressure)
- Cough, cold, and flu medications that contain alcohol
- Headache and pain medications that contain caffeine
- Nicotine replacement products
- Sedating antihistamines (for colds and allergies)
- SSRIs (for depression or anxiety)
- Sympathomimetic stimulants (for attention deficit disorder)
- Theophylline (for asthma)
- Thyroid hormone (for hypothyroidism)

If you suspect that a medication is disrupting your sleep or causing you to feel drowsy during the day, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may be able to switch you to a different one that has a different side effect profile, reduce the dosage of your current prescription, or suggest a different type of treatment altogether so that your sleep isn't affected. For example, if you're taking a medication to lower your blood pressure and it's negatively affecting your sleep somehow, you might consider asking your doctor whether you can drop the medication and replace it with lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, exercising regularly, eating more nutritious foods, reducing your intake of sodium, alcohol, and caffeine, quitting smoking, and/or lowering your stress.

What you *shouldn't* do is attempt to solve the problem on your own. Always discuss the situation in depth with your doctor first, and don't stop taking the medication until you have decided on an alternative treatment. Otherwise, you may experience dangerous side effects (such as uncontrolled asthma, ADD, depression, or anxiety). A physician's guidance can help you evaluate the risks and benefits of a medication.



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Ideas for Our Newsletter?

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