

Mobility and falls



Difficulties in movement and balance are a common feature of PSP. This is because PSP affects the areas of the brain associated with movement and balance control. In the earlier stages of PSP you may find that you move more slowly, or that your muscles become very stiff. This can affect your posture and gait, and can leave you feeling fatigued. It is important to be referred to a physiotherapist and occupational therapist as soon as possible after diagnosis to ensure that you have everything you need to help reduce some of the issues you may experience.

Physiotherapist (Physio)

Physiotherapists help people to maintain good co-ordination, range of movement and mobility. They advise on exercises to help muscles, posture and minimise the stiffening of joints. They can also work with people as they adjust to changes in mobility. They might also be involved in supporting someone who has difficulties with breathing and coughing. Physios can also offer advice on aids that may help, such as walking frames or specially designed shoes.

Your occupational therapist and physiotherapist can advise you on all sorts of equipment that is available to enable you to remain as independent as possible, including:

- Grab rails or bars – firmly mounted bars are really useful in helping standing transfers from bed, shower and toilet
- Wet rooms or shower cubicles with side doors, so you can still enjoy a refreshing shower in safety.

Occupational Therapist (OT)

The aim of the occupational therapist is to enable individuals to remain as independent and safe as possible in all activities of everyday life. They can advise on strategies to reduce the risk of falls, fatigue management, moving, handling and wheelchair provision. Occupational therapists can also offer advice on aids that can make daily life at home more manageable.

If you use a wheelchair, you may be provided with ramps in place of steps to help you get in and out of the house. If you live alone, or spend periods of the day by yourself, your occupational therapist can advise you on how to obtain a community alarm system, so that you can call for help if you fall over, or experience other issues that may affect your safety.

Always seek advice from your occupational therapist when considering purchasing any items of equipment, to ensure that it is safe for your needs, and that it will be helpful to you in the long term. This will prevent you spending money on items of equipment that may only be useful for a short time, or that are not safe for you to use. You may also find