

## DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

To diagnose PD, healthcare professionals use a set of diagnostic criteria established by the International Parkinson and Movement Disorder Society. These criteria include:

- **Bradykinesia:** Slow movement
- **Rigidity:** Muscle stiffness
- **Resting Tremor:** Tremors occur while the patient rests.
- **Postural Instability:** Impaired balance and coordination.

A diagnosis of PD requires the presence of at least two of these criteria, with one being bradykinesia.



In conclusion, diagnosing PD entails reviewing medical history, performing a physical examination, and conducting diagnostic tests. While no single test can definitively diagnose PD, a comprehensive diagnostic approach allows healthcare professionals to identify and manage the condition accurately.

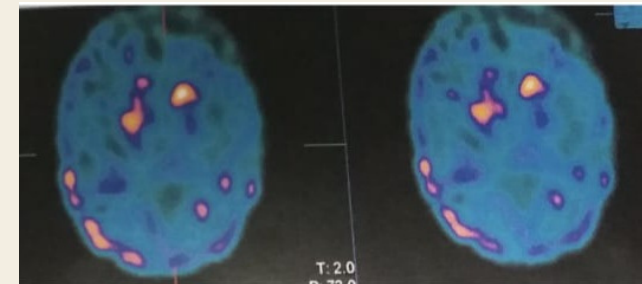


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## INVESTIGATIONS REQUIRED TO DIAGNOSE PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Diagnosing Parkinson's disease (PD) can be a complex process, as the symptoms are similar to other conditions. No single test can conclusively diagnose PD; healthcare providers rely upon medical history, physical examinations, and a few tests (listed below) to diagnose PD.



## MEDICAL HISTORY AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

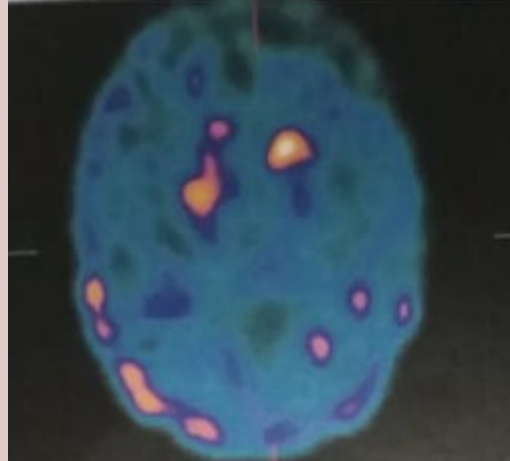
- The diagnostic process starts with gathering a medical history and physical examination. A healthcare professional will inquire about the patients' symptoms as well as their medical and family history.
- A physical examination will also assess motor function, coordination, and balance. People with PD typically present with bradykinesia (slowness of movement), tremors when their limbs are at rest, and stiffness in the body, with symptoms starting on one side. A careful history and examination are crucial to establish the diagnosis of PD and exclude other diseases that mimic PD.
- Improvement in symptoms with levodopa is an essential clue in diagnosing PD.

## DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

Several diagnostic tests may be ordered to support a diagnosis of PD. These include:

- Brain imaging, such as MRI and CT scans, may be ordered to rule out other conditions (like tumors or strokes) that could be causing symptoms of parkinsonism

- DaTscan (Dopamine Transporter Scan) is an imaging test that uses a small amount of radioactive material to visualize the brain's dopamine system. It can help diagnose PD by showing the level of dopamine in the brain.



- Neuropsychological tests may be ordered to evaluate cognitive function and identify any signs of dementia.
- A sleep study may be ordered to assess sleep patterns and detect any signs of sleep disorders.
- Blood tests may be ordered to rule out other conditions causing symptoms, such as thyroid disorders or vitamin deficiencies.
- Genetic testing is not routinely ordered in PD. However, it may be suggested for patients with early-onset disease (under 50 years old) or those with a family history of PD or neurological disorders. The tests are performed after proper genetic counselling.

## OTHER TESTS

Other tests that may be infrequently ordered for individuals with PD include:

- Autonomic function tests: Detect changes in blood pressure and heart rate during various postures and activities
- Olfactory testing: It assesses patients' sense of smell. Loss of smell sensation may be an early sign of PD.
- Gait and Balance Tests: These tests evaluate a patient's ability to walk and maintain balance.
- Tremor Analysis: This test measures the frequency and amplitude of tremors and helps to differentiate PD tremors from other types of tremors.

