

# The Center for Parkinson's Disease

## Fall Newsletter

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### **Administrator's Note**

September is an important month for the Center for Parkinson's Disease. It marks our anniversary, and this year we celebrate seven years of boxing, stretching, walking, painting and laughing together. Since we launched in September 2017, our community has participated in over 5000 classes and workshops, with almost 35,000 total class visits. The vibrancy of our community is reflected in these numbers, but more importantly, it is evident in the commitment of our volunteers, instructors, coaches, and of course, all of you.

September also happens to be **National Falls Prevention Awareness Month**. One in four older adults fall each year, and unfortunately, that number is higher for people living with Parkinson's disease. But, many - if not most - falls are preventable. A review article published in 2022 found that regular exercise participation results in a 26% reduction in rate of falls for people living with PD. The Center for Parkinson's Disease not only offers a range of exercise classes, but we are also spearheading an effort to translate the national evidence-based falls prevention program A Matter of Balance specific for Parkinson's. Initial pilot workshops suggest the program may be effective at reducing fear of falling for people living with Parkinson's disease.

I am thrilled to share a range of different falls prevention resources below. Most importantly, if you have experienced a fall, feel unsteady or experience a fear of falling, say something. Speak to your doctor, physical therapist or other healthcare provider.

Falls are preventable, and we are here to support you!

With gratitude,  
Sarah

### **Sarah Cohen, Administrator**

Center for Parkinson's Disease  
Stony Brook Southampton Hospital

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Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers who support our programs and a special shout out to **Olivia Schnauder** for volunteering at Rock Steady Boxing-Hampton Bays this summer. We wish her well as she returns to SUNY Geneseo for her sophomore year. Best of luck and Rock Steady!

*"Volunteering at RSB was a rewarding experience that came with the opportunity to work with passionate coaches and Parkinson's boxers who were eager to improve every class. I wanted to make a positive difference in their lives by assisting with various exercises and helping to create a welcoming environment, which provided physical benefits and fostered a sense of community among participants. This experience taught me about resilience and determination, reinforcing my desire to pursue a career in healthcare."*

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## Falls Prevention Awareness Month Resources

### Falls Free Check-up

Falls happen for a number of different reasons, and it is helpful to understand your personal fall risk profile. The **Falls Free Check-up** is a great first step in understanding your unique strengths and challenges. Results are emailed to you and include additional falls prevention resources. Complete the on-line survey [here](#).

### Exercise and Falls Prevention

Exercise is an important component of a falls prevention plan. What kind of exercise you do is less important than choosing an activity you enjoy, can commit to on a regular basis and can perform safely. With that said, Tai Chi and Dance have been shown to be effective at improving balance and decreasing fall risk.

**Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention** is an evidence-based falls prevention program offered virtually through Long Island Falls Free and Stony Brook Medicine. You may learn more and sign-up [here](#).

**Dance for Parkinson's** launches here on the East End in October! See details and a link to register below.

### Otago Exercise Program

Stony Brook Southampton Hospital's outpatient physical therapy department offers the Otago Exercise Program, an evidence-based falls prevention program shown to decrease falls by up to 40%. You may work one-on-one with one of our certified Otago therapists or join a 9-week group workshop. To learn more or make an appointment, please call: (631) 726-8520.

### Learn More ...

#### **American Parkinson Disease Association: Balance Impairment and Falls in Parkinson's Disease**

APDA's Chief Mission Officer, Dr. Rebecca Gilbert discusses some of the root causes of falls. You may access the article [here](#).

#### **Let's Keep Moving with APDA: Teresa Baker, PT, DPT**

American Parkinson Disease Association partners with specialists at Boston University to discuss what the research tells us about exercise, balance training and preventing falls. Watch the webinar [here](#).

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## Program Updates

### **EAT WELL with Parkinson's**

EAT WELL has transitioned to television! Inspired by previous nutritional and cooking workshops, EAT WELL is now filmed once monthly at LTV Studios in East Hampton.

Interested in joining as our live audience guest? **Sign up** for our next filming on **September 16, 1:30 pm**.

You may learn more and view previous episodes **here**.

### **Dance for Parkinson's**

Mondays, Oct. 21 - Dec. 2 from 1 to 2 pm ET

*(No class Nov. 11 or Nov. 25)*

Thanks to the generosity of the Parrish Art Museum, we are thrilled to once again offer a Dance for Parkinson's workshop series. The program will be led by Donna Kaz, a choreographer and movement artist who has trained with the acclaimed Dance for PD program. You may register **here**.

### **Pottery at the Parrish**

Thursdays, Sept. 19 and Oct. 17 from 11 am - 12 pm

Developed in collaboration with the Parrish Art Museum and led by Wendy Gottlieb, Museum Educator, **Pottery at the Parrish** will explore current works in the galleries and include a hand-on pottery project in the studio. The program will be held over two sessions to enable participants to create and glaze their own ceramic projects. You may register **here**.

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## In the Know ...

### **Research Study at Stony Brook Medicine (SBM): Study of Brain Inflammation in Parkinson's Disease**

Researchers at SBM are recruiting people with Parkinson's disease to participate in a study of brain inflammation. Study participants will take an anti-inflammatory medication for 8 weeks, and obtain brain imaging at the beginning and end of this 8-week period. You may view the study flyer **here**, and for more information please contact:

Sandra.skinner@stonybrookmedicine.edu or call 631-444-7513

### **Exercise Program Open House, HOPEFitness in Bohemia**

HOPEFitness and Stony Brook Medicine are teaming up to host an in-person exercise open house event on **September 14 at 11 am!** Stop by to share your thoughts on future class opportunities and meet the exercise instructors at HOPEFitness. You may register **here**.

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All of our programs are offered at no charge, thanks to the generosity of this community. Please consider making a donation to the Center for Parkinson's Disease. **Donate here.**

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(631) 726-8600  
Center for Parkinson's Disease  
Stony Brook Southampton Hospital  
240 Meeting House Lane  
Southampton, NY 11968



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| Southampton, NY 11968 US

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