



The Value of the Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) in Treating People with Parkinson's Disease (PD): Long-Term Impact



Speech-Language Pathology Treatment has a Lasting Effect on Communication, Swallowing, and Quality of Life (QoL) for People with PD.



Improved Voice and Communication

Following intensive SLP-directed voice treatment, people with PD experience lasting improvements at...

1-2 months:

- Sustained improvement in voice-related quality of life (VR-QoL; **24%**)¹

3-6 months:

- Sustained improvement in VR-QoL (**23%**)¹
- Sustained improvement in functional communicative effectiveness (**8%-24%**)¹⁻³
- Sustained improvement in loudness for conversation (**4 dB**)⁴

6-12 months:

- Sustained improvement in loudness for monologues (**4-7 dB**)^{2, 5, 6}
- Sustained improvement in VR-QoL (**44%**)⁷
- Sustained reduction in impact of voice disorder on daily activities (**35%**) and emotional well-being (**40%**)⁷

24 months:

- Sustained improvement in loudness for monologues (**2 dB**)⁸ and voice-related function (**29%**)⁷
- Sustained reduction in voice-related emotional impact (**54%**)⁷



Improved Eating and Swallowing

Following intensive SLP-directed treatment, people with PD experience lasting improvements at...

1 month:

- Sustained improvement in pleasure of eating (**32%**), social functioning (**14%**), and desire to eat (**17%**)⁹
- Sustained reduction in swallowing-related burden (**19%**), emotional impact (**36%**), and symptom frequency (**20%**)⁹

3 months:

- Sustained reduction in swallowing-related emotional impact (**55%**)¹⁰
- Sustained performance on Penetration Aspiration Scale scores¹¹ in **91%** of individuals with PD¹²
- Sustained reduction in pharyngeal residue severity (**21%**)¹³
- Sustained reduction in dysphagia symptoms (**59%**)¹⁰

6 months:

- Sustained improvement in swallowing-related social functioning (**14%**) and desire to eat (**12%**)⁹
- Sustained reduction in swallowing-related burden (**13%**), emotional impact (**38%**), and symptom frequency (**16%**)⁹
- Sustained reduction in pharyngeal residue volume (**44%**)¹⁴
- Sustained reduction in symptom severity (**60%**)¹⁴



Multidisciplinary Treatment

Following multidisciplinary care involving SLPs, people with PD experience lasting improvements at...

3 weeks:

- Sustained improvements in health-related QoL (**8%**) and self-perception of ability to cope with difficult life demands (**7%**)¹⁵

3 months:

- Sustained improvements in health-related QoL (**11%**)¹⁸
- Sustained improvements in QoL regarding emotional well-being (**19%**), cognition (**24%**), and communication (**27%**)¹⁶



Maintenance Treatment



With swallowing treatment sessions every 3 months, **63%** of individuals with PD preserved or improved swallow function at 5 years.¹⁷

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