



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



SLP Treatment for People with PD Improves Communication, Swallowing and Quality of Life (QoL).



Improved Voice and Communication

For people with PD, intensive SLP voice treatment leads to...

Improved Speech and Communication

- Increased communicative effectiveness (25%).¹
- Improved turn-taking (143%), initiation of communication (125%), and participation in communication overall (12%).^{1,2}
- Increased speech intelligibility as reported by care partners (27%) and objective measures (5%-32%).³⁻⁶
- Reduced severity of dysarthria (13%-23%).⁷
- Reports of fewer repetitions and increased verbal communication in 60% of people with PD.⁸

Improved Prosody and Loudness

- Increased loudness in 55%-87%^{5,6} of people with PD, with increased loudness in monologues (3-8 dB)^{2,7-9} and conversation (3-7 dB).^{1,10,11}
- Improved prosody in 50%¹² of people with PD, with increased vocal range (5-11 Hz).^{8,10}
- Improved self-perception of prosody (25%-28%).^{12,13}

Improved Voice Quality

- Improved dysphonia (21%-57%),¹⁸ hoarseness (50%),¹⁴ and breathiness (49%).¹⁴
- Improved voice-related QoL (27%-61%),^{1,5,10,15} with reduced impact of voice disorder on daily activities (30%-53%),^{2,16} vocal symptoms (32%),² and emotional well-being (53%).²



Improved Swallowing

Following intensive SLP treatment, people with PD experience a 23%¹⁷ increase in pleasure of eating, with...

- Improved swallowing-related QoL (8%-16%)^{18,19} and function (61%).²⁰
- Reduced severity (61%)^{20,21} and frequency (14%-20%)^{17,19} of dysphagia symptoms.
- Improved swallow initiation (45%),¹⁸ pharyngoesophageal segment opening duration (9%),²¹ and spontaneous cough (12%).²¹
- Reduced dysphagia severity (36%-52%).²²
- Reduced presence (36%-75%),¹⁷ severity (41%),²³ and volume (44%)²¹ of pharyngeal residue.
- Reduced swallowing-related fear (21%)²⁴ and emotional impact (59%).²⁰
- Higher likelihood (88%)²⁵ of maintaining or improving Penetration Aspiration Scale (PAS)²⁶ scores during the course of treatment, with 33%-70%^{25,27} of therapy participants demonstrating improved PAS scores.

Following SLP-led compensatory strategy training and diet modification, aspiration is eliminated in 61% of patients with PD.²⁸



Multidisciplinary Treatment

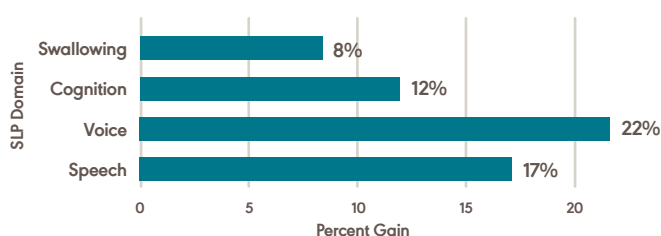
Following multidisciplinary SLP care, individuals with PD demonstrate improvements in voice-related QoL (25%)²⁹ and health-related quality of life (16%-41%),^{30,31,32} with...

- Improved QoL for mental health (20%-43%), cognition (30%-34%), and communication (36%-49%).^{30,31}
- Increased knowledge regarding PD for care partners (93%) and people with PD (95%).³³
- Reduced anxiety (10%)³⁴ and depression (8%).³⁵
- Reduced perceived burden and extent of disease (15%-31%).^{31,36,37}

Following inpatient multidisciplinary SLP treatment, patients with PD demonstrate...

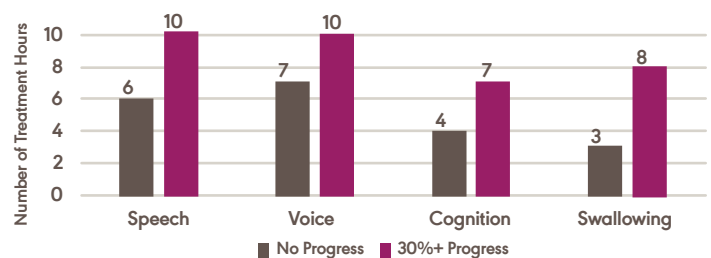
- Reduced dependence for cognitive-based tasks (23%).³⁸
- Improved visuospatial reasoning (33%) and abstract reasoning (12%).³⁹

Percent Gain in Functionality



Patients with PD made an 8%-22% average gain in functionality following SLP treatment.⁴⁰

Treatment Hours and Progress



Patients with PD who improved by at least 30% in functional abilities only received 3-5 additional hours of treatment compared to those who showed no improvement.⁴⁰

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