

My Mommy has PD...
But It's Okay!



A Guide for Young Children about Parkinson's Disease



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By Jan Quist

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PARKINSON DISEASE
ASSOCIATION

Strength in optimism. Hope in progress.



A note to parents:

Often parents wish to protect young children from the distressing occurrences in life. However, even young children can tell when something is different or “wrong” with someone they love. They may become frightened if they are not provided with acknowledgement and explanations regarding what they are observing. This booklet was developed to assist you in talking with your child about Parkinson’s disease and in answering some of the more common questions children ask about the disease. It is our hope that this booklet will help provide an opportunity for discussion within families and will be beneficial to all who have been looking for a way to talk and share feelings about Parkinson’s disease.

“My Mommy has PD...But It’s Ok!” was written for a third grade reading level. It can also be used as a read-aloud booklet for younger children. You, of course, can substitute “Daddy” for “Mommy” or use the name of any loved one. We hope this book will help young families with Parkinson’s disease find strength in optimism and hope in progress.

At first, it was scary for me when my mommy got sick. She looked sad and cried a lot.



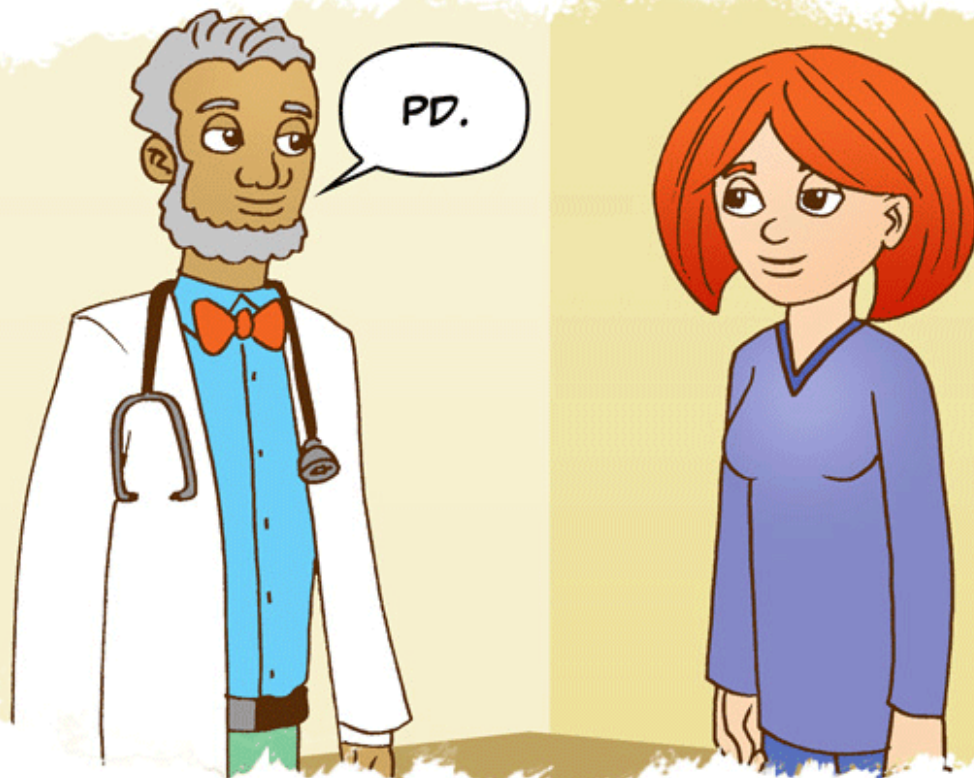
Her hands were shaky, and sometimes she walked really slowly. Sometimes she talked softly and sometimes too fast. My mom said that she felt stiff. It sounded like how I feel when I play soccer for a long time.



Then my dad helped her find a new doctor. He was a neurologist (nōō rāl'a jist). He did some tests on my mom.



The new doctor said that my mom has Parkinson's Disease. We call it PD for short.



My dad said that there is a little part of my mommy's brain that is not working like it should. But she can take some pills from the doctor to help her feel better.



We don't know why she got PD. She just did.



Somehow it doesn't seem so scary now that we know what it is.

Even if mommy takes her medicine, sometimes she seems like she is “frozen” and can’t move—like a statue. And sometimes she still needs help doing some things. I can help her tie her shoes or open a jar.



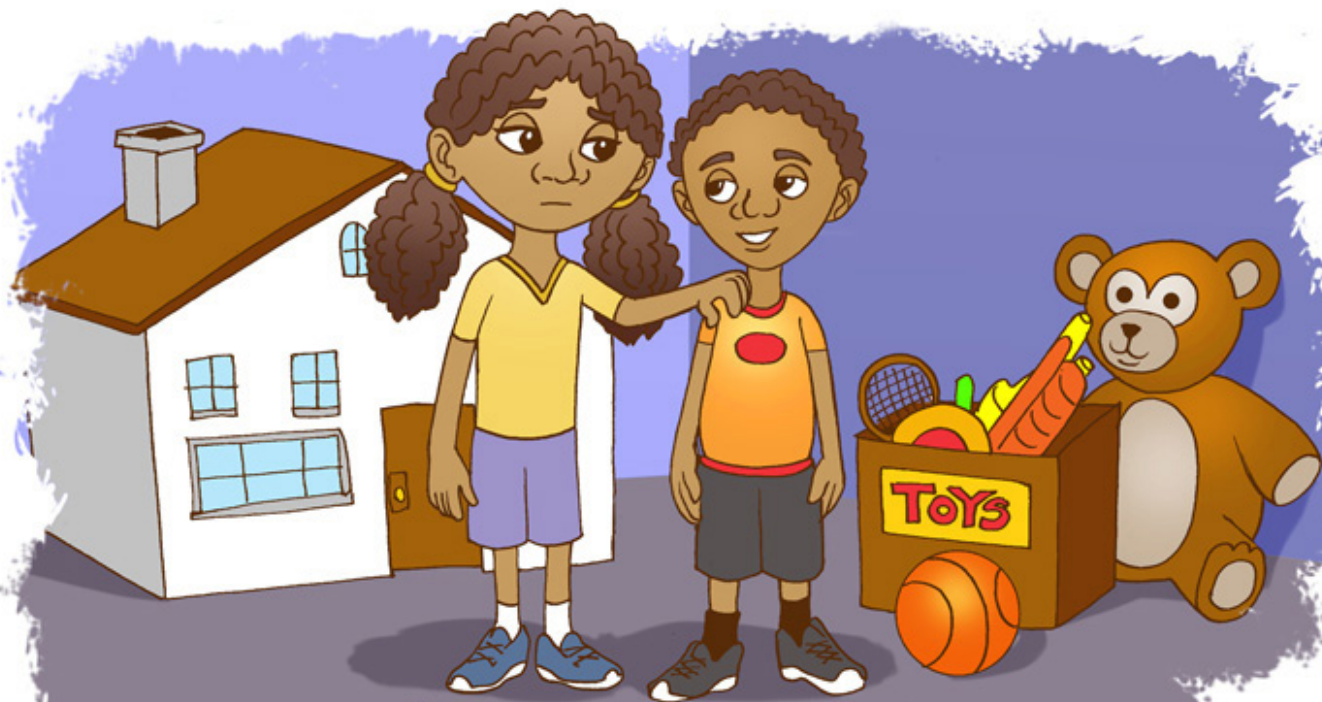
I can help rub her foot when it cramps. I can wait for her when she walks slowly with our dog, Buzz.



My mommy still helps me do lots of things, too. She listens to me read and helps me practice my math facts. She tucks me into bed and gives me BIG hugs!



Sometimes, I worry that I will get PD or maybe my brother Jeff might get it too.



Mommy says that I should not worry about that. I can't get PD like I got the chicken pox from my friend, Katie.



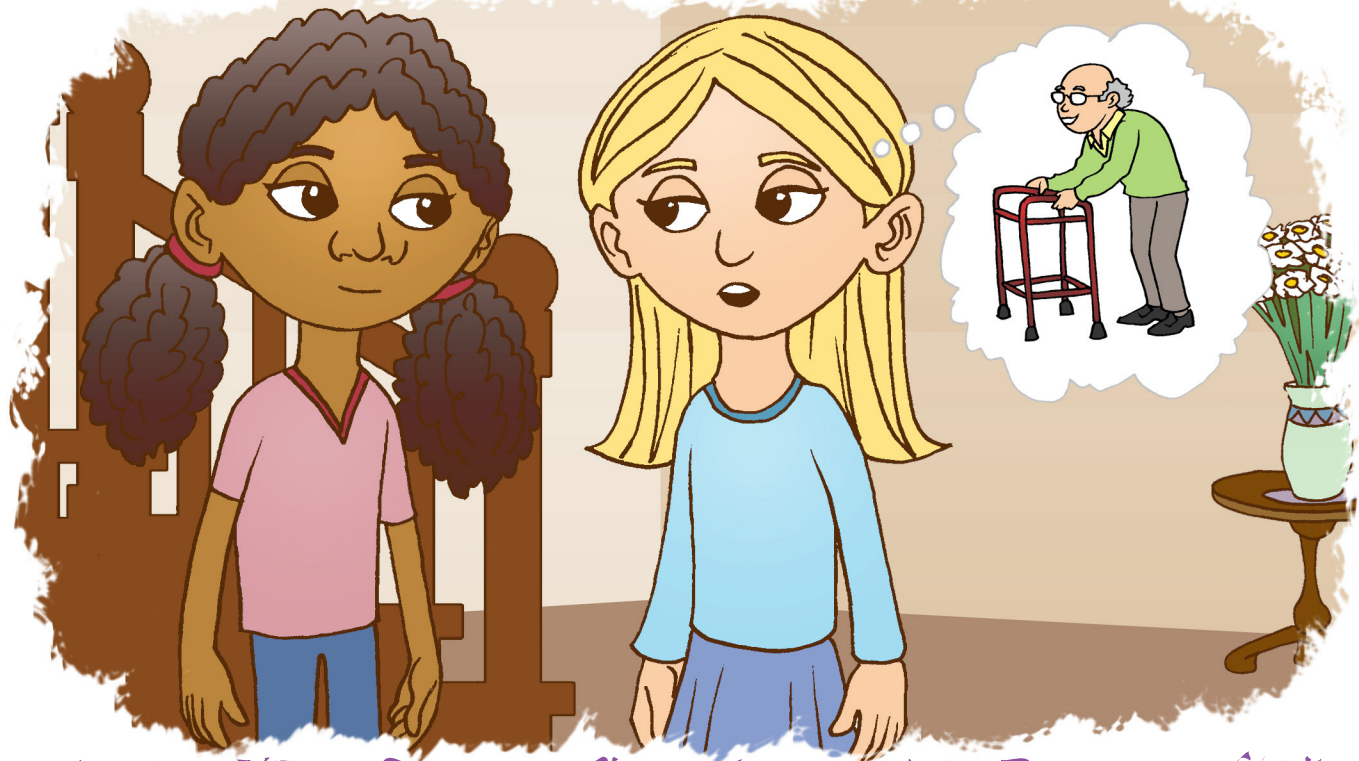
Sometimes I feel afraid for my mom. At first, I was even afraid that maybe my mom would die. I thought that maybe if I would help her more, she would get better. My mommy put me on her lap and said that wasn't true. She said that if anything ever bothers me that I should talk to her or Daddy about it.



My friend, Emily, asked why my mommy's hands shake sometimes and why she needs to take naps a lot.



I told her, "My mommy has PD." I told her the things that my dad had told me. She said her grandpa has PD too. He has to use a walker.



My mom said that smart doctors are finding new ways to help people with PD. We can help these doctors by raising money to help their work to find a cure. My whole family is going on an APDA Optimism Walk. I asked my mom if I could sell lemonade with my friend, Emily, to help raise money also. She said, "That would be really nice!"



The best thing of all is that my mom is still my mom and we love each other...
so it's okay!



The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) is here to provide you with the necessary information and resources to better manage Parkinson's Disease (PD). If you or someone close to you has been diagnosed with PD, you may feel overwhelmed. This handbook has been designed to help by providing valuable information about PD, including common symptoms, available treatments for disease management, practical tips on caring for someone with PD, and research currently underway in PD.

For more information, please contact APDA at:



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The author:

Jan Quist conceived of and wrote this children's booklet. She was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at the age of 48. Jan was in the field of education for over 25 years.



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The information contained in this supplement is solely for the information of the reader. It should not be used for treatment purposes, but rather for discussion with the patient's own physician.

