

## New Year's resolutions to help you live well with Parkinson's disease

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Coping Strategies - For most people, New Year's Eve is the time to look ahead to the promises of the coming year, and reflect on the changes we want to make in our lives. Those of us living with Parkinson's disease too often find ourselves on the sidelines, afraid to dream in the face of our uncertain future. This is unfair to ourselves and to those who care about us.

Each of us must find our own way to put anger and sadness behind us and get on with living. Although life will never be the way we had planned in our pre-Parkinson's days, "different" does not have to be bad. More than 13 years into my own journey with Parkinson's, I assure you that the daily choices we make will impact the quality of life we have tomorrow.

I've chosen my 10 resolutions for 2012 with this in mind and am sharing them here to inspire and motivate you to make your own resolutions:

1. Make daily exercise a priority. Research reveals it is the one thing that may slow disease progression. It also improves overall health & makes us look and feel better.
2. Get more sleep. Sleeping less than 7 hours a night impairs our ability to concentrate, make decisions, & moderate our emotions. It also contributes to weight gain as well as "excessive daytime sleepiness" & "sleep attacks" that compromise safety behind the wheel & in the workplace.
3. Eat better. The foods we eat today will impact our fitness level & overall health going forward.
4. Focus on what you can do, not what you can't. I can do things now that I could not even dream of doing in my pre-Parkinson's; like swimming half a mile at a time.
5. Live in the moment. Do the best you can today and deal with tomorrow, tomorrow.
6. Don't allow Parkinson's to rob you of the good times still awaiting you.
7. Take up a new hobby or learn something new.
8. Volunteer to help others & find new purpose for our own lives. Each of us has a gift we can share to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

9. Find ways to feel more in control. Participating in clinical trials is one way to do this, as this research offers our only hope of finding a cure.

10. Spend more time with family and friends

If you don't like where you are currently at mentally or physically, this is the perfect time to change your course and your destiny. The choice is yours.

Source: "Parkinson's News Update" – Northwest Parkinson's Foundation.

## Update: Medical Therapy Caps Exception Extended to February 29

Last month, we asked you to contact your Members of Congress and urge them to support legislation to repeal the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process.

In 1997, Congress passed legislation that limits, or caps, the total amount of outpatient therapy services a Medicare beneficiary can receive each calendar year. To mitigate the impact of these caps on the Parkinson's community and others for whom the annual costs of therapy services often exceeds the annual limit, Congress established an exceptions process. This process must be reauthorized by Congress each year.

**We believe Congress can and should do even more.** PAN supports the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011 (**H.R. 1546/S. 820**), which would eliminate Medicare therapy caps altogether. This is critically important legislation for the Parkinson's community and we need our voices to be heard. **Please take a moment to contact your members today!**

On December 23, 2011, Congress passed, and the president signed, a two-month continuation of the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process. Congress now has until February 29 to reauthorize the current exceptions process.

**Contact your Members of Congress today and urge them to support repealing Medicare therapy caps by co-sponsoring H.R. 1546/S.829!**

## TAKE ACTION!

Source: Parkinson's Action Network

