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Paralysis Agitans

Yana Suchy and Angela Eastvold
Department of Psychology, University of Utah,
Salt Lake City, UT, USA

progressive degenerative disorder of the central nervous system caused by the loss of dopamine-producing brain cells in the substantia nigra and characterized by postural instability, bradykinesia, rigidity, and tremors. This disorder became known as Parkinson's disease in the 1860s.

Synonyms

[Parkinson's](#); [Parkinson's disease](#); [Parkinsonism](#); [Shaking palsy](#)

Cross-References

► [Parkinsonism](#)

Definition

Paralysis agitans is a term initially introduced in 1817 by the British physician, James Parkinson, and literally means “shaking palsy.” It refers to a

References and Readings

Lew, M. (2007). Overview of Parkinson's disease. *Pharmacotherapy*, 27(12-2), 155S–160S.