

Research Participants Wanted for Nordic Walking Exercise Study!

Are you an individual living with Parkinson's disease (PD) who is interested in exercise options to potentially improve your health, fitness, and walking ability? **GVSU is seeking participants for a new research study that will be examining the effects of a Nordic Walking exercise program on walking function, PD motor/nonmotor symptoms and exercise biomarkers (cellular responses).**

**Participants receive Nordic walking poles, exercise training, and Fitbit monitors
FREE OF COST!**

What: Nordic Walking (NW), a widely popular fitness exercise in Europe, is an intensive walking exercise utilizing poles in your hands similar to Nordic skiing for a full body workout. Previous research strongly supports the health benefits of NW on cardiovascular fitness and walking function in older adults. This exercise may have targeted benefits for individuals with PD, ranging from improved movement ability, walking ability, speed and endurance.

Nordic Walking training will be conducted by a licensed Physical Therapist (primary investigator) and 3 physical therapy student researchers 2-3 times per week, for 6 weeks in a small group setting. NW sessions will involve individualized training to maximize the benefits of the exercise. Evaluation of PD motor and nonmotor symptoms, and walking function will be completed prior to training, immediately post-training, and 3-months following training. Participants will be asked to engage in independent NW exercise during the training phase and the 3-month follow-up phase. Evaluation of chemical changes from exercise will involve taking saliva and blood samples across time points in the study. These chemical changes at the cellular level will provide researchers insight into how this exercise may affect your cells and your Parkinson's disease.

Where: Evaluation sessions will be conducted at Grand Valley State University, Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences (301 Michigan St NE, Suite 268, Grand Rapids MI 49503). NW Training will take place outdoors at a local community track and community park.

When: Recruitment in Feb-March 2020; Initial Baseline Testing in April 2020; NW Training in May-June 2020; Post-testing early July 2020; follow-up Independent NW phase & assessment July-Oct. 2020.

This study is not a PAWM-sponsored research trial but is a GVSU sponsored study. This research is conducted by GVSU Collaborative team of faculty from the Departments of Physical Therapy, Cell & Molecular Biology, and Medical Laboratory Science. Please contact Cathy or Mike if interested in learning more about the study. They will be happy to answer any questions that you might have. Come join in on this FUN and EXCITING ACTIVITY!!

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