Questions to Ask Your Neurologist Before Adding Any Supplement

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A one-page checklist for the appointment — brought to you by someone who's been there.

A quick word before you go in

Hi — it's David. I'm nine years into living with Parkinson's, and I've learned this the hard way: **not every "natural" product plays nicely with Parkinson's medication.** I've had a supplement that interacted badly with my levodopa and left me confused for days. It wasn't dangerous in the long run — but it was scary, and it didn't have to happen.

This checklist is the conversation I wish someone had handed me at my first appointment. Fill in the blanks, ask every question, and write down the answers. You're not being difficult — you're being smart. Your neurologist will respect it.

SECTION 1 — Before you go (5 minutes)

- [ ] My current medications (name + dose + what time I take them):
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- [ ] The supplement I'm thinking about: ___
- [ ] Where I'd buy it / who makes it: ___
- [ ] The reason I want to try it (my symptom I hope it helps): ___

SECTION 2 — The 12 questions (ask all of them)

Write their answer next to each one. Don't be shy about it.

1. **"Does this interact with levodopa — or any of my other medications — in any way?"**

   Answer: _____
2. **"What dose would you start me on?"**

   Answer: _____
3. **"Could this cause confusion, delirium, or changes in my thinking?"**

   Answer: _____
4. **"What side effects should I watch for, and how soon would they show up?"**

   Answer: _____
5. **"Do I take it with food, or on an empty stomach?"** *(Food — especially protein — can affect how my meds absorb.)*

Answer: _____

6. **"Can I keep taking my other medications while I test this?"**

Answer: _____

7. **"Is this product tested or regulated here in Canada?"** *(My honest lesson: the label doesn't always match what's inside.)*

Answer: _____

8. **"How long before I'd know if it's helping — or if it isn't going to work?"**

Answer: _____

9. **"What would 'this is making things worse' look like, and when should I stop and call you?"**

Answer: _____

10. **"Is there a non-supplement option you'd recommend I try first?"**

Answer: _____

11. **"Would you write down the dose and the plan, so I can show my family or caregiver?"**

Answer: _____

12. **"When should we check back in to see how it went?"**

Answer: _____

SECTION 3 — My personal "start low, go slow" rule

If your neurologist gives the green light, here's how I do it — and how I wish I'd done it the first time:

- Start at the **lowest possible dose**, less than what's suggested if you can.
- **Change only one thing at a time** — never add two new products in the same week.
- **Tell one other person** (your caregiver, your partner) exactly what you're taking and when, so they notice changes before you do.
- **Keep a tiny log** for two weeks: date, dose, and any change in symptoms — good or bad.
- **Never make big decisions during an OFF period** — wait until your medication is working before you judge anything.

What to do next

- Read my honest account of what happened when I tried CBD oil: My CBD Oil Experiment Went Wrong
- See how I time protein so my levodopa works better: Protein and Parkinson's: Why It Blocks Your Levodopa

- More guides and free tools: lifewithparkinsons.ca

This checklist is education, not medical advice. It's meant to help you have a better conversation with your own care team — always follow your neurologist's guidance first.

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