



April 5, 2023

## Hope for Those with Parkinson's Disease

For the more than 1 million Americans suffering from Parkinson's disease, problems with physical movement and speech can make carrying out routine activities and communicating with loved ones increasingly difficult.

To help improve the lives of those living with this disease, Salem Regional Medical Center's (SRMC) Rehabilitation Services Department offers innovative outpatient rehabilitation programs featuring the proven LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment) BIG® and LOUD® Parkinson's treatment therapies.

These groundbreaking treatments are designed to help people with Parkinson's disease manage their symptoms by increasing their ability to move and communicate more effectively in their everyday lives.



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### What is Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's disease causes a gradual loss of muscle control; and those with the disease tend to have smaller, slower movements. As symptoms worsen, people with the disease may have trouble with walking, coordination and balance. These challenges can make it difficult to complete simple daily tasks, such as getting into a bed or chair, writing, dressing and bathing.

### LSVT BIG Program Targets Movement

LSVT BIG can help those with Parkinson's disease to be able to keep moving and maintain an active lifestyle.

"LSVT BIG is a specialized outpatient therapy program during which patients perform repetitive, exaggerated whole body movements, such as taking high steps and swinging their arms across their bodies," explained Brian Rafferty, PT, SRMC's Director of Rehabilitation Services. "This can help patients regain their mobility and independence through improved walking, arm and leg movements, speed, balance and flexibility."

“The program can be tailored to a person’s individual needs, so we may also work on specific movements during therapy sessions that are tailored to patients’ hobbies and interests to help them resume these activities,” he added.

### **LSVT LOUD Program Helps Speech**

Speech and voice changes, such as talking in a muffled or monotone voice, are also common in people with Parkinson’s disease. The LSVT LOUD program can help a person’s speech become louder and easier to understand.

According to SRMC speech-language pathologist Dawna Cramer, MA, CCC/SLP, “The LSVT LOUD program uses voice training exercises that stimulate and train patients’ vocal muscles, with the goal of helping them speak more loudly and clearly without straining. This therapy also incorporates sensory awareness training to help patients recognize when their voice is too soft, so they can raise it to an appropriate level of loudness.”

“In addition, the LSVT LOUD program has been effective in improving a person’s facial expressions and swallowing, which may also be affected by the disease.”

A physician’s referral is required to participate in the BIG and LOUD Parkinson’s therapy programs at SRMC. The cost of the programs is covered by most insurance plans and Medicare.

To learn more, call SRMC Rehabilitation Services at 330-332-7297. The Rehabilitation Services Department is located on the first floor of the Salem Regional Professional Building, 2094 East State Street, across the street from SRMC’s main campus.