

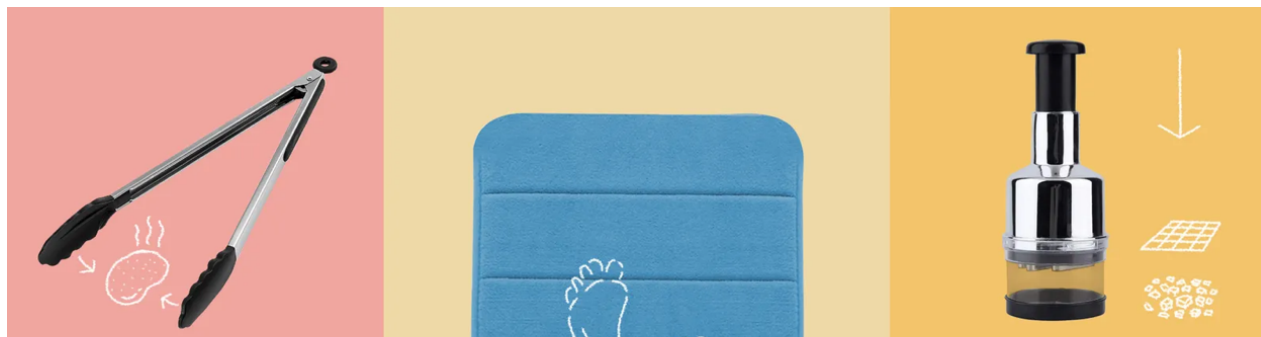
SHOPPING

7 Tools That Make Cooking With Parkinson's Easier

We asked a variety of patients which kitchen tools help make cooking with Parkinson's symptoms safe, efficient, and joyful.

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A Parkinson's diagnosis brings a period of massive home reassessment, with every chair and throw rug now subject to scrutiny. The kitchen, packed as it is with pointy objects and hot surfaces, might appear to be the most dangerous room in the house.

“Are you tremor specific? Then the kitchen is going to be tough,” begins Melani Dizon, director of education for the [Davis Phinney Foundation for Parkinson's](#) of how the nervous system disorder causes involuntary quivering in around [80% of Parkinson's patients](#). “If you have swallowing issues, then eating is going to be tough. If you have freezing of gait, then you're going to have trouble in the preparing phase.”

Deciding to swap or simply eliminate certain kitchen tools can add emotional insult to the physical injury of Parkinson's, so getting yourself in the right headspace can be important. “Part of it is accepting where you are and not being embarrassed. I've found it very humbling,” says Kat Hill, a Portland, Oregon Parkinson's patient who learned to gradually let go of certain routines after being diagnosed in her 40s. “I had 50 years of peeling potatoes. Is it really a loss not to do that anymore?”

We asked a variety of patients which kitchen tools help make cooking with Parkinson's symptoms safe, efficient, and joyful. Read on for their favorite accessible and affordable options.

Read our full guide to cooking with Parkinson's.

Extra-long silicone oven mitts

“You may not be as quick as you were before you had symptoms, and if you shake, you may get burned,” warns Palo Alto, California, Parkinson's patient Elaine[#] of lifting heavy objects from the stove or out of a hot oven. “Instead of potholders, extra-long gloves are thick, so they'll protect your hands and arms.”



Extra Long Silicone Oven Mitts

\$14 AT AMAZON

Extra-long heat resistant tongs

Gretchen White, a Pennsylvania ambassador for the Phinney Foundation who runs an organization baking for those in need, suggests using long tongs for

foods that can be taken directly from a hot oven one by one, like baked potatoes or chicken cutlets. “Put a platter next to the oven and use tongs to transfer things. Wait for the pan to cool down, and there’s no chance of your hands getting burned.”



17" Cooking Tongs

\$13 AT AMAZON

Metal mesh cutting gloves

Tremors and muscle rigidity can make knife work a dangerous mission. “Wrap rubber bands around the handle of knives to avoid slipping,” says Kimberly Berg, who teaches boxing for those with Parkinson’s at [Rebel Fit Club](#) in Oregon. Or try a [metal knife guard](#) to keep fingertips safe. White also praises the metal mesh cutting gloves used by chefs, which her chef children bought for her. “As soon as I start chopping stuff, I put them on,” she says. “If you cut into your hands, the knife doesn’t cut through the gloves.”



Cutting Glove



\$17 AT AMAZON

Hand pressure chopper

“I used to use a big chopping knife. Now it’s too heavy and I don’t trust my dexterity with it,” says Hill. Dystonia—involuntary muscle contractions that can cause cramping or twisting of hand muscles or fingers—inhibits fine motor skills. “With a small chopping tool, I cut big pieces and then hit this on the top—I don’t need fine motor skills and I’m not afraid of cutting off my fingers!”



Oxo Good Grips Chopper

\$21 AT AMAZON

Claw grabber

Because balancing on even the [sturdiest step stool](#) can easily lead to falls and then injury, Elaine recommends a claw grabber with magnetic tips. “It’s really important when trying to reach a top shelf. You squeeze it, and it helps you pull down cans and boxes.”



Jellas Reacher Grabber Tool

\$15 AT AMAZON

Eatwell dish set

Shifting breakable dinnerware to rugged [melamine](#) is practical—and fashionable. But to keep plates and utensils on the table? “We recommend the Eatwell set—it’s amazing,” Dizon says. “There’s a lip on everything, so food scoops into the spoon. There’s rubber on the bottom so cups and plates don’t move around. It’s just a great set for people with tremors of any kind.”

4-Piece Eatwell Smart Assistive Tableware Set





\$76 AT HOUZZ

Memory foam bath mats

The instinct might be to simply remove kitchen rugs. But floor mats can help with visual tracking as well as cushion joints. Elaine suggests [rug grippers](#) for those you're not ready to let go of, and White praises memory foam bath mats over kitchen rugs entirely. "They're cheaper and easier to clean!"



Memory Foam Bath Mat

\$16 AT AMAZON