

- TOPAZ PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT
- TAI CHI & FALLS
- WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

Peter, with his wife
in Glacier
National
Park



TOPAZ Participant Spotlight

Interview with Peter Dueber

How did you hear about the study?

I learned about TOPAZ from my neurologist at Vanderbilt University.

What motivated you to join?

It seemed like a logical and potential solution to a common problem for people with PD. It just seemed like a very common-sense treatment that should already be approved for people with Parkinson's.

How would you describe your experience in the study?

It was very low maintenance. I enjoyed the home visit with the research nurse, who was very positive about the study and a good ambassador for TOPAZ.

Did you experience any side effects related to the study?

Zero.

How would you describe your overall satisfaction with the study?

Five stars!

Anything else?

My support group in Oakridge, Tennessee enjoyed having you join our meeting by Zoom to discuss the study. It taxed my technical capabilities to set it up, but we made it work!

TAI CHI AND FALL PREVENTION

Tai Chi is a form of exercise that involves slow, gentle movements, meditation, and controlled breathing. It was originally used as a martial art in China, but is now commonly used for health and rehabilitation purposes. A research article published in 2022 analyzed studies that looked at the effects of Tai Chi on people with Parkinson's disease. The researchers found that practicing Tai Chi can improve functional mobility, balance, and reduce falls in people with Parkinson's. To achieve these benefits, the Tai Chi intervention group was required to practice two to three times a week for 60 minutes over a period of 10 to 24 weeks. In the studies reviewed, Tai Chi was found to be beneficial for improving functional mobility and balance, although other interventions such as resistance training and stretching were found to be more effective in improving mobility. Additionally, most of the studies saw a significant decrease in the number of falls in the Tai Chi group compared to control groups or other interventions.

Source: Aras B, Seyyar GK, Fidan O, Colak E. The effect of Tai Chi on functional mobility, balance and falls in Parkinson's disease: A systematic review and meta-analysis of systematic reviews. *Explore (NY)*. 2022 Jul-Aug;18(4):402-410. doi: 10.1016/j.explore.2021.12.002. Epub 2021 Dec 13. PMID: 34952799.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34952799/>



The **American Parkinson Disease Association** website has additional information about Tai Chi and a link to a [Virtual Events Calendar](#) that features some online classes.

www.APDAparkinson.org/article/online-exercise-classes-and-resources/

UPCOMING WEBINAR!

PMD Alliance is hosting a fracture prevention webinar on April 18th with TOPAZ Study Investigators. Click the following link to learn more and register for the event:
www.TOPAZstudy.org/events

Additional Fall Prevention Tips and Resources

The following brochure from the **CDC** provides useful information on ways to prevent falls, focusing on four key strategies.

Many falls can be prevented.

By making some changes, you can lower your chances of falling.

Four things YOU can do to prevent falls:

-  Have your healthcare provider review your medicines.
-  Exercise to improve your balance and strength.
-  Have your eyes and feet checked.
-  Make your home safer.

For more information, contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1-(800)-CDC-INFO (232-4636) or visit www.cdc.gov/steady

For information about fall prevention, visit go.usa.gov/xN9XA

For more information about hypotension, visit www.mayoclinic.com
www.webmd.com



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

What YOU Can Do to Prevent Falls



STEADY

Stopping Elderly Accidents,
Deaths & Injuries

Four things YOU can do to prevent falls:

① Talk openly with your healthcare provider about fall risks & prevention.

Tell a provider right away if you fall, worry about falling, or feel unsteady. Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall. Ask your provider about taking vitamin D supplements to improve bone, muscle, and nerve health.

② Exercise to improve your balance and strength.

Exercises that improve balance and make your legs stronger, lower your chances of falling. It also helps you feel better and more confident. An example of this kind of exercise is Tai Chi.

Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling.

Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

③ Have your eyes and feet checked.

Once a year, check with your eye doctor, and update your eyeglasses, if needed. You may have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling. Also, have your healthcare provider check your feet once a year. Discuss proper footwear, and ask whether seeing a foot specialist is advised.

④ Make your home safer.

- Remove things you can trip over (like papers, books, clothes, and shoes) from stairs and places where you walk.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping.
- Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool.
- Have grab bars put in next to and inside the tub, and next to the toilet.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang light-weight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases.
- Wear well-fitting shoes with good support inside and outside the house.



Talk to your doctor about fall prevention.