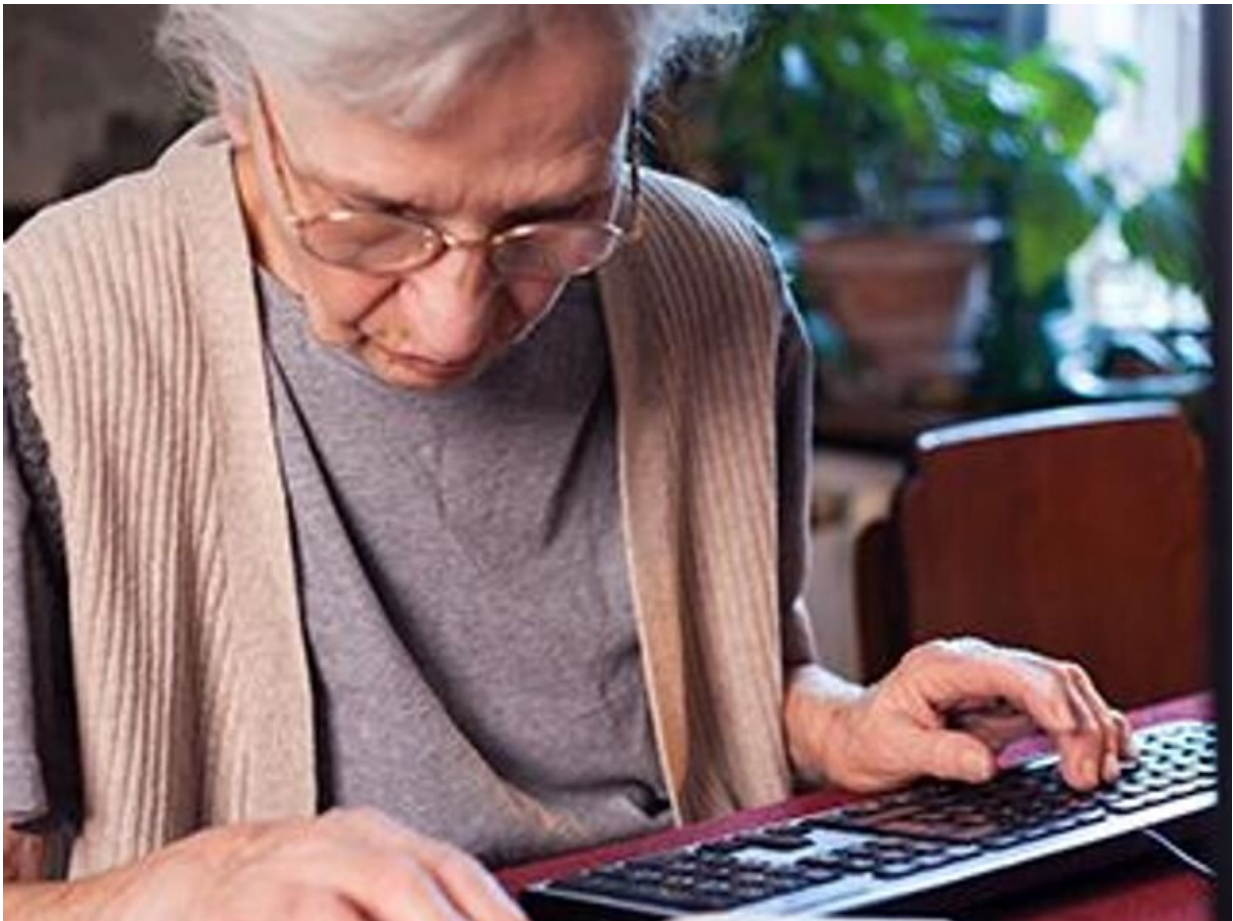


Telehealth use up markedly among Parkinson patients

February 11 2021



Parkinson disease (PD) symptoms and management practices were

markedly affected by COVID-19, according to a study published online Jan. 21 in *npj Parkinson's Disease*.

Megan P. Feeney, M.P.H., from the Parkinson's Foundation in New York City, and colleagues surveyed 1,342 patients with PD in May 2020 to assess emotional and behavioral consequences of the public health policies implemented to mitigate the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 and to explore factors contributing to accessing [health care](#) via alternative means, such as telehealth.

The researchers found that approximately half of respondents reported a negative change in PD symptoms, particularly around emotional well-being, with 66.5 percent experiencing nervousness or anxiety, 50.9 percent reporting feeling down or depressed, and 66.2 percent reporting sleep disturbances. There was a large uptick in telehealth use, which increased from 9.7 percent prior to the pandemic to 63.5 percent during the pandemic. Telehealth use was associated with higher income and higher education. Telehealth was more often used for doctor's appointments than for physical, occupational, speech, or mental health therapies. Nearly half of respondents (46 percent) reported a preference for continuing to use telehealth always or sometimes after the pandemic had ended. A desire to continue using telehealth was associated with having received support/instruction for telehealth and having a care partner, friend, or family member to help them with the telehealth visit.

"The survey highlights PD-specific issues and potential coping mechanisms, including online [social support](#) and telemedicine to reduce the burden caused by the pandemic," a coauthor said in a statement.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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