Boxing for Parkinsons Disease

We know exercise is beneficial for people with Parkinson's!

Evidence has strongly suggested that exercise can effectively complement pharmacotherapy, particularly high-intensity exercise, which may slow PD progression by promoting neuroplasticity.

We've seen this in programs such as PD Warrior and LSVT BIG but also Tai Chi, Dance and intentional walking.

But is Boxing beneficial?

Boxing exercise can effectively improve both motor and non-motor symptoms in PD patients, with safety and high adherence. Current studies have shown that boxing exercise can:

- Improve gait function [2, 6, 7]
- Improve mobility [2,3]
- Improve balance [2, 6]
- Reduce depressive symptoms [5]
- Alleviate disease severity [5, 6]
- Enhance quality of life [2, 3, 6]

Importantly, participants have demonstrated high adherence to boxing interventions without experiencing falls or other adverse events [1, 6]

Rock Steady Boxing data

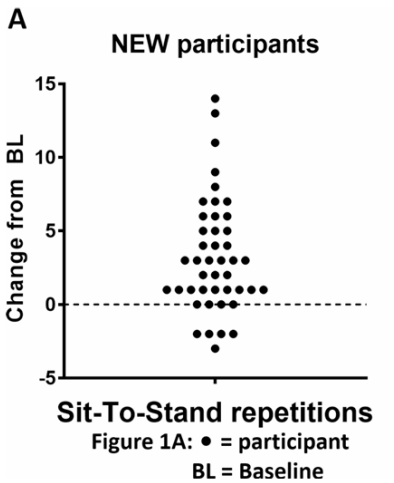

Figure 1A: ● = participant
BL = Baseline

TABLE 4 Subjective Changes in Parkinson Disease Symptoms After RSB

Symptom (Number of Respondents)	Improved	Same	Worse
Tremors[a] (26)	27%	**69%**	4%
Body stiffness[b] (36)	**69%**	31%	0%
Mood[b] (34)	**76%**	24%	0%
Fatigue[b] (37)	**57%**	43%	0%
Gait and balance[b] (36)	**56%**	44%	0%

Abbreviation: RSB, Rock Steady Boxing.

[a]P = 010; [b]P < 0001.

Why does boxing work?

Boxing is an all-encompassing training method that combines aerobic, strength, and agility with focus, memory and coordination.

- **Dynamic balance**: maneuvers like reaching overhead while punching speed bags, multidirectional reaching and stepping when completing focus mitt drills, both of which require you to maintain and adjust your balance.
- **Coordination and motor planning:** Your brain has to coordinate hands, feet, hips, and posture at the same time.
- **Dual tasking**: Not only physical dual tasking but cognitive dual tasking where you have to complete a cognitive and physical task at the same time.
- **Attention and focus:** You have to concentrate on instructions, combos, timing, and targets—whether it's a bag, pads, or shadowboxing. Staying mentally engaged keeps movements accurate and safe.
- **Memory:** Boxing workouts rely on remembering punch combinations, footwork patterns, and sequences called out by a coach or shown in a class.
- **Reaction and timing:** during boxing you react to cues—numbers, visual signals, rhythm —deciding *when* to punch, move, or reset.
- **Cognitive flexibility:** Switching between combinations, speeds, or drills forces your brain to adapt quickly and shift between tasks.
- **High-intensity**: helps the brain receive more—and better quality—signals from the body, which may make it easier for people to process and combine sensory information.

Launching PD Punch!

Weekly boxing class for Parkinsons Disease

Wednesdays 11am

Starting March 18th March 2026

Introductory assessment: 45 min $75 - $130

- PD specific assessment
- Introduction to 6 core boxing movements
- Report can be supplied to GP (optional)

Weekly boxing group class: 60 min $20

- Non-contact boxing involving components of cardio, agility, boxing, calisthenics, hand-eye coordination, and strength conditioning
- 2 to 8 participants
- All equipment provided
- Location: Empower Health NQ, 1/153 – 155 Charters Towers Rd

Funding available: Private, NDIS, My Aged Care

Your coach: Jacinta Bonaventura

- 13 years of clinical experience as an Exercise Physiologist
- Special interest in Parkinsons Disease
- Training in PD Warrior, LSVT BIG, Boxing CS3 for PD.

Contact us:

Phone: 07 4725 2015
Email: admin@empowerhealthnq.com.au
Address: 1/153 - 155 Charters Towers Road, Townsville QLD 4812
Opening hours:

- Monday to Thursday: 6am – 6pm
- Friday: 6am – 3pm
- Saturday: 7:30am – 10:30am

References:

1. Blacker D. J., Fazio R., Tucak C., Beranek P., Pollard C., Shelley T., et al. (2023). FIGHT-PD: a feasibility study of periodized boxing training for Parkinson disease. PM R 16, 36–46. doi: 10.1002/pmrj.12986
2. Combs S. A., Diehl M. D., Chrzastowski C., Didrick N., McCoin B., Mox N., et al. (2013). Community-based group exercise for persons with Parkinson disease: a randomized controlled trial. NeuroRehabilitation 32, 117–124. doi: 10.3233/nre-130828
3. Combs S. A., Diehl M. D., Staples W. H., Conn L., Davis K., Lewis N., et al. (2011). Boxing training for patients with Parkinson disease: a case series. Phys. Ther. 91, 132–142. doi: 10.2522/ptj.20100142
4. Moore A., Yee E., Willis B. W., Prost E. L., Gray A. D., Mann J. B. (2021). A community-based boxing program is associated with improved balance in individuals with Parkinson's disease. Int. J. Exerc. Sci. 14, 876–884. doi: 10.70252/BNAX9498
5. Patel R. A., Blasucci L., Mahajan A. (2023). A pilot study of a 12-week community-based boxing program for Parkinson's disease. J. Clin. Neurosci. 107, 64–67. doi: 10.1016/j.jocn.2022.12.006
6. Sangarapillai K., Norman B. M., Almeida Q. J. (2021). Boxing vs sensory exercise for Parkinson's disease: a double-blinded randomized controlled trial. Neurorehabil. Neural Repair 35, 769–777. doi: 10.1177/15459683211023197
7. Shearin S., Braitsch M., Querry R. (2021). The effect of a multi-modal boxing exercise program on cognitive locomotor tasks and gait in persons with Parkinson disease. NeuroRehabilitation 49, 619–627. doi: 10.3233/nre-210218