

Questions for dr. Bloem

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

1. What are in your opinion the most **promising therapies** for the near future?
2. **Neuroplasticity**: neurosciences have discovered that our brains are very flexible and that they are capable of overcoming damages to their cells by rewiring existing neural pathways. In what sense can PwPs take advantage of neuroplasticity, considering that the damaged dopaminergic neurons are very specialized? Is there a way in which we can influence the dopamine pathways in addition to medicines?
3. A lot of research has been carried out recently on meditation techniques and their therapeutic effects on neurological disorders. From a broader perspective, it looks like **self-awareness activities**, including psychotherapy, yoga, journaling, etc. , can help patients cope better with the illness and improve their quality of life. What is your opinion about these activities and what developments do you expect in the future?

SPORT

(Simone Masotti, Stefano Ruaro, Massimiliano Iachini)

1. **Cycling**: what are the particular benefits of this sport for PwPs compared to other sports?
2. **Freeriding** requires focusing on multiple tasks at the same time. However, my performance in this discipline is often better than a normal person. Could this be due to the fact that adrenaline substitutes dopamine, in my case?
3. When preparing for the **Ironman**, I trained for about 15 hours a week, alternating running, biking and swimming, favouring low- intensity workouts. Recently I was advised to do at least five one-hour high-intensity workouts per week. What does high-intensity mean and do you agree that it is helpful?
4. Regarding the three disciplines (running, biking, and swimming) do you believe there is one that is more helpful for PwPs or one that should be avoided? Are there any other recommended disciplines for PwPs?
5. There are many sports and each one has its own benefits and particular features, providing a very rich variety of disciplines. However, doctors often only recommend activities that are financially supported by the national health system (in Italy only physiotherapy). Why is this and how can we change this?
6. **Parkinson's patients associations** often do not collaborate and this leads to a great waste of resources and to a lack of coordination. How can we change this situation and work together towards common goals and what are in your opinion the main goals we should aim at?

LOVE AND SEXUALITY

1. Dopamine has an important role to play in the **reward system**. This has great implications with regard to pleasure, in a general sense, and to sexuality more specifically. However, it looks like these aspects are often overlooked by doctors and PwPs and their partners are not helped to tackle the changes that the illness causes in their love relationships. Research studies on the other hand confirm the role of a **healthy sexual life** in improving many symptoms, from sleep problems to cognitive disorders. What is your opinion on this issue?

THE CARING COMMUNITY
(Orientina Di Giovanni)

1. In the spirit of **Participatory medicine**, patients, health professionals, families and the community as a whole are more and more involved in a collaborative health model approach. You've been a pioneer in patient-centred integrated multidisciplinary care in Parkinson's Disease. According to your approach, people with PD are not the recipients, but part of the multidisciplinary team. The idea that PwPs are 'competent' about the disease and the way they need to be cared is quite disruptive in every medical field. What is this competence about?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS for Simone Masotti, Stefano Ruaro, Massimiliano Iachini

1. What kind of physical and emotional feelings do you have during sport activities, before and After?
2. Effect of sport on levodopa treatment: have you noted an effect of physical/sport activities on your dopaminergic treatment? I mean do you feel levodopa has a longer or bigger effect if you take it and then you do sport or you do not need it when you do sport?
3. How did you choose your sport? Was it a sport you did before the diagnosis of PD?
4. Who pushed you to practice sport, who helped you? Which kind of reasons/elements pushed you to practice sport?
5. I believe there is no one right sport but just the one you love, what do you think?