

# Rush Parkinson's Disease GI Clinic

The Rush University Medical Center Parkinson's Disease Gastrointestinal (GI) Clinic is a novel multidisciplinary clinic focused on the gastrointestinal health of patients with Parkinson's disease (PD) and other movement disorders.

Although Parkinson's disease is primarily considered a movement disorder, patients diagnosed with PD may also suffer from non-motor symptoms. These include GI manifestations, such as weight loss, dysphagia, sialorrhea, gastric dysmotility and constipation. These symptoms often negatively impact daily quality of life. Many studies have shown that GI symptoms are present in at least 50% of patients with Parkinson's disease.

The Rush Parkinson's Disease GI Clinic includes providers with expertise in several specialties, including neurology, gastroenterology, psychology and behavioral sciences, nutrition and physical therapy. The multidisciplinary approach provides an opportunity for patient-centered care and for the formulation of a comprehensive and individualized care plan according to the needs of every patient at all stages of their disease.

## Why refer your patients here?

The neurology and neurosurgery programs at Rush are ranked #4 in the nation and best in the Midwest by *U.S. News & World Report*. Rush's gastroenterology and GI surgery programs are ranked 31st in the nation.

Our clinic offers a novel approach to treating Parkinson's disease, becoming the first multidisciplinary Parkinson's disease/GI clinic in the country.

The Rush Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Program is nationally known for excellent clinical services, groundbreaking research and patient education. Our movement disorders neurologists who have expertise in Parkinson's disease and are working in gut-brain Parkinson's disease research, partnering with gastroenterologists to provide personalized, directed care to improve quality of life.

Ali Keshavarzian, MD, is nationally known for his studies on the microbiota-gut-brain axis in Parkinson's disease. He is the director of the Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition, as well as the Institute for Advanced Study of the Gut, an interdisciplinary program at Rush that advances clinical research on the relationship between the gastrointestinal tract and neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease.

As director of the interventional program for Parkinson's disease at Rush, Leo Verhagen, MD, PhD, has been treating Parkinson's disease patients for more than 25 years. He is widely recognized as an expert in the field of interventional therapies, such as deep brain stimulation and infusion therapies.

Deborah Hall, MD, PhD, is the Parkinson's Foundation Endowed Chair, chief of the Section of Movement Disorders, and director of the Parkinson's Foundation Center of Excellence. She has been treating Parkinson's disease patients for 20 years and has cultivated a keen clinical interest in the relationship between PD and gastrointestinal diseases.

We provide a space for Parkinson's disease patients to be seen by providers in neurology, gastroenterology as well as multiple ancillary services, within few patient encounters. Our providers work in concert to develop comprehensive plans for exceptional care.

**To refer patients or  
request a consult,  
call (833) 944-4474**

For general inquiries regarding  
the Rush Parkinson's Disease  
GI Clinic, contact Charnisha  
Prothro, clinic coordinator,  
at (833) 944-4473 or  
[charnisha\\_prothro@rush.edu](mailto:charnisha_prothro@rush.edu).



## Location

### Rush University Cancer Center

Professional Building  
1725 W Harrison St.  
Suite 207  
Chicago, IL 60612

## Our Team

### Ali Keshavarzian, MD

Gastroenterology

Board certifications: Gastroenterology

### Deborah A. Hall, MD, PhD

Neurology

Board certifications: Neurology

### Leonard Verhagen, MD, PhD

Neurology

Board certifications: Neurology

### Rana R. Abraham, MD, MS

Gastroenterology

Board certifications: Gastroenterology

### Keith W. Bruninga, MD

Gastroenterology

Board certifications: Gastroenterology

### Abhimanyu Mahajan, MD, MHS

Neurology

Board certifications: Neurology

### Kenika R. Robinson, MD

Gastroenterology

Board certifications: Gastroenterology

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## Conditions We Treat

The Rush Parkinson's Disease GI Clinic is available to evaluate patients with gastrointestinal symptoms, such as constipation, difficulty swallowing, bowel incontinence, abdominal bloating, reflux disease, nausea and vomiting related to neurological and movement disorders, including:

- Parkinson's disease (PD) and other Parkinsonian disorders
- Lewy body dementia (LBD)
- Multiple System Atrophy (MSA)
- Progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP)
- Corticobasal degeneration (CBD)

## Treatments and Therapies

- Anorectal manometry
- Breath hydrogen test
- Colonoscopy
- Esophageal manometry
- Esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD)