

Dr Julian Rodrigues

*Movement Disorders Neurologist and
Parkinson's Disease Specialist*

- Management of newly-diagnosed patients through to complex/advanced Parkinson's disease as part of a multidisciplinary team at Hollywood Private Hospital
- Providing the latest in medical technologies including Deep Brain Stimulation for PD, Essential Tremor and Dystonia
- Specialist Medicare rebates apply, medical referral required



Hollywood Medical Centre
Level 2 Suite 45, 85 Monash Ave, Nedlands WA 6009
(08) 9420 4900
www.drjullianrodrigues.com.au



Deep brain stimulation

Completing his medical degree at The University of Western Australia in 1995, Dr Julian Rodrigues has practised as a neurologist since 2004 in the field of movement disorders, primarily Parkinson's disease.

Practising at Hollywood Medical Centre and Private Hospital, Dr Rodrigues also holds positions as a neurologist at the Fiona Stanley Hospital Department of Neurology and Joondalup Health Campus.

According to Dr Rodrigues, Parkinson's is a varied disease that affects all sorts of people.

"I have patients in their 30s and 90s," he said.

"It's a disease that slowly but inevitably progresses and, depending on what you and your family need, you don't want to lose quality of life while effective evidenced-based treatments are available.

"It really is an individual disease and it's all about basing treatment on what the problem is for the particular person.

"We work out what the issues are, how they are impacting on someone's life and tailor treatment to minimise symptoms like tremor, slowness and stiffness, and improve their overall health and wellbeing.

"For example, for people in the early stages who are overweight or aren't healthy, the

advice isn't to start medication, but to get fit, have a healthy lifestyle and eat nutritious foods."

The next step up from lifestyle changes is medical treatments, including tablets, patches and moving through to injectable therapies. As the disease progresses, more complex medication regimens are required, however, these aren't always preferred by patients.

Conducting research into deep brain stimulation (DBS), Dr Rodrigues has been providing DBS treatment for patients with Parkinson's in WA since 2004.

According to Dr Rodrigues, this is the most convenient and effective therapy for patients with Parkinson's disease where medical therapy is failing. Used since the 1990s, he said the mature treatment was widely considered best practice.

"It's a procedure involving a neurosurgeon and neurologist who insert two very thin probes into the brain," he said.

"They will then have a programmable pacemaker-like device implanted into their chest, so we can make a wide range of adjustments after surgery to reduce symptoms."

Dr Rodrigues said the procedure was painless and the effects long-lasting, with patients able to get their quality of life back.

"Not everyone wants surgery and that's



completely fine," he said. "It all goes back to the questions; what do you want to get out of life and what are you willing to do to achieve that.

"Some people are quite frightened of it, but I remind them that while there's always a risk from surgery, it's about the same as having a hip replacement. Many people will do it and say why didn't I do this earlier?"

"The patients who go through it and have good outcomes – which is the vast majority at 95 per cent – have no regrets."

For more information, visit www.drjullianrodrigues.com.au or phone 9420 4900.



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