

# Incapacity Benefit

**I**f you have Parkinson's, you may have some concerns about how you'll manage financially – if you can't work, or if you need help with your day-to-day needs, this can lead to extra costs. But there is some financial support available, so it's important to find out what benefits you're entitled to.

**This sheet explains what Incapacity Benefit is, who qualifies, how to claim and what information you need to supply.**

## What is Incapacity Benefit?

Incapacity Benefit is for people who can't work because they are ill or disabled. On 27 October 2008 it was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). But if you were already claiming Incapacity Benefit before 27 October 2008, you can still claim it for the time being.

## Facts about Incapacity Benefit

- It is not affected by any savings or capital you have.
- The long-term rate (see page 2) is taxable.
- You can't claim it as well as State Pension or Jobseeker's Allowance.
- It can be paid at the same time as Disability Living Allowance.
- If you are on a low income, you may be able to top it up with Income Support.
- If you get long-term Incapacity Benefit, you could get the disability premium with Income Support, or with Housing or Council Tax Benefits.
- You can claim it while you are in hospital.
- If you have a partner in paid employment, your basic benefit will not be affected.
- Your partner's occupational and personal pensions count as earnings if they are a dependant addition.

## How much is Incapacity Benefit?

There are three rates of Incapacity Benefit:

### Short-term lower rate (weeks 1–28)

Claimant	£71.10
Adult dependent	£42.65

### Short-term higher rate (weeks 29–52)

Claimant	£84.15
Adult dependent	£42.65

### Long-term higher rate (after 52 weeks or 28 weeks if you are entitled to highest rate Disability Living Allowance care component or have a terminal illness)

Claimant	£94.25
Adult dependent	£54.75

### Age addition

If you were under 45 when you first claimed, an extra amount of money called an 'age addition' is added to the long-term rate.

There are two rates of the age addition:

Higher rate (if you were under 35)	£13.80
Lower rate (if you were 35 to 44)	£5.60

If you first claimed Incapacity Benefit after April 2001, it is reduced by 50p for each £1 of occupational or personal pension you get over £85 a week. This money isn't taken away if you receive the highest rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance.

### Work-focused interviews

If you are of working age and receive Incapacity Benefit or are the dependent partner of anyone who gets Incapacity Benefit, you might have to go to a 'work-focused interview' at your local Jobcentre Plus office. At this interview you will see a personal adviser who will help you explore anything stopping you from working and the support that could help you get into work.

### Permitted work

If you want to try some paid work while getting Incapacity Benefit, you may be able to do 'permitted work'. This lets you try some paid work without needing approval from a doctor.

You should tell the office that pays your benefit before you start work.

Incapacity Benefit is unaffected by this type of work. But if you also get Income Support, this is likely to be reduced by anything you earn above £20 a week.

You can work while claiming Incapacity Benefit if you:

- earn up to £20 a week, for as long as you are on benefit, or
- work for less than 16 hours a week on average and earn up to £95 each week for a fixed 52-week period, or
- do 'supported permitted work' and earn up to £95 each week for as long as you are on benefit

Supported permitted work is work supervised by an employee of a public or voluntary body whose job it is to arrange supported work for disabled people.

Earnings do not include income tax, National Insurance contributions, half of your contributions to an occupational or personal pension and, sometimes, childcare costs.

Contact your local Jobcentre Plus office for more information.

## What if I start work but my sickness or disability mean I have to stop again?

If you stop claiming Incapacity Benefit because you start work, you will need to claim Employment and Support Allowance if you have to stop work again because of your condition.

## What if I start voluntary work?

You can do as much voluntary work as you like. Your Incapacity Benefit will not be affected as long as you do not get paid for anything other than expenses for things like travel or special clothing you need for the voluntary work. The voluntary work must not be for a close relative. You must tell Jobcentre Plus if you do any voluntary work.

## Can I stay on Incapacity Benefit indefinitely?

At some point between 2010 and 2014 you will be reassessed under the new 'Work Capability Assessment'. This test applies to Employment and Support Allowance. If this test shows you have a limited capability for work, you will be moved on to ESA.

Even though most people who get Incapacity Benefit and Income Support should not be worse off on ESA, some people may be. If this applies to you, once you have been moved onto ESA, you should get a 'transitional addition'. This is an extra amount of money that will bring your ESA up to the same level as the Incapacity Benefit or Income Support you currently get.

**Find out more on ESA:** see our information sheet *Employment and Support Allowance*

## More information and support

We have information sheets on other benefits you may be entitled to. You can download these from our website at [parkinsons.org.uk](http://parkinsons.org.uk) or see the back page of this sheet for details of how to order these for free.

## Our helpline

For more help and information on rights and benefits, you can contact our dedicated employment and benefits adviser on the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk)

## Information and support workers

Our UK-wide network of information and support workers can also provide details about benefits and help you with the application process. You can find your local information and support worker online at [parkinsons.org.uk/isw](http://parkinsons.org.uk/isw) or call our helpline for details.

## Local groups

Speak to others about their experiences at your local Parkinson's UK group. Visit [parkinsons.org.uk/localgroups](http://parkinsons.org.uk/localgroups) or call our helpline for details of your nearest meeting.

## Online forum

Speak to others in a similar situation through our online discussion forum at [parkinsons.org.uk/forum](http://parkinsons.org.uk/forum)

## Thank you

Thank you to Disability Alliance for updating this information sheet.



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## Incapacity Benefit

If you have comments or suggestions about this information sheet, we'd love to hear from you. This will help us ensure that we are providing as good a service as possible.

We'd be very grateful if you could complete this form and return it to **Information Resources, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ**. Or you can email us at [publications@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:publications@parkinsons.org.uk). Thanks!

### Please tick...

- I have Parkinson's. When were you diagnosed? .....
- I'm family/a friend/a carer of someone with Parkinson's
- I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's

Where did you get this information sheet from?

- GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse
- Parkinson's UK local group or event
- Our website
- Information and support worker
- Ordered from us directly
- Other .....

**We're the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.**

### Can you help?

At Parkinson's UK, we are totally dependent on donations from individuals and organisations to fund the work that we do. There are many ways that you can help us to support people with Parkinson's. If you would like to get involved, please contact our Supporter Services team on **020 7932 1303** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/support**. Thank you.

### Parkinson's UK

Free\* confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

Text Relay **18001 0808 800 0303**

(for textphone users only)

**hello@parkinsons.org.uk**

**parkinsons.org.uk**

\*calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks.

### How to order our resources

**01473 212115**

**resources@parkinsons.org.uk**

**parkinsons.org.uk/publications**

We make every effort to make sure that our services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate facts. We hope that these will add to any professional advice you receive and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your health and social care team if you are worried about any aspect of living with Parkinson's.

References for this information sheet can be found in the Microsoft Word version at **parkinsons.org.uk/publications**

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How useful have you found the information sheet? (1 is not useful, 4 is very useful) 1 2 3 4

Have you found the publication easy to read/use?  Yes  No

What aspects did you find most helpful? .....

Were you looking for any information that wasn't covered? .....

Do you have any other comments? .....

If you would like to become a member of Parkinson's UK, or are interested in joining our information review group, please complete the details below and we'll be in touch.

Membership  Information review group (who give us feedback on new and updated resources)

Name .....

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