

## What's the gut got to do with Parkinson's?

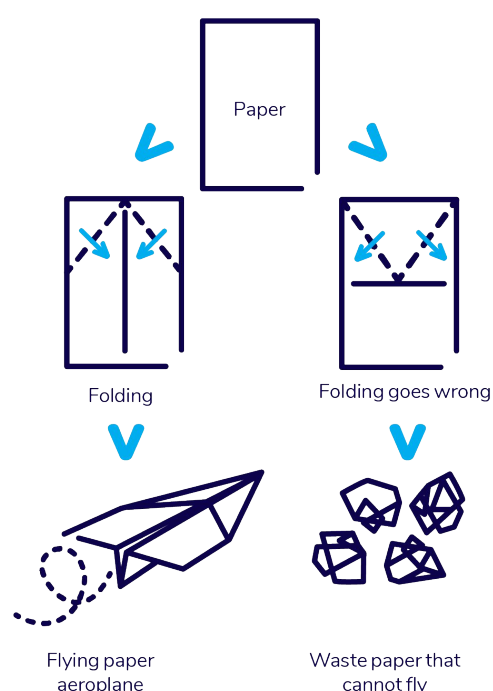
### Brief summary

- A toxic protein that contributes to the loss of brain cells in Parkinson's may originate in the gut and travel to the brain.
- Gut bacteria differ in people with and without Parkinson's, and may play a role in the development and progression of the condition.
- Researchers are looking at various methods to boost gut health. Identifying which bacteria are involved in contributing to Parkinson's will help accelerate the search for better treatments and a cure.

### Supporting diagrams

#### Misfolded alpha-synuclein

Proteins such as alpha-synuclein need to be the correct shape to function properly - just like a paper aeroplane. If the paper isn't folded properly it won't fly and results in a pile of scrunched up discarded paper. You can think of this scrunched up paper as the clumps of alpha-synuclein that cause problems within brain cells.



#### Connecting the gut to the brain

Our nervous system is made up of an intricate network of nerves that connect the brain to the rest of the body. This includes the vagus nerve that connects the gut to the brain. One theory is - misfolded alpha-synuclein moves from the gut to the brain via this nerve.

