

# BEWARE



## Surfing the waves of Parkinson's disease

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### Background

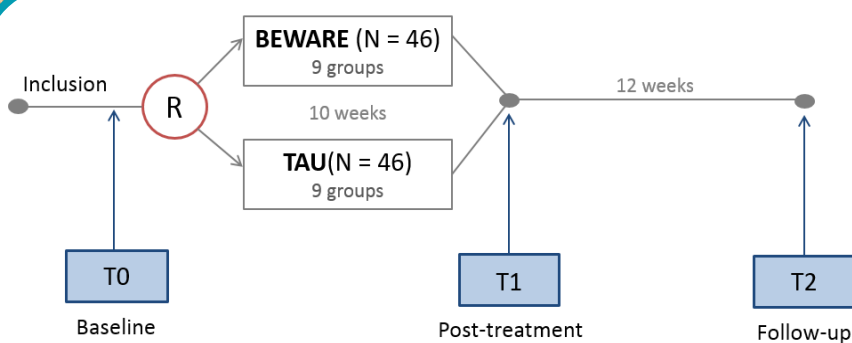
In patients with Parkinson's disease (PD), fluctuations in physical and psychological symptoms commonly occur within five years of commencing dopamine replacement therapy. Current treatment options are limited and a multidisciplinary approach is needed to address the complex interactions between physical and psychological symptoms. Since fluctuations are eventually inevitable, treatment should focus on coping and acceptance, not primarily on symptom reduction.

### Mind and body interact



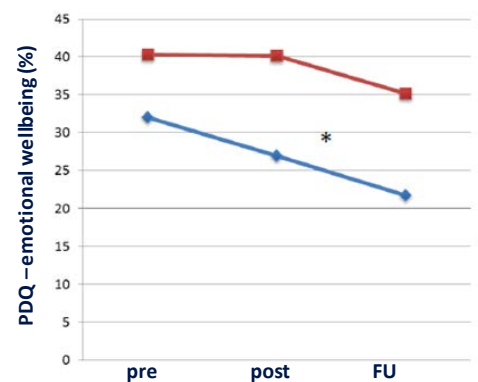
### The BEWARE training

We developed a body awareness group training, named BEWARE, combining physical therapy with Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to teach PD patients how to better cope with the interacting and fluctuating symptoms. Elements from physical therapy include cueing techniques, moving to music, and learning transfer strategies. Elements from ACT include mindfulness, cognitive defusion, and valued based action. The BEWARE training consists of 10 weekly 90-minute group sessions and includes homework exercises concerning both physical and psychological exercises. The BEWARE training is being investigated in comparison to treatment as usual (TAU, e.g. physical therapy only) in a multicenter RCT in The Netherlands.



All outcome measures (physical and psychological, with our primary outcome measure being the *Chronic Illness Acceptance Questionnaire*) are performed prior to, immediately after, and 3 months after the treatment period.

### Results pilot RCT (n=36)



Improvements in emotional wellbeing (see figure), standing balance, and stigmatization of PD symptoms.

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“You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf” – Jon Kabat-Zinn