

About Parkinson's Disease & April Awareness Month

Parkinson's Disease

- Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive neurological disorder with no known cure.
- There are over 13,000 people in British Columbia living with Parkinson's disease, and over 100,000 people across Canada.
- Common motor symptoms include tremor (shaking), slowness of movement, muscle stiffness, and impaired balance. Other symptoms often include fatigue, speech and writing difficulties, sleep disorders, cognitive changes, and more.
- Parkinson's causes dopamine-producing cells to die off, resulting in the onset of motor symptoms. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter important for nervous system functioning.
- Parkinson's is the second most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer's. The worldwide incidence of Parkinson's is expected to double by 2040.
- Since there is no cure, treatment is focused on symptom management. Exercise and medication are the two most common ways to treat Parkinson's.
- Levodopa is a building-block of dopamine, and one of the most common drugs used to treat symptoms of Parkinson's. It stimulates dopamine production in the body.

Parkinson Society British Columbia

Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) is a not-for-profit charitable organization that serves to empower people with Parkinson's in British Columbia through providing resources and services to enable self-management, self-reliance, and self-advocacy. The Society is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, and supported by donations from individuals, members, corporations, foundations, and the efforts of our volunteers.

Our services include:

- Educational materials for people with PD, their caregivers, and healthcare professionals.
- Free, short-term, confidential counselling services for anyone touched by Parkinson's.
- Over 50 volunteer-led support groups in communities across the province, and online.
- PD Link, a peer support program for individuals with PD and caregivers.
- Education events, including workshops, conferences, webinars, and community talks.
- PD Connect, a referral program for healthcare professionals treating people with PD.
- Information, consultations, and referrals through our toll-free information line and email.

Celebrating 50 years of service

Since 1969, PSBC has been a part of a strong community united in our dedication to improve the lives of those affected by Parkinson's. To mark this milestone, we hope to extend our reach further, and strengthen our impact greater than ever before – within the Parkinson's community and beyond.



Our plans include:

- Growing our online resources, such as webinars, online support groups, and educational materials, to reach those affected by Parkinson's across the province, and especially in remote communities.
- Building a timeline of the Society's history, featuring photos from education and fundraising events we have hosted throughout the years.
- Sharing inspirational stories from our community to honour the strength of people with Parkinson's, the dedication of caregivers, and the efforts of our volunteers.
- Bringing back our provincial conference, *Moving Forward, Together*, featuring a new stream for healthcare professionals.
- Launching a video series highlighting the Society's history and achievements, the programs and services we offer, and the community we serve.

April Awareness Month

April Awareness Month is an opportunity to engage the public in expanding their understanding of PD, and the diversity of our community.

This year's campaign highlights:

- Inspirational stories from people with PD, their families, and carepartners.
- The history of Parkinson Society BC, and the growth of our programs & services.
- Our Society's mission to ensure all British Columbians living with PD know that they are not alone on their journey.

In recognition of Parkinson's Awareness Month, and World Parkinson's Day on April 11, we are encouraging individuals affected by the disease to share their experiences through our **#PDANDME** (PD and Me) campaign. To spread awareness to the public, we are running a concurrent campaign featuring the slogan, *it's more than a tremor*, which will be promoted on television, in local newspapers, on the radio, and in public transit.

What can you do to help the Parkinson's community in BC?

- [Share](#) our April Awareness campaign, and use the hashtag #PDANDME.
- [Learn](#) about Parkinson's disease, its symptoms, and treatments.
- [Donate](#) to Parkinson Society BC to support our advocacy, research funding, education programs, and front-line services.
- [Fundraise](#) for Parkinson Society BC by hosting your own community event.
- [Volunteer](#) for Parkinson Society BC, in our office, or at education and fundraising events.
- [Advocate](#) for improved patient outcomes by joining our network of Parkinson's Advocacy Ambassadors.
- [Participate](#) in a research study as a person with Parkinson's, or a control subject.

To learn more about this year's campaigns, visit www.parkinson.bc.ca/awareness.