

SPECIAL NOTICE

In response to the global outbreak of COVID-19, Parkinson Society BC staff are working remotely until further notice. We will continue to offer programs and services in alternate formats. For the most up-to-date information, please visit this PSBC web page: www.parkinson.bc.ca/coronavirus. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@parkinson.bc.ca.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Gut Health Series** | Mondays, November 9 & 16
Learn more & register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/gut-health-series
- **Dance the Holidays: Nutcracker Repertoire** | Thursdays, November 12, 19, 26, & December 3
Learn more & register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/dance-nutcracker
- **November Symposium Series** | November 18, 25, & 30
Learn more & register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/november-symposium
- **Holiday Social & Caroling** | Thursday, December 10
Learn more & register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/holiday-social
- **Hand & Dexterity Exercise Series** | Thursdays, January 14, 21, 28, February 4, 11, & 18
Learn more & register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/dexterity-series

Annual General Meeting

We invite you to join us for our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday, November 21, featuring guest speaker Dr. Anish Kanungo, BSc (Hon), PhD, MD, FRCPC. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's AGM will be held virtually via Zoom.

Dr. Kanungo is a neurologist at the Fraser Health Movement Disorders Clinic, and a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. He actively participates in the training of medical students and residents, and maintains an interest in research aimed at improving the lives of people with movement disorders.

Dr. Kanungo's presentation will discuss the non-motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease, and how allied healthcare professionals, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists, can help support people with Parkinson's manage these symptoms. He will also discuss his research on the impacts of a multi-disciplinary approach to treating Parkinson's.

Our 2019 Annual Report and financial statements are now available on our website. The Annual General Meeting package will be circulated with login instructions for this event.

Important: *Parkinson Society BC's Bylaws require 5% of our voting membership to be in attendance at our Annual General Meeting. To ensure that we meet quorum, we kindly ask that if you register for the event, you uphold your commitment to attend.*

Date: Saturday, November 21

Time: 9:30am – 11:30am

Fees: **FREE for members only.** Non-members interested in attending must pay the \$25 annual membership fee. To learn more about membership, please contact Susan Atkinson at satkinson@parkinson.bc.ca or 1-800-668-3330.

Register: www.parkinson.bc.ca/agm

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS**Champions for Parkinson's**

- IMPACT Parkinson's: Ongoing event proceeds (see events: www.impactparkinsons.com)
- Donate a Car Canada: Ongoing (read more: <http://bit.ly/2ORTuJn>)
- Naturally Urban Pet Food Delivery Sales: Ongoing (read more: <http://bit.ly/2MLasvX>)

We're looking for more Champions!

Do you want to help fund research, grow support networks, and improve quality of life for those living with Parkinson's? Become a Champion for Parkinson's and plan your own independent community fundraising event! Contact Caroline Wiggins at cwiggins@parkinson.bc.ca or 1-800-668-3330.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**EPDA Drooling Survey**

The European Parkinson's Disease Association (EPDA) is conducting a short survey that focuses on the often-overlooked symptom of drooling (excessive or uncontrolled saliva beyond the margin of the lip). Research shows that this symptom affects 75-80% of people with Parkinson's. The survey is available at www.surveymonkey.com/r/EPDA_sial_EN.

Remembrance Day

Please note that Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) will be closed on Wednesday, November 11 for Remembrance Day.

To honour Canada's veterans this Remembrance Day, the Society would like to feature an individual who has served our country in our November issue of Good News. If you or someone you know is a veteran with a connection to Parkinson's disease, and would be interested in sharing your story to inspire others, please contact Laura Halas, *Marketing & Communications Coordinator*, at lahalas@parkinson.bc.ca.

Parkinson SuperWalk

Thank you to everyone for your enthusiastic participation in, and generous donations to, the 30th annual Parkinson SuperWalk. This year, your incredible support has helped to raise over \$280,000 and counting. These funds will allow the Society to expand its reach, providing advocacy, programming, support services, and contributions to research for the 13,000 British Columbians living with Parkinson's, and their carepartners and families. Stay tuned to our website, where we'll be announcing our top fundraisers and teams!

If you couldn't join us this year, it's not too late to help us make a difference. Donations for this year's SuperWalk will be accepted through December 31st, 2020!

DISCUSSION TOPIC: Improving Balance & Preventing Falls**Discussion Questions**

1. How do you keep your home safe and free of falling and tripping hazards?
2. What are some of the things you do to improve your balance?
3. Who do you go to for support with your mobility and balance?

Parkinson's disease (PD) affects the parts of the brain controlling balance and coordination. As a result, balance and coordination adjustments that were once automatic now require conscious effort. Additionally, some people with PD may experience a feeling of faintness when getting up from a sitting or lying position (called orthostatic hypotension), either as a symptom or a side effect of certain medications. Difficulty with balance and/or low blood pressure can increase the risk of falling and bone fractures, both of which can be serious.

Evaluating fall risk

Falls can be caused by many factors, both relating to your physical health and fitness, and your environment. Some of the fall risk factors common in Parkinson's include:

- advanced or severe symptoms
- cognitive changes
- fatigue and sleep disorders
- freezing (particularly freezing of gait)
- depression, stress, and anxiety
- fear of falling
- medication use, and medication interactions (causing side effects or "off" periods)
- reduced leg strength, and trunk rigidity
- poor mobility, bradykinesia (slowness), and dyskinesia (involuntary movement)
- urinary incontinence and urgency (particularly at night, called nocturia)
- changes in posture, or postural instability
- acute illness with Parkinson's
- difficulty turning, changing direction, backing up, and moving around obstacles
- home and community hazards

Although many of the factors above cannot be changed, it is possible to work on improving mobility and balance, and remove hazards from your environment to avoid falls. To determine your individual risk factors, contact your healthcare team or your local home and community care office to arrange an assessment with a physician, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, or other professional.

During a falls risk assessment, you may be asked to perform small tests, such as (PSBC, 2019):

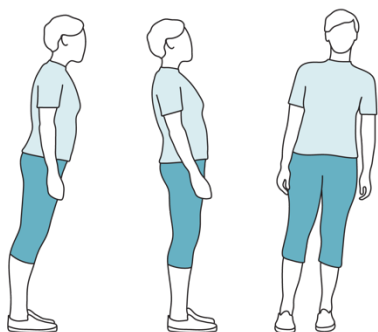
- multi-tasking, especially while walking
- getting up and down from the floor
- maintaining balance when nudged in various directions
- turning in a small space
- picking objects up from the floor
- stepping backwards safely

Minimizing risk

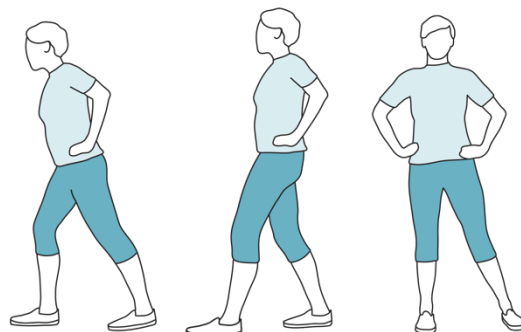
Here are a few suggestions on how to avoid falls and manage balance problems:

- Use cueing strategies to overcome freezing of gait.
- See a clinical counsellor to discuss mental health concerns or fears of falling.
- Exercise to improve your mobility, leg strength, posture, agility, and walking.
- Speak to your healthcare team about incontinence and nocturia, or seek referral to a continence or pelvic floor therapy service.
- Have your blood pressure checked frequently to ensure it is not too low.
- Remove throw rugs and low-lying obstacles from pathways inside and outside your home.
- Avoid using stepladders and stools.
- If you walk with a cane, use one with a large base, or a walker with brakes. Get professional advice before making any major purchases.
- Stand as straight as you can, and walk with your feet a little wider apart than normal.
- Wear comfortable shoes with good arch support. If you shuffle, avoid rubber or crepe soles.
- Pay attention to changes in ground surfaces (eg. curb to pavement, or carpet to bare floor).

Some balance problems, like postural instability, can be more complex and require assessment by a physiotherapist. Exercises that may be prescribed for postural instability may be multidirectional swaying and stepping exercises.



Forward, backward, and side sway



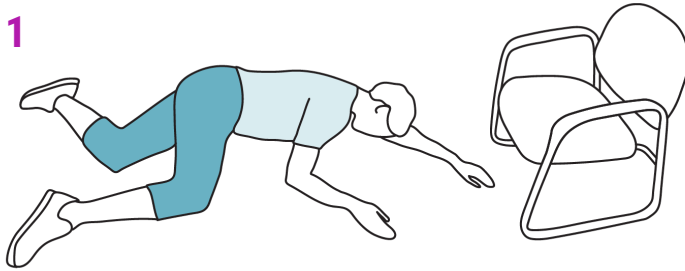
Forward, backward, and side stepping

Recovering from falls

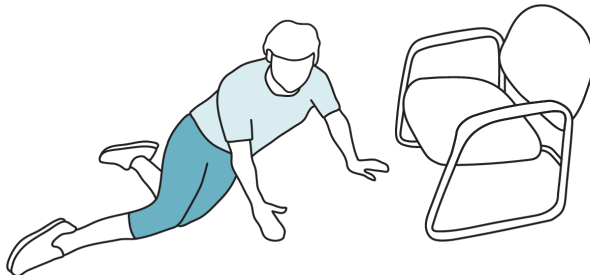
If you fall, stay calm, and remain where you are. Take a moment to conduct a body scan (mentally scan and feel from head to toe) to see if you are hurt anywhere. If you are hurt, do not move, and call for help. If you are not hurt, then you can try getting up from the floor using the technique below, with help from a chair or something else sturdy. Only do this if you are sure you are not hurt and can get up by yourself. If you need help getting up from the floor, do not attempt this without assistance, as you could fall again.

See illustrations on the next page.

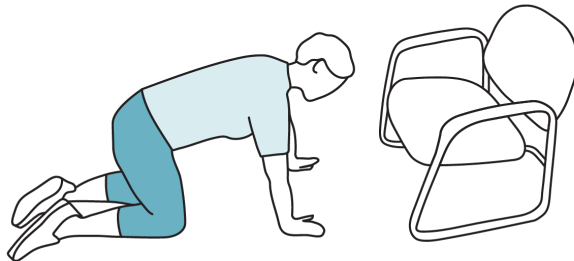
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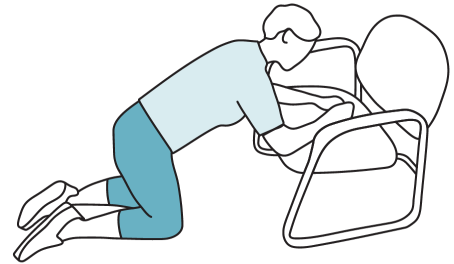
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If you need assistance getting up from the floor, or there is nothing sturdy to hold on to (e.g. if you are outside and unable to crawl to a bench or a building wall), you can use the same techniques as above, performing steps 4 through 6 with a person in place of a chair, given that the person assisting feels they are able to do so.



Balance checklist

Balance and good posture can work together to improve your activities of daily living. When your body is correctly aligned, movement is more efficient and stable. To establish good posture:

1. Stand with your back against a wall, your feet flat on the floor, and your heels approximately 3-4 inches or less from the wall.
2. Hold your head erect, chin parallel to the floor, and your vision focused on a target at eye level.
3. Relax the arms and shoulders.
4. The buttocks, shoulder blades, and, if possible, the back of the head should be touching the wall. Focus on keeping chin parallel with the floor and eyes on a target.
5. Evenly distribute weight throughout feet, front to back, and side to side.
6. Pull your abdominals in, and lift your chest.
7. Hold position for 15 to 30 seconds, and then relax.
8. Repeat the above directions 2-3 more times.

Additional Resources

Exercise Helpsheet | <https://bit.ly/pdphysicalactivity>

In-Home Safety Check Helpsheet | <https://bit.ly/pdhomesafetycheck>

Stay on Your Feet Booklet | <https://bit.ly/pdstayonyourfeet>

Sources

Parkinson Society British Columbia (2019) Naomi Casiro Discusses Balance & Falling in Parkinson's. Viewpoints Fall 2019. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/vptsbalancefalling>