

# VIEWPOINTS



## Fall 2022

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by Parkinson Society  
British Columbia

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Parkinson Society BC would not exist without the support of our members, donors, and volunteers.

## OUR MISSION

Parkinson Society British Columbia exists to empower people with Parkinson's in British Columbia through providing resources and services to enable self-management, self-reliance, and self-advocacy.

## Here are a few of the ways you can support the Society:

### MEMBERSHIP

For an annual fee of \$25, your household benefits from unlimited access to our education and support services, events, and resources.

### DONATIONS

Contact us to set up monthly, quarterly or annual donations, or think of us when giving through United Way.

### PLANNED GIVING & BEQUESTS

Consider Parkinson Society British Columbia as a beneficiary in your will.

### FUNDRAISING

Become a Champion for Parkinson's by organizing your own event benefiting the Society. For more information on how you can support us, visit [www.parkinson.bc.ca/donate](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/donate).

### SUPPORT GROUPS

100 Mile House, Abbotsford, Advanced Carepartner Online, Burnaby, Campbell River, Carepartner Bereavement Online, Chilliwack, Chinese Speaking (Burnaby), Courtenay/Comox Valley, Cranbrook, Duncan/Cowichan Valley, Early-Mid Stage Carepartner Online, Gabriola Island, Kamloops, Kelowna, Kelowna Carepartners, Kootenay Lake East Shore, Langley, Langley YOPD, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows, Maple Ridge Caregivers, Nanaimo, Nanaimo Carepartners, New Diagnosis, New Westminster, North Shore, Osoyoos/Oliver, Parkinson's Online, Parksville/Qualicum, Parksville/Qualicum Caregivers, Port Alberni, Powell River, Prince George, Princeton, Quesnel, Richmond, Richmond Carepartners, Surrey, Trail/Castlegar, Tri Cities Caregivers, Tsawwassen, Vancouver Arbutus, Vancouver Carepartners, Vancouver Downtown, Vancouver West Side, Vernon, Vernon Caregivers, Weekly Parkinson's Online, White Rock Carepartners, Williams Lake, Young Onset Parkinson's Online

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# Ask an Expert

## Dr. Jennifer Locke discusses bladder health for people with Parkinson's



**Dr. Jennifer Locke** is a urologist with subspecialty training in reconstructive urology (female urology, male urology, neurogenic bladder, overactive bladder, urinary

incontinence, and urethral stricture disease). Dr. Locke grew up in Tsawwassen, British Columbia and attended the University of British Columbia (UBC) for her undergraduate degree in chemistry. She then completed a PhD in experimental medicine at UBC, followed by her MD training at the University of Toronto (U of T). She completed her residency training in urology at UBC, followed by her fellowship training in reconstructive urology at the U of T. Her current clinical practice is based out of Kelowna, BC and consists of a mixture of general urology and reconstructive urology. Operating out of the Kelowna General Hospital, she serves the greater Okanagan region and beyond.

### **How does Parkinson's disease (PD) affect the bladder, and what are the most common symptoms of bladder dysfunction in people with PD?**

Parkinson's disease can affect the bladder in many ways, with up to 75% of patients experiencing bladder issues. PD can cause the bladder to contract when someone is not ready to urinate, which may present as urgency ("I have to go really badly"), with or without leakage of urine. Leakage of urine is called urinary incontinence.

Parkinson's disease can also cause a person to frequently urinate and only excrete small amounts at a time, which may be a sign of an overactive bladder. Overactive bladder occurs when the bladder sends repeated signals to the brain, telling it that it is full and needs to be emptied, even when this is not true. As a result, people with Parkinson's may make many trips to the bathroom, both in the day and night, which can interrupt their sleep.

Lastly, it can cause patients to experience hesitancy, or an inability to start urinating. Hesitancy can be a result of an inability to relax the urethral sphincter muscles, and can result in urinary retention. When urine is retained in the bladder, bacteria can multiply in the urinary tract, which may cause urinary tract infections.

### **Are there any lifestyle changes people with Parkinson's can employ to improve their bladder health?**

Good bladder habits can improve symptoms and prevent a person from needing medications. One technique that is easy to integrate into your daily routine is timed voiding. This involves going to the bathroom on a schedule, usually every two hours, regardless of how much you feel the need to urinate. Timed voiding is helpful because it can prevent the bladder from becoming too full, as an overly full bladder may result in urinary urgency and incontinence.

For those who struggle to void completely, a technique called double voiding may be useful. Double voiding involves attempting to urinate more than once per bathroom trip. There are many techniques to encourage this – you could try sitting on the toilet for longer, rocking from side to side, standing up and sitting down again, or leaning forward slightly.

### **Are there any food or drinks that can help people with PD better manage their bladder health, and are there any food or drinks to avoid?**

Water is the best fluid for your bladder health. It is non-irritating and helps to dilute the urine, as well as flush out potentially harmful bacteria. There are also many foods that may also promote bladder wellness, such as pears, bananas, squash, whole grains, oatmeal, and nuts. Eggs have been cited as one of the best foods for sensitive bladders, as they are high in protein and rarely lead to bladder irritation (Urology Care Foundation, 2018).

On the other hand, there are several foods and beverages that may be wise to avoid. Spicy foods can negatively affect the bladder by irritating the bladder lining and causing pain. Similarly, sugary foods and beverages can stimulate the bladder, which can result

in urinary urgency and frequency. Caffeine is a well-known stimulant, which can irritate the bladder and cause it to contract inappropriately. Finally, alcohol is a powerful diuretic, which means it increases the production of urine, and can lead to both urinary frequency and urinary incontinence in people with bladder issues. Therefore, it is essential to limit coffee, tea, juice, pop, alcohol, and spicy foods. This doesn't mean you can't have any in your diet – it just means to enjoy them in moderation.

An elimination diet may help individuals figure out which foods and beverages are a trigger for their bladder symptoms. If a trigger food or beverage is removed, it is reasonable to expect an improvement in symptoms within 10 days. After 10 days, re-introduce the food or beverage; if symptoms flare up or return, the food or beverage is a likely culprit. To be sure you eliminate the right trigger, remove only one food or beverage at a time.

#### **What medication options exist to treat bladder problems in PD?**

In both men and women with urgency, with or without leakage, there are bladder relaxant medications that help reduce urgency symptoms (beta-3 agonists and anticholinergics, which work by relaxing the bladder muscles and increasing bladder capacity).

In men with hesitancy, there are medications that help relax the urethra and prostate, allowing them to empty their bladders more effectively (alpha blockers and 5-alpha reductase inhibitors, which block the action of 5-alpha reductase, an enzyme that plays a role in prostate growth).

#### **Are there surgical options to help bladder dysfunction as a result of Parkinson's?**

For patients that have urinary urgency despite the use of oral medications, there is an option of injecting Botox into the bladder. One study found that Botox injections helped to reduce both daytime and nighttime urinary frequency, as well as urinary incontinence, which helped improve participants' quality of life. Improvements lasted at least six months following the injections (*Giannantoni, et al., 2011*).

Sacral neuromodulation, a minimally-invasive surgery that implants a pacemaker into the back that stimulates the sacral nerve, has also been shown to help reduce common bladder problems in people with Parkinson's, such as overactive bladder, urinary frequency, urinary incontinence, and urinary retention.

For male patients who can't empty well, there are surgeries to open up the prostate (transurethral resection of the prostate and greenlight laser prostatectomy), as an enlarged prostate can slow down or block the flow of urine.

#### **How might bladder health change as the disease progresses?**

Unfortunately, as the disease progresses, bladder symptoms, such as urinary urgency, often get worse. However, it is important to note that worsening bladder symptoms are not always a direct result of Parkinson's, but may be caused by other issues, such as an enlarged prostate. The good news is that there are many modalities of treatments available to treat the symptoms, regardless of their cause.

#### **How can someone with Parkinson's tell if their bladder problems are caused by PD or by another unrelated condition?**

There are two tests that can be done to help determine if the bladder problems are related to Parkinson's disease: cystoscopy, a procedure that uses a thin camera to look inside the bladder, and urodynamics, a test that measures the performance and health of the bladder and urethra using electrodes and a catheter. Both of these tests are minimally invasive and can help pin down the diagnosis to help patients get the treatment they need.

#### **What are some tips you have or resources you would suggest for people with PD while they wait to see a urologist?**

Your family doctor can start you on any of the oral medications in advance of seeing a urologist. Furthermore, keeping a bladder diary may be useful, as it can give your future urologist a snapshot into your bladder health. The smartphone app Vesica is a convenient and easy-to-use bladder diary. For printed copies of a diary, visit Dr. Locke's website at [bit.ly/DrLockeBladderDiary](http://bit.ly/DrLockeBladderDiary).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Bladder Dysfunction**  
Helpsheet: [bit.ly/pdbladderdysfunction](https://bit.ly/pdbladderdysfunction)
- **Helpful documents & helpsheets from Dr. Locke's website:**  
[bit.ly/DrLockeHelpfulDocuments](https://bit.ly/DrLockeHelpfulDocuments)

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# Living Well

## How stress impacts PD

Many of us know that stress has negative health consequences. Regardless of whether it is acute stress, spurred by challenging life events like a job loss or divorce, or chronic stress, originating from longstanding, unresolved issues, stress can have detrimental effects on our wellbeing, health, and overall happiness. The latest research is now uncovering that people with Parkinson's disease (PD) may be especially susceptible to the adverse effects of stress.

People with Parkinson's experience higher than average rates of both anxiety and depression, and may also have higher levels of the hormone cortisol, often known as the "stress hormone" (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). Because of this increased baseline level of stress, individuals with PD may experience more severe consequences from additional stress (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). In fact, acute stress can reduce the effects of Parkinson's medications, and can even worsen both motor and non-motor symptoms of the illness (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). Those with Parkinson's frequently report that tremor, freezing of gait, and dyskinesia are exacerbated in the face of acute stress (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*).

In addition, chronic stress has been found to disrupt homeostasis, the process in which the body attempts to stabilize itself, and has been linked to a higher risk of anxiety and depression (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). In animal studies, chronic stress has also been shown to speed up the progression of PD by accelerating the loss of dopaminergic neurons (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). The loss of these neurons is thought to play a key role in the development of Parkinson's. Additional animal studies suggest that chronic stress affects the gut microbiome and causes inflammation, which then may directly contribute to neurodegeneration (*Dodiya, et al., 2020*).

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a major source of stress for many people, including those with Parkinson's. When people with PD were surveyed

about their experiences with stress during the pandemic, those that reported higher stress levels also reported greater motor and non-motor symptom severity (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). The researchers suggested that lifestyle changes, such as increased time at home and less time exercising outdoors, contributed to greater levels of stress (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*).

### **LUCKILY, THERE ARE PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE THINGS PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S CAN DO TODAY TO REDUCE THEIR LEVELS OF STRESS AND LIVE HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIVES, INCLUDING:**

#### **1. Getting active:**

In a survey of 5,000 people with PD, 83% used physical activity to manage stress (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). When comparing aerobic exercise, such as cycling, to light, non-intensive forms of exercise like stretching, aerobic exercise was more effective at reducing motor symptom severity (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). However, the researchers admit it is unclear whether the motor symptom improvements resulted directly from exercise, or whether they were indirectly caused by exercise's ability to reduce stress (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). What is clear is that stress reduction techniques and physical exercise can work together to help people with Parkinson's manage their symptoms and take control of their health (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*).

#### **2. Using mindfulness:**

Mindfulness is an ancient practice that dates back over 2,500 years (*Fisher, 2016*). It emphasizes living in the present moment, with conscious and deliberate attention to what is happening here and now, without dwelling on the past or planning the future (*Fisher, 2016*). A survey of 5,000 people with PD found that nearly 40% practice mindfulness, with many reaping the rewards of mindfulness practice, such as symptom severity reduction and reduced anxiety (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*). How frequently one practices mindfulness seems to matter – those who were mindful more often reported greater symptom improvement (*van der Heide, et al., 2021*).

In a related study, participants with PD received an eight-week mindfulness intervention (Pickut et al., 2013). Afterwards, their brains were scanned using MRI; the results showed increased gray matter density in the neural networks (Pickut et al., 2013). Gray matter in the brain plays a key role in motor function, and as a result, increased density is thought to be beneficial to those with PD.

### 3. Enlisting the help of a counsellor:

Sometimes we all need a compassionate and understanding person to talk to. Counselling can provide a safe and structured environment within which to discuss challenges and process difficult emotions, such as stress over a new diagnosis or disease progression. Parkinson Society BC offers free, short-term, and non-crisis counselling services for people touched by Parkinson's disease. Learn more at [www.parkinson.bc.ca/counselling](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/counselling).

### 4. Practicing alternative therapies, like yoga and tai chi:

Such therapies are showing promise in helping reduce stress and anxiety in Parkinson's disease, though more research is required to determine their exact therapeutic potential (van der Heide, et al., 2021).

**Everyone experiences some degree of stress. A certain amount of stress is a normal part of life and can be beneficial for things like completing tasks or meeting deadlines. However, living with a chronic health condition can bring about many challenges and changes, some of which are negatively stressful. It is important for people with Parkinson's to remember that by building in habits to safeguard against the harmful effects of stress, they can enhance their physical and emotional wellbeing.**

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Depression and Anxiety**  
<http://bit.ly/moodchangesinparkinsons>
- **Assessing and Managing Problematic Anxiety**  
<https://bit.ly/drhowardanxietypd>

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## Living alone with PD

Living alone with Parkinson's disease (PD) can be an empowering experience, allowing for more opportunities to exercise independence. However, living independently with any progressive neurological disorder may present you with a variety of daily physical and mental challenges to consider. Proper home safety, as well as access to the necessary mental health and self-management resources, are of crucial importance. This can include adapting your home with assistive devices to prevent physical injuries, reaching out to loved ones or finding community in a support group, and/or creating small shifts in your daily routine, such as showering instead of bathing to avoid slips (*Hammarlund et al., 2018*). Regardless of your living situation, know that there are resources to support you in your journey with Parkinson's disease.

### HOME SAFETY

Individuals living with Parkinson's are at a greater risk of falling and other injuries. In fact, people with PD are twice as likely to experience a fall than those with other neurological conditions, and these falls may contribute to decreased quality of life, as well as a fear of falling again (*Allen et al., 2013*). Therefore, it is important to evaluate in-home safety to meet your physical needs. Parkinson Society BC offers a thorough in-home safety checklist for people with PD, available at [bit.ly/pdhomesafetycheck](http://bit.ly/pdhomesafetycheck).

#### Reducing the chance of slips and/or falls

A combination of soap, water, and tile can result in the bathroom being a particularly dangerous area of the home. Non-slip bathmats are a quick and easy solution to avoid slips and falls around the sink and shower. Specialized tools with extra handles and grips, such as those in the bathtub or near the toilet, can help in managing motor symptoms. Installing grab bars instead of relying on a towel rack for support is a safer alternative to avoid falls, as towel racks may come loose when used to support a person's weight. Another simple but effective way to avoid injury while bathing is to place a chair in the tub and sit while washing.

Using a hand-held showerhead and showering when your medication is "on" may also help keep you safe.

#### Preparing emergency contacts and support

It is also recommended you carry a cellphone with you, both inside and outside the home, in case of an emergency. Even without a network signal, cellphones can make emergency calls. Furthermore, modern smartphones are useful tools while living alone, as they offer a variety of safety-oriented apps for seniors and people with physical limitations. FallSafety Home is an easy-to-use app that automatically calls for help from an emergency contact after the smartphone's built-in accelerometer detects a fall. Another app that serves as a powerful tool is Snug Safety, designed for seniors living alone. Snug Safety is a free, daily check-in service that will get in touch with an emergency contact if a check-in is missed.

### SELF-MANAGEMENT AND MEDICATION

Living alone with Parkinson's disease means giving a higher level of attention to self-managing your medication. A simple tip to ensure you are organizing your medication on your own is to create a chart with detailed information, such as the name and type of drug, dosage, and schedule. Posting your chart in a prominent area of the home, such as the refrigerator, can serve as an easy reminder. Ensure you are also tracking your medication and symptoms with a diary or journal that you can bring to your medical appointments. You may also wish to utilize timers or alarms to track the timing of doses. The ParkiTrack booklet can help you get the most out of your PD medication, and can be shared with your healthcare team to optimize your treatment. To download a copy, please visit [www.parkinson.bc.ca/parkitrack](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/parkitrack).

### MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF-CARE

Mental health and self-care can sometimes be overlooked while living independently, especially when physical challenges take priority. However, ensuring you are taking care of yourself mentally and emotionally can make all the difference. One of the most important strategies for successfully living independently with PD is finding and maintaining social connections. It is normal to feel lonely if you are living alone. However, feeling lonely does not mean you are alone. The Society offers local support groups in communities across BC. Joining your local

support group is an extremely effective way to stay connected and build relationships while living alone. To learn more about support groups in your area, please visit [www.parkinson.bc.ca/supportgroups](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/supportgroups). Scheduling regular calls or outings with loved ones is another method to help you stay connected with your support circle. Your support network can also help with routine tasks, like grocery shopping, which will free up your time and energy for hobbies and activities you enjoy (*Parkinson's Foundation, 2022*). Support doesn't have to come from just other people – pets make great companions, and can be registered as emotional support animals (*Parkinson's Foundation, 2022*).

Taking care of your mental health can also involve doing the hobbies you love at home. This can add day-to-day excitement and fulfillment to your life. Exercise, reading, art, and writing are activities that can be performed alone or with a loved one, either in-person or online. Parkinson Society BC offers activity-based, social events, such as our popular Drumming for Parkinson's classes, as well as the Virtual Gardening Group. These events allow you to meet others with similar experiences to your own, while having a great time or learning a new skill. For our latest event offerings, please see our website at [www.parkinson.bc.ca/events](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/events).

## PRIVATE CARE

Remember that there is nothing wrong with asking for additional help while living alone. Knowing when it is time to seek out extra support takes great strength and courage. Understanding your own wants and needs in the context of your personal limitations is an important step in coping with PD. Private care and home support in BC are available for activities of daily living, such as bathing and dressing, grooming, nutrition, and overall safety maintenance. To be eligible for publicly-funded home support, you must have been assessed as needing personal assistance by a health authority or professional (*Province of British Columbia, n.d.*). For more information, contact your local health authority and/or doctor. You may also contact Parkinson Society BC through our Information & Referral consultations, and ask for assistance from our Healthcare Navigator. To learn more, please visit [www.parkinson.bc.ca/consultations](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/consultations).

Living alone with Parkinson's disease does not mean you have to navigate your everyday life entirely by yourself. There are many resources available to make daily life more accessible and enjoyable through a wide variety of strategies and tools. Understand that your loved ones, community, and Parkinson Society BC are there to support you, and that you are never truly alone living with Parkinson's.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **In-Home Safety Check**  
Helpsheet: [bit.ly/pdhomesafetycheck](http://bit.ly/pdhomesafetycheck)
- **Symptom Tracking Checklist:**  
[bit.ly/pdsymptomchecklist](http://bit.ly/pdsymptomchecklist)
- **Medical Appointment Preparation**  
Helpsheet: [bit.ly/pdmedication](http://bit.ly/pdmedication)
- **Parkinson's Medication**  
Helpsheet: [bit.ly/pdmedication](http://bit.ly/pdmedication)
- **Aware in Care Kit:**  
[www.parkinson.bc.ca/awareincare](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca/awareincare)
- **Home and Community Care Services**  
Government of BC: [bit.ly/homeandcommunitycare](http://bit.ly/homeandcommunitycare)

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## How people with Parkinson's can benefit from adaptive aids and assistive technology

The symptoms of Parkinson's disease (PD) can make some daily tasks more challenging. People with PD may find that the activities of daily living, such as eating, grooming, and using the bathroom, become more physically demanding as the disease progresses. They also may experience difficulty using technology, such as smartphones and computers. Fortunately, by utilizing the help of an occupational therapist (OT), as well as adaptive aids and/or assistive technologies, people with PD can often continue to participate fully in life.

Occupational therapists work to identify a person's key needs, while looking for opportunities to encourage them to participate in meaningful occupations. In this sense, an occupation is an activity that brings purpose to one's life, and includes activities that people want to, need to, or are expected to do (*World Federation of Occupational Therapists, n.d.*). Based on their observations, OTs can recommend adaptive aids and assistive technologies that can help people with PD better adapt to their symptoms (*McKall, 2020*). While the two terms appear similar, they

differ in one key way: assistive technologies are used by many people, including those with or without limitations, as a way of improving their abilities or making a task easier. Adaptive aids, on the other hand, are primarily used by people with limitations (*Dakota Center for Independent Living, n.d.*).

### ADAPTIVE AIDS

Adaptive aids, also known as adaptive equipment or adaptive devices, are tools that can help people with Parkinson's during activities of daily living. Their use is intended to improve the user's physical abilities, such as by stabilizing utensils to reduce the effect of tremor. There are various types of adaptive aids that may help people with PD, each targeting different activities of daily living, such as (*McKall, 2020*):

- **Mobility:** Walkers, wheelchairs, canes.
- **Dressing:** Shoe horns, button hooks.
- **Eating:** Bottle openers, weighted or tremor-reducing cutlery, electric can openers.
- **Handwriting:** Large grip and/or weighted pens and pencils.
- **Bathroom usage:** Toothpaste squeezers, non-slip mats, raised toilet seats with handles.

Adaptive aids can help people with Parkinson's continue to care for themselves independently, which may boost their self-esteem and self-worth (*National Parkinson Foundation, n.d.*). They can also make the activities of daily living a safer experience; for example, by reducing the physical demands required to perform a task, adaptive aids may be able to reduce fall and slip risk. Additionally, these tools can facilitate healthy habits, like the ability to exercise, which can keep someone with Parkinson's more active in the long run.

### ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Similarly, assistive technology aims to boost a person's ability to perform tasks and activities. These technologies encompass a wide variety of possibilities, and typically allow the user to more easily use technological devices, like smartphones or computers. However, assistive technology can be added to common items around the home, such as lightbulbs, to make them more accessible to use. Some examples of assistive technology are (*McKall, 2020*):



**Smartphones:** Speech-to-text converters, which are often preinstalled on newer smartphone models, voice amplifying software to increase volume, medication management apps that can be accessed by one or more caregivers/carepartners.



**Computers:** Accessibility features that help reduce typing accidents by telling the computer to ignore brief or repeated keystrokes.



**Smart home devices:** Light clappers and motion-sensitive lights, as well as programmable ovens, refrigerators, and thermostats, remote-locking doors that can be locked and unlocked from anywhere.

As no two people with Parkinson's are the same, their reasons for using assistive technologies may differ. However, the outcome is that they are better able to enjoy life, retain their independence, and stay connected (*National Parkinson Foundation, n.d.*). Assistive technologies can also help simplify managing one's home, in addition to making it safer (*McKall, 2020*).

### ENSURING SUCCESS

To ensure success while using assistive technologies and adaptive aids, it is important to ask yourself the following questions (*McKall, 2020*):

- Does this technology/aid meet my specific needs and challenges?
- Is there a simpler solution I can implement that will have the same results?
- Will this technology/aid be easy to incorporate into my daily routine, or will it require extraordinary efforts?
- What support do I have in learning how to use the technology/aid, as well as troubleshooting any issues that may arise in the future?
- Are there any demonstrations of the technology/aid available that I can reference going forward?
- If I discover it is not a suitable option for me after I have tried it, can I return it?
- Can I afford this technology/aid, and are there any funding options available (*for example, is it covered through my insurance plan*)?

After carefully considering these questions and selecting an appropriate technology or aid, there are further ways to increase the likelihood that the tool will be a good long-term fit. Firstly, working with an occupational therapist will ensure the best success, as OTs are experts in the use of assistive technologies and adaptive aids. If an occupational therapist is not an option, a technologically-savvy loved one may be able to help. Furthermore, it is imperative that you schedule enough time to learn to use the tool, and to integrate it into daily habits and routines. We also learn best by doing, so taking a hands-on approach will help facilitate learning (*McKall, 2020*).

## COMMON CONCERNS

Individuals who use assistive technologies and adaptative aids may encounter common issues, such as (McKall, 2020):

**Feeling defeated.** The use of assistive tools is not a sign that you are unable to care for yourself. In fact, by allowing these tools to help you when you need it most, you are more likely to be able to engage in hobbies and activities you enjoy, stay safe, and maintain your independence (*National Parkinson Foundation, n.d.*).

**Feeling overwhelmed.** It is completely normal to feel uncertain about new technologies and tools. Fortunately, shifting your mindset so the new tool becomes a challenge instead of a threat can be very helpful. Support from caregivers/carepartners, friends, and family may also ease feelings of anxiety.

**Needing additional support and/or help with troubleshooting.** To counter this, it is prudent to purchase from companies that offer long-term support options, so you can be assured support will always be available when you need it. However, always read the fine print carefully and consider the cost of any monthly or annual subscription fees.

**Not feeling tech-savvy enough.** You can enlist the help of loved ones in creating a simplified instruction manual for more complex tools. Cyber-Seniors also provides free technology support and training for senior citizens. Please contact them at [info@cyberseniors.org](mailto:info@cyberseniors.org) or 1-844-217-3057. However, in case the tool is not a good fit after all, ensure it has a good return policy before purchasing.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Obtaining Assistive Devices and Home Adaptations**  
Helpsheet: <http://bit.ly/pdhomeadaptation>
- **Smart Homes Made Simple**  
Website: [www.smarthomesmadesimple.org](http://www.smarthomesmadesimple.org)
- **Ability411**  
Website: [www.ability411.ca](http://www.ability411.ca)
- **CanAssist**  
Website: [www.canassist.ca](http://www.canassist.ca)

## SOURCES

- Dakota Center for Independent Living. (n.d.). Adaptive vs. Assistive Technology. <https://dakotacil.org/2016/10/31/adaptive-vs-assistive-technology>
- McKall, K. (2020, April 3). Independence Through Using Adaptive Aids and Assistive Technology [PowerPoint slides]. Movement Disorder Clinic, University of British Columbia.
- McKall, K. (2020, April 3). SMART Homes & SMART Goals [PowerPoint slides]. Movement Disorder Clinic, University of British Columbia.
- National Parkinson Foundation (n.d.). Assistive Devices & Home Health. <https://www.parkinson.org/living-with-parkinsons/management/activities-daily-living/assistive-tech-devices>
- World Federation of Occupational Therapists (n.d.). About Occupational Therapy. <https://wfot.org/about/about-occupational-therapy>



Parkinson Society British Columbia invites you to join us for our provincial conference, **Moving Forward, Together**, on Saturday, October 15 at the Radisson Hotel Vancouver Airport from 9:00am – 4:00pm PT!

Our in-person provincial conference aims to foster an educational and inspirational space to enrich connections between people with Parkinson's, carepartners, friends, and healthcare professionals. Featuring prominent local and national presenters, *Moving Forward, Together* will offer a diversified agenda. In addition to our two morning plenaries, you'll be able to choose two of eight afternoon breakout sessions to attend. A special two-part breakout stream created for healthcare professionals will also be offered.

This year, there will also be an opportunity to take advantage of our wellness rooms, which provide attendees options for relaxing retreats, including a quiet room, massage room, exercise room, and guided meditation room. Exercise breaks, including Moving with Martial Arts: Karate, will provide movement throughout the day. Lunch will be served at the conference.

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

#### Medication Management

Dr. Alan Low

#### Gait Disorders and Falls

Dr. Alfonso Fasano

#### Overcoming Stigma and Shame

Madelaine Ross

#### Complementary Therapies

Dr. Sanjay Ram

#### Cognitive Deficits Pt. 1\*

Dr. Penny MacDonald

FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ONLY

#### Cannabis for Parkinson's Disease

Dr. Jean Paul Lim

#### Motor Symptoms

Dr. Omesh Kulkarni

#### Caregivers: Navigating Regret

Tricia Wallace

#### Diet and Nutrition

Suzanne Kaye

#### Cognitive Deficits Pt. 2\*

Dr. Penny MacDonald

FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ONLY

### PLENARY SPEAKERS



**Dr. Penny MacDonald & Maggie Prenger**

Social Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease



**Dr. Alfonso Fasano**

Pain: The Invisible Symptom of Parkinson's Disease

Thank you to our sponsor

abbvie

Register online at

[parkinson.bc.ca/mft](http://parkinson.bc.ca/mft)

# Newsworthy

## Upcoming Education & Exercise Events

### Virtual Gardening Group

Every 2nd & 4th Thursday,  
March 10 – September 22

Linda Boehm

### Move with Martial Arts

Tuesdays, August 2 - September 27

Liz Janze, experienced Karate instructor

### September Challenger

Thursdays, September 1 – 29

Shelly Yu, neuro physiotherapist

### Improv for Parkinson's: Laughter is the Best Medicine

Wednesdays, September 14 – October 19

Dan Dumsha

### Improv for Parkinson's: Performance Troup

Wednesdays, September 14 – November 30

Dan Dumsha

### Move with Shelly

Tuesdays, October 4 – 25

Shelly Yu, neuro physiotherapist

### Getting Started With Writing (Journey to Publication)

Wednesdays, October 5 - 26

Cristy Watson, award-winning author

### Seated Exercise Series

Thursdays, October 6 – 27

Shelly Yu, neuro physiotherapist

### SongShine with Joani (Fall & Winter Sessions)

**Fall:** Thursdays, October 6 – November 10

**Winter:** Thursdays, November 17 – December 15

Joani Bye

### Virtual Open House

October 25

Liz Janze, Education and Support Services  
Coordinator at PSBC

## SEPTEMBER SYMPOSIUM SERIES

### Women and Parkinson's

September 9

Dr. Michelle Fullard, movement disorder specialist

### Sexual Wellbeing: The Male Experience

September 14

Shea Hocaloski, sexual health clinician

### Navigating Relationship Role Changes

September 28

Courtney Doherty, clinical counsellor

**Thank you to our  
fundraisers and donors!**



Thank you to Me-n-Ed's and organizer Cris Florian for an amazing \$5,000 raised for Parkinson Society BC at their 13th annual Charity Golf Classic this summer!

The 6th annual Full Throttle event took place on May 29th, with participants enjoying a scenic car and motorcycle ride along the Sea to Sky Highway. This year's ride raised an incredible \$13,125! Thank you to organizer Jim Smerdon and family.

The Elk Valley Parkinson's Golf Tournament took place this past June and raised an amazing \$13,060! Special thanks to organizers Merl Shelley and Adam Toner.

Mike Vrlak and friends came together for an afternoon of tennis for a good cause! This year's SMASH Tennis Tournament raised \$15,080 in memory of Mike's dad, Steve Vrlak, who passed away from complications of Parkinson's last year.



# PARKINSON SUPERWALK®

**Join us for Parkinson Society British Columbia's (PSBC) largest fundraising event of the year, Parkinson SuperWalk!**

Beginning the weekend of September 10 and 11, incredible British Columbians in more than 20 communities throughout the province will walk together to help give hope to approximately 15,000 people in BC living with Parkinson's disease. Funds raised in BC through this event help PSBC continue to grow programs and services, expand advocacy efforts, and increase investment in innovative research.

## 100 MILE HOUSE

Centennial Park  
Saturday, September 10

## KAMLOOPS

Riverside Park  
Saturday, September 10

## PRINCE GEORGE

Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park  
Saturday, September 10

## ABBOTSFORD

Yale Secondary School Track  
Saturday, September 10

## KELOWNA

Waterfront Park  
Saturday, September 10

## RICHMOND

Virtual Walk  
Saturday, September 10

## BURNABY

Confederation Park  
Sunday, September 11

## NEW WESTMINSTER

Moody Park  
Saturday, September 10

## VANCOUVER

Stanley Park/Ceperley  
Park Playground  
Sunday, September 11

## OLIVER

Virtual Walk  
Saturday, September 11

## CHILLIWACK

The Landing Sports Centre  
on Spadina  
Saturday, September 10

## PARKSVILLE/ QUALICUM BEACH

Rathrevor Beach Provincial Park  
Saturday, September 10

## VERNON

Polson Park  
Saturday, September 10

## COMOX VALLEY

Virtual Walk  
Saturday, September 10

## PITT MEADOWS/ MAPLE RIDGE

Hammond Community Centre  
Sunday, September 11

## VICTORIA

Esquimalt-Gorge Park  
Saturday, September 10

## CRANBROOK

Idlewild Lake Park  
Saturday, September 10

## POWELL RIVER

Timberlane Track  
Saturday, September 10

## WHITE ROCK

Kintec Store (Parking Lot)  
Sunday, September 11

# Stay Connected to the Parkinson's Community

It's that time of year again! Renew your membership with Parkinson Society British Columbia and continue to be part of our friendly, caring, and supportive community.

For only \$25, you will receive an annual membership for you and your household, valid until December 31, 2023.

## REASONS TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

1

### Get Discounts

Your membership provides you with great discounts on events that are not to be missed!

2

### Be Heard

Vote at our Annual General Meeting and add your voice to the community to garner support from donors, sponsors, and politicians.

3

### Stay Informed

Get the latest information on research, medication, caregiving, exercise, wellbeing, and nutrition when you receive our quarterly newsletter, *Viewpoints*, and other publications.

4

### Gain Support

Link to our provincial network of over 50 support groups, and speak with our knowledgeable and compassionate staff.



**Questions?** Contact Susan Atkinson at 1-800-668-3330 ext 263 or [satkinson@parkinson.bc.ca](mailto:satkinson@parkinson.bc.ca)



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