

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Painting and Play: Expressive Arts Therapy (A)** | Wednesdays, October 4, 11, 18 & 25
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/arttherapy-a>
- **SongShine with Joani** | Thursdays, October 5, 12, 19 & 26
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/songshine-septoct23>
- **Painting and Play: Expressive Arts Therapy (B)** | Fridays, October 6, 13, 20 & 27
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/arttherapy-b>
- **Rock Steady Boxing** | Tuesdays, October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and November 7, 14, 21 & 28
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/rsb-octnov23>
- **Self-Management in Parkinson's** | Tuesday, October 17
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/selfmanagement-oct23>
- **Psychiatric Issues** | Wednesday, October 18
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/psychissues-oct23>
- **Burnaby Regional Conference** | Sunday, October 22
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/burnabyregional23>
- **Unlocking Insights: Imaging and Biomarkers in Parkinson's** | Monday, November 13
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/imagingbiomarkers-23>
- **Parenting with Parkinson's: Impact on Children, Teens, and Young Adults** | Tuesday, November 21 | Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/pdparenting-nov23>
- **Move with Confidence: Parkinson's Fitness** | Tuesdays, December 5, 12 & 19
Learn more & register: <https://www.parkinson.bc.ca/movewconf-dec23>

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Donate a Car Canada

[Donate a Car Canada](#) accepts vehicle donations for Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC)! Free towing is provided in most areas across Canada. When you donate your car, truck, RV, boat, or motorcycle to PSBC through Donate A Car Canada, it will either be recycled or sold at auction (depending on its condition, age, and location). After your vehicle donation is complete, PSBC will send you a tax receipt and will put your gift to good use.

Brighten the day with a bouquet from Callia Flowers

For a limited time, [Callia Flowers](#) is offering Parkinson Society BC's (PSBC) community members a \$5 discount on any order they place using the code: **PARKINSONBC**. With every order placed using the custom code, Callia will donate 10% of the net sales to the Society. Join us in making a meaningful impact in our community and spread the love with Callia Flowers today!

We are 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 disease (PD)? Become a Champion for Parkinson's and plan your own independent community fundraising event! Contact us at events@parkinson.bc.ca or 1-800-668-3330.

TIP JAR

The Tip Jar is where we share advice from Parkinson's community members on a wide range of topics from daily lifestyle hacks to safety. This month we share a tip on fall prevention!

To minimize the risk of tripping and falling, it's crucial to maintain a tidy living space. Close cupboard and closet doors and drawers to avoid hitting them, and make sure not to clear the floor of clutter that can be a tripping hazard. Keeping a clean room or house not only promotes mental clarity but also eases your navigation, making your environment safer and more manageable.

Do you have any tips or tricks that you would like to share with the Parkinson's community? These can be tips from something that works well, to eating and dressing, to getting out of bed or travelling! All tips and tricks are welcome! Please share your ideas at info@parkinson.bc.ca.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS***World Mental Health Day***

October 10 is recognized as World Mental Health Day and this year's theme set by the World Foundation of Mental Health is 'Mental health is a universal human right.' Mental health is

crucial for everyone, including those affected by Parkinson's disease. Together, we can raise awareness, support one another, and emphasize the importance of seeking help when needed for better mental well-being. [[learn more](#)]

Invisible Disabilities Week

Invisible disabilities week taking place between October 15-21 shines light on conditions like Parkinson's disease which may not always be immediately visible but have a significant impact on quality of life. Let's foster better understanding, empathy, and support for those facing invisible disabilities, recognizing their resilience and strength in the face of daily challenges. [[learn more](#)]

Seeking Support Group Facilitators

Parkinson Society British Columbia is currently seeking volunteer support group facilitators for Abbotsford (in-person), Tri Cities/Coquitlam Caregivers (in-person), and West Kelowna (in-person). [[learn more](#)]

Join PSBC's Book Club!

PSBC's Book Club is a social club for like-minded people who have PD, or carepartners of those with PD, to meet and discuss books that are selected by the peer committee or group members. The group meets at 11:30 am on the first Thursday of each month. If you are interested in joining this virtual, peer-led book club, please contact [Alana Dhillon](#).

DISCUSSION TOPIC: Mental Health

Discussion Questions

1. How has your journey with Parkinson's disease affected your mental health?
2. What strategies or treatments have you found effective in managing mental health challenges while living with Parkinson's?
3. Seeking support and treatment for mental health issues is a courageous step, not a sign of weakness. How has your perspective on seeking help for mental health

- evolved throughout your journey with Parkinson's, and what advice would you offer to others facing similar challenges?
4. What role has your support system (family, friends, support groups) played in helping you manage mental health challenges associated with Parkinson's disease? How do you navigate conversations with loved ones about your emotional well-being?

Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, constituting a crucial aspect of overall health for all individuals. Just as symptoms of Parkinson's disease (PD) vary significantly among individuals, the spectrum of mental health challenges experienced by people with Parkinson's (PwP) also varies widely. Some may have minimal mental health concerns, while others grapple with issues like depression, anxiety, psychosis, or cognitive impairments, all of which can manifest as non-motor symptoms of PD. During the progression of the disease, a majority will experience at least one clinically significant neuropsychiatric issue, and many will simultaneously contend with multiple mental health issues. These can range from depression and anxiety to hallucinations, memory problems, and dementia (M. Pontone & D. Weiss, 2018).

Anxiety and depression are particularly prevalent among individuals with Parkinson's disease, with nearly half of all individuals living with Parkinson's experiencing one of these challenges (Parkinson Society BC, 2019). These symptoms can emerge due to various factors, including the emotional strain of receiving a Parkinson's diagnosis and the physiological changes in the brain resulting from the condition itself.

Anxiety

Anxiety can be characterized by excessive fear, concern, and stress. It is a prevalent issue in Parkinson's, affecting up to 50% of PwP at some point during the course of the disease (M. Pontone & D. Weiss, 2018). It can take various forms, such as generalized anxiety disorder, panic attacks, social anxiety, or specific phobias, and often overlaps with multiple types (Gallagher & Schrag, 2012). Distinguishing it from occasional situational anxiety is essential, as

anxiety disorders tend to be persistent and can significantly impact daily life (Schrag & Taddei, 2017). Living with Parkinson's can introduce a sense of uncertainty and unpredictability, which can further exacerbate these anxious feelings. Furthermore, the physical symptoms of the disease, such as tremors and gait disturbances, can lead to self-consciousness and fears of social judgment, exacerbating anxiety symptoms. Anxiety can also manifest during "off" periods when the PD medication wears off before the next dose.

Symptoms of Anxiety

People with anxiety may experience some of the following:

- A sense of dread
- Constant worry
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling unable to relax
- Difficulty sleeping

Physical symptoms can also manifest from anxiety. These can include:

- Sweating
- A pounding or racing heart (palpitations)
- Tightness of the chest or feeling breathless
- Dizziness
- Trembling
- Indigestion, nausea, and stomach-ache or cramps
- Headaches
- Loss of appetite
- A dry mouth
- Muscle pain and tension
- Restless legs and difficulty maintaining restful sleep

Please be aware that this list of main symptoms of anxiety is not exhaustive. Anxiety can manifest in various ways, and individual experiences may differ.

While there's no definitive cure for anxiety, proactive strategies can help manage symptoms and restore a sense of control. It's crucial to discuss anxiety with a healthcare professional, as it can exacerbate other Parkinson's symptoms like dyskinesia, tremors, and balance issues (Parkinson's UK, n.d.). Treatments for anxiety in PD include medication such as antidepressants and psychotherapy. Individuals taking antidepressants alongside Parkinson's medications should exercise caution and consult their healthcare provider for appropriate monitoring and management (Schrag & Taddei, 2017). Additionally, applied relaxation techniques and participation in support groups have shown efficacy in managing anxiety symptoms and developing coping strategies. Applied relaxation involves learning to relax muscles quickly in anxiety-inducing situations, typically taught by a qualified therapist over a period of 3-4 months (Gallagher & Schrag, 2012). It is recommended that you speak to your doctor about what may be the best solution for you. Moreover, joining a support group is easily accessible and offers a safe space for individuals with PD experiencing anxiety to share their experiences and feelings. These groups foster a sense of belonging and understanding, often leading to a reduction in isolation and the exchange of effective coping strategies.

Tips to Manage Anxiety

- **Set aside time for your worries:** By doing so, you can reassure yourself that you haven't forgotten them. You can also write them down to consciously separate and isolate your worries from impacting the whole day.
- **Track your feelings:** Keep a diary of how you feel when you get anxious and write about the circumstances or situation. This can help you and your counsellor or therapist identify patterns in what triggers your anxiety.
- **Distract yourself:** If your anxiety is starting to feel overwhelming, find a simple activity like watching funny videos, or talking to a friend allowing you to shift your focus.
- **Use your voice:** Sing around the house, in the shower or join a choir. Singing engages deep breathing and releases endorphins which can promote relaxation and reduce stress.
- **Go outside:** Being outdoors has various benefits for anxiety by providing exposure to nature, fresh air, physical activity, sunlight, a change of environment, opportunities for

mindfulness, social interaction, and a break from digital devices. These can contribute to a sense of relaxation and reset.

Depression

Depression is typically diagnosed when persistent feelings of extreme sadness or a pervasive sense of emotional 'emptiness' endure over an extended period. It extends beyond temporary episodes of sadness, discontent, or frustration and can significantly hinder one's ability to carry out daily tasks. Studies have indicated that around 40% of individuals with Parkinson's experience symptoms of depression at some point during their illness (Parkinson's Foundation, n.d.). This elevated risk of depression can be attributed to both biological changes in the brain and the psychosocial challenges associated with the diagnosis.

Depression in Parkinson's is not solely a reaction to physical limitations; it is also associated with neurochemical imbalances, particularly involving dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine. These neurotransmitters play pivotal roles in regulating mood, and their dysfunction can contribute to depressive symptoms (Parkinson Society BC, 2019). Additionally, depression can have a genetic component, making individuals with a family history of depression more susceptible to developing it (Schrag & Taddei, 2017).

Symptoms of Depression

- A lack of interest in, or pleasure from, usual activities
- Feeling down or hopeless nearly every day
- Feeling anxious or feeling constantly worried or afraid
- Difficulty concentrating
- Low energy and tiredness
- Trouble sleeping (waking in the early hours of the morning can be a typical sign) or excessive sleeping
- A loss of appetite, usually connected with weight loss
- Increased appetite and weight gain

- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- In severe cases, thoughts of death or self-harm, and suicidal ideas

Diagnosing depression in individuals with Parkinson's disease can be challenging due to the overlap of certain symptoms. For instance, sleep disturbances are common among those with Parkinson's, leading to feelings of fatigue and reduced energy levels. However, these symptoms alone may not necessarily indicate depression. Both Parkinson's and depression can manifest as fatigue, characterized by an overwhelming sense of tiredness. Additionally, the fluctuating nature of PD symptoms throughout the day can result in mood fluctuations, which may not necessarily signify depression. In some cases, these mood changes could be linked to adjustments in Parkinson's medication. To differentiate between the two conditions, it is crucial to seek a comprehensive assessment by a healthcare professional, preferably a neurologist or psychiatrist specializing in PD and mood disorders, to provide a more accurate diagnosis and a tailored treatment plan (Schrag & Taddei, 2017).

Patients and caregivers should remain vigilant in recognizing signs of depression, as timely intervention—whether through counseling, psychotherapy, or medication—can alleviate depressive symptoms and enhance overall quality of life. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and counseling serve as valuable treatment options for individuals with Parkinson's contending with depression. CBT is a structured, evidence-based therapeutic approach that focuses on identifying and altering negative thought patterns and behaviors contributing to depression. It equips patients with practical tools and coping strategies to manage their emotions and improve their overall well-being. On the other hand, counseling offers a supportive and empathetic environment for individuals to express their feelings and concerns (Yang et al., 2012). Both approaches provide crucial emotional support, helping individuals with Parkinson's better comprehend and manage their depression, ultimately enhancing their quality of life and emotional resilience.

Tips to Manage Depression

- **Keep active:** Research has shown that being physically active 2 to 3 times a week, especially as part of a group, can boost your mood and help you sleep well. It doesn't have to be high impact, find something that you enjoy!
- **Maintain a healthy diet:** Depression can lead to changes in your appetite therefore it is important to make an effort to have a balanced diet to improve low mood and overall well-being.
- **Prioritize sleep:** Sleep disorders can be symptoms of depression. Maintain sleep hygiene to improve the amount and quality of sleep. This includes making sure your bedroom is quiet and comfortable and following a sleep schedule.
- **Carve out time for relaxation:** Engage in activities that you enjoy, such as reading a book or listening to your favorite music. Consider exploring relaxation techniques like aromatherapy, or meditation which you may find beneficial.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Mindfulness involves embracing the present moment with undivided attention, free of distractions or judgment. It empowers you to observe your thoughts and emotions without becoming entangled in them, offering benefits that extend to both your physical and mental well-being.
- **Seek support:** Engaging in support groups can provide a sense of community and shared experiences, reducing feelings of isolation. Additionally, discussing your depression with a healthcare professional ensures access to tailored treatment options and guidance. There is no shame in reaching out for help.

As it relates to Parkinson's disease, the significance of mental health often takes a backseat to physical well-being. However, it is essential to remember that one's mental health is just as crucial as their physical health. Experiencing anxiety or depression is not a sign of weakness, but rather a natural response to the challenges posed by this complex condition. Seeking support and treatment should never be accompanied by shame or hesitation. Instead, it is a courageous step toward regaining control, fostering resilience, and ultimately achieving a higher quality of life, where both mental and physical health are given the attention and care they rightfully deserve. Remember, you are not alone, and there is help available to navigate the emotional landscape of Parkinson's with strength and dignity.

Additional Resources

Mental Health and Parkinson's | Courtney Doherty | [[view video](#)] [[view slides](#)]

Depression and Anxiety [[helpsheet](#)]

Depression in Parkinson's Disease | Dr. Fidel Vila-Rodriguez [[view video](#)] [[view slides](#)]

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