

## Peer-led support groups

Parkinson Society British Columbia works closely with over 50 peer-led support groups throughout the province, facilitated by trained volunteers who have lived experience or a connection with Parkinson's disease. At the heart of our support groups are the guiding principles of trust, acceptance, respect, and compassion, ensuring every member feels supported and empowered. Membership to a support group offers the following benefits:

- the opportunity to meet in a friendly, non-judgmental, and empathetic setting.
- a sense of belonging in a safe and nurturing space where sharing can take place with people who have similar experiences, fostering meaningful connections and a supportive community.
- access to a variety of local professionals with knowledge of Parkinson's and related healthcare concerns, who may periodically come to meetings.

## Advocacy

In collaboration with members of our community, the Society aims to be an effective lobbyist for important Parkinson's-related issues. Furthermore, we partner with several law firms to offer legal services, free of charge, to people with Parkinson's in British Columbia. The issues must be directly related to Parkinson's disease.

## Research

Parkinson Society British Columbia believes that research holds the key to unlocking the mysteries of Parkinson's disease. Scientific excellence and the courage to test new ideas are vital in the search for better treatments and a cure. To honour this commitment, the Society contributes annually to fund leading edge research.

## Your support is essential!

The manifestation and progression of Parkinson's disease is multifaceted, influencing all aspects of one's life. Providing support services, offering educational programs, funding research, and advocating for the needs of the Parkinson's community, are some of the ways that Parkinson Society British Columbia works to empower people to better manage their symptoms.

We cannot do this without your support. Your membership and donations are essential!

### Here is how you can support the Society:

1. Become a member.
2. Give a monthly or quarterly donation.
3. Donate online at [www.parkinson.bc.ca](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca).
4. Participate in, or organize, a fundraising event.
5. Consider PSBC as a beneficiary in your will.



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# You Are Not Alone.



# Parkinson Society British Columbia

Established in 1969, Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) is a not-for-profit charitable organization that aims to support those affected by Parkinson's disease through advocacy, education, support services, and contributions to research. The Society is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors and is supported by donations from individuals, members, corporations, foundations, and the dedicated efforts of volunteers.

## Parkinson's disease

Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder after Alzheimer's. When over half of the dopamine cells in the brain are lost, symptoms begin to appear which may include: tremor, rigidity, slowness of movement, impaired walking, difficulty with balance, sleep disturbance, and mood disorders. The progression of the disease and accompanying symptoms vary with each individual.

There is currently no cure for Parkinson's, but there are treatments such as medication and surgery, as well as physical, occupational, and speech therapies that can assist in coping with the disease.

There are approximately 100,000 Canadians (2008) living with Parkinson's disease, including approximately 17,500 British Columbians (2022/23). The average age of onset is 60, with the incidence increasing with age. It affects both men and women, across ethnic lines. The number of people with Parkinson's worldwide is predicted to double by 2040 (Dorsey et al., 2018).

## Programs and services

Parkinson Society British Columbia is a not-for-profit charitable organization that aims to empower the Parkinson's (PD) community by providing resources and services to enable self-management, self-reliance, and self-advocacy.

Our services include, but are not limited to:

- one-on-one consultations
- free, confidential, and short-term counselling and healthcare navigation
- free virtual physiotherapy service for those with limited access to specialized treatment
- PDLINK, a peer-to-peer program that matches individuals living similar experiences
- publication of informational resources, such as *Viewpoints*, a quarterly magazine with up-to-date information on research, medication, caregiving, nutrition, and more
- educational events featuring experts in Parkinson's research and treatments
- books available through our lending library
- a network of over 50 support groups province-wide, including online support groups

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