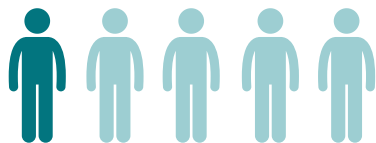


# Parkinson's Disease

## What is it?

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a chronic, progressive, degenerative disease that affects the nervous system. It is typically characterized by reduced motor function and cognitive ability.

Parkinson's disease  
**affects 1 in every  
500 people** in  
Canada



Approximately  
**6,600 new cases**  
are diagnosed in  
Canada each year



## Early warning signs

- A slight tremor in fingers, thumbs, hands and or chin
- Trouble sleeping and increased fatigue
- Trouble moving or walking, oftentimes accompanied by stiffness or rigidity in movement
- Cramped/smaller handwriting and or other handwriting changes
- Rigid, stern facial expression - referred to as "masking"

## Top caregiver do's

- Educate yourself - learn everything you can about Parkinson's and recognize how it manifests in the affected individual
- Be attentive to expressed symptoms and take note of any worsening symptoms
- Volunteer your help whenever needed, even when it comes to simpler tasks
- Take preventative measures for falls and other accidents

## Impact on quality of life

Parkinson's progressively impedes motor and cognitive function - it is extremely challenging to live with and can greatly decrease the quality of life. Aside from typical symptoms, such as tremors and fatigue, affected individuals can also experience a decline in mental health.

## Top caregiver don'ts

- Don't discount mental health issues - if you notice any signs of depression and anxiety, engage in discussions with both the affected individual and their doctor
- Don't efface the affected individual's independence - although it is important to volunteer your help, be mindful and invest in tools that can give some sense of independence back to your loved one