



## DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

Living well with Parkinson's disease can be challenging. For many years, we believed Parkinson's disease mainly affected movement. We now know that many people with Parkinson's disease also experience depression and anxiety. In response to a Parkinson's disease diagnosis, you may feel depressed but changes happening in your brain may also affect mood.

Parkinson's disease alters the levels of dopamine and other chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the brain. These changes can greatly affect your mood and how you feel. Depression and anxiety are medical conditions. They are not character flaws or something to be ashamed of.

**ASKING FOR HELP TAKES COURAGE AND STRENGTH.  
TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE WILL HELP YOU LIVE  
WELL WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE.**



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To find the appropriate resources,  
visit the Info Centre Parkinson at

**parkinsonquebec.ca**

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LIVING

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## DEPRESSION

Recognizing depression in Parkinson's disease is very important. It is the first step toward treatment and recovery. Some symptoms of Parkinson's disease and depression overlap - sleep problems, feeling slowed down or having less emotion show on your face. You may not recognize that your mood has changed; therefore it is helpful when those closest to you report to your healthcare team any changes that might be related to depression.

People experience depression in different ways but some symptoms are commonly seen. They are persistent and affect your daily life.

### Symptoms of depression include:

feeling sad, having "the blues";

no longer finding pleasure in activities that used to bring you pleasure;

feeling concerned or insecure;

feeling worthless, helpless or guilty;

feeling tired all the time;

changes in sleeping habits  
(too much, too little, or unable to stay asleep);

changes in appetite (eating more or less; weight gain or weight loss);

poor attention, inability to concentrate;

thoughts that life is not worth living;

feeling slowed down (everything taking more time to get done);

aches, pains (headaches, stomach aches) that are not responding to treatment.

## ANXIETY

Anxiety is also very common in people living with Parkinson's disease, making daily life a challenge. Depression and anxiety in those living with Parkinson's disease are often seen together. Be sure to talk with your doctor or healthcare team if you are experiencing anxiety. Help is available!

### Symptoms of anxiety include:

feelings of excessive nervousness;

recurring thoughts of worry or fear;

avoiding social situations;

physical symptoms: tachycardia, sweating, increase in tremors, dizziness, trouble breathing.



## GETTING HELP

If you, or someone close to you, are experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety, talk with your physician or healthcare team. Recognizing and treating depression and anxiety early is important.

Treatment may include: lifestyle changes, medication, therapy from a qualified practitioner. Support groups associated with Parkinson Québec can be of great help to you, your family and your support system.

