



Parkinson Canada Kingston Chapter

# January 2021 Newsletter



## Hi Folks,


Happy New Year!

2021 starts as 2020 ends...we're under a Covid-19 shutdown. Hopefully this time people will pay attention, get the vaccine and let our country get back to some sense of normality. We will continue to meet online until the "all clear" is sounded.

## News & Articles

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- **COVID-19 vaccine & PD.** As COVID-19 vaccines become more widely available, many people are worried and even skeptical about the vaccine. Medical director, Dr. Michael S. Okun, from Parkinson's Foundation gave an excellent virtual talk, answering questions about the corona virus, vaccines, and how these relate to Parkinson's. He recognizes people's fears but he, amongst many other professionals, still recommends everyone to get the vaccine once it is available to them. In fact, the COVID-19 vaccines are the safest vaccines Dr. Okun has witnessed in his career. You can watch the session on [YouTube](#) or use the Facebook link: [LINK](#)
  - ***Consult your family physician or other healthcare professionals for concerns regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, its benefits, and risks.***
- Keep updated about Ontario's COVID-19 guidelines and vaccine availability through Ontario's official websites:
  - <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>
  - <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/getting-covid-19-vaccine-ontario>

- **Vitamin C & E are potentially protective against PD.** A longitudinal study with over 40,000 participants found that diets with higher vitamin C and E content correlated with reduced risk of PD. Vitamin C and E are antioxidants that function in the body to protect cells against damage and inflammation. Keep in mind this data is preliminary – however, this should encourage all of us to eat more fruits and vegetables and consume less processed foods. You can read more about the study here: [LINK](#)
- If you are considering taking vitamin supplements, it is always a good idea to **consult a dietitian or other healthcare professionals** before consumption. Consuming too much fat-soluble vitamins, such as vitamin E, can have harmful effects.
- Check out more articles from Queen’s for Parkinson Kingston’s website written by student volunteers (<https://www.queensforpdkingston.ca/>). E-Parkinson Post is another great resource to find more PD-related articles <https://parkinsonpost.com>

## Virtual events and activities

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“Ask the Expert – Speech Therapy for PD” webinar hosted by Parkinson’s Foundation is happening on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 11-12:30pm EST. Learn strategies to improve speech and communication. You can sign up for free online: [LINK](#)



Parkinson Canada is starting a **Parkinson Advisory Council** that works to bring forth more diverse voices and perspectives from the PD community to the President & CEO of Parkinson Canada, Karen Lee. You can be a part of this council too and impact the organization’s key decisions and plans! Applications are open until Jan 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. [LINK](#)



Parkinson Canada Webinar “Motivation and Parkinson’s Disease: A discussion on Apathy & Impulsivity” on Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7:00-8:00pm EST. Have you lost your ‘get up and go’? Apathy and Impulsivity can be very puzzling and challenging non-motor symptoms of Parkinson’s disease. Dr. Mateusz Zurowski is a psychiatrist specializing in the treatment of mental health issues in patients with movement disorders will be giving an informative talk. You can register online: [LINK](#)



Listen to the newest podcast episode of “When Life Gives You Parkinson’s” called “17 Things That Give Me Hope About Parkinson’s”. The hilarious host, Larry Gifford, his wife, and other guests discuss the newest breakthroughs in the PD community. These include potential biomarkers and novel therapies. You can listen online: [LINK](#)

## Health & Wellness

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- **Protecting yourself and loved ones against COVID-19.** People with PD are not at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19. However, the risk of mortality for PD patients with COVID-19 is 30% higher than a COVID-19 patient without PD, as suggested by researchers ([article](#)). As COVID-19 vaccines become available to a wider range of people, healthcare professionals still strongly recommend us to remain cautious and maintain social distancing. Dr. Michael S. Okun from Parkinson’s Foundation recommends the 3 C’s. “**Cover, control, and contain**” – *Cover* as in keeping your face covered with a face mask. Masks should at least have 2 layers. The best protective mask currently is the N95 masks. *Control* means to control the environment and stay outside as much as possible, albeit this is more difficult during the winter. The virus is spread faster indoors, thus, consider limiting the number of people coming and leaving your home. And lastly, *contain* means to stay in a small social bubble, social isolate, and maintain 6 feet apart from others. Don’t forget to wash your hands frequently! For more information, watch Dr. Okun’s webinar recording ([LINK](#)).

- **Keeping safe & warm during the wintertime.** People with PD often experience worse symptoms in extreme weather. As the harsh winter of Ontario makes itself more and more prevalent in the coming months, here are some tips to help keep you warm and safe (resources [1](#) & [2](#)):
  1. Wear more layers indoors and outdoors. It helps to have more thin layered clothing rather than one thick layer. Wear socks and hats to bed if you get cold at night.
  2. Exercise regularly or do light exercises throughout the day.
  3. Eat more hot foods (e.g. soups, teas and coffees) and drink more warm/hot water.
  4. Stock up on medications and groceries so that you don't have to make frequent trips during the colder months.
  5. Try to stay indoors as much as possible! If you are going outside, try to go during the afternoon or when it is warmer outside. Make sure you have sturdy, non-slip shoes!



## Exercise Programs and Resources

| Name                              | Time and Date             | Contact or Link   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Kingston PD Dance classes         | Tuesdays at 10 AM         | Contact <a href="mailto:parkinson.kingston.chapter@gmail.com">parkinson.kingston.chapter@gmail.com</a>                      |
| PWR!Moves                         | Wednesdays at 10 AM       | Contact <a href="mailto:wellness@crossroadsunited.ca">wellness@crossroadsunited.ca</a>                                      |
| Dance for PD                      | Online classes and videos | <a href="https://danceforparkinsons.org/resources/dance-at-home">https://danceforparkinsons.org/resources/dance-at-home</a> |
| PD Home Workout with Lance Letain | Online videos             | <a href="#">LINK</a>  |

## Closing Remarks

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As we start a new year, I am working on booking speakers for the months that Parkinson Canada is not presenting a webinar. I hope that you will take advantage of the exercise programs listed above.

Palmier, President

[parkinson.chapter.kingston@gmail.com](mailto:parkinson.chapter.kingston@gmail.com)

"Bare branches of each tree  
on this chilly January morn  
look so cold, so forlorn.  
Gray skies dip ever so low  
left from yesterday's dusting of snow.  
Yet in the heart of each tree  
waiting for each who wait to see  
new life as warm sun and breeze will blow,  
like magic, unlock springs sap to flow,  
buds, new leaves, then blooms will grow."  
- Nelda Hartmann, *January Morn*