

# What is Parkinson's?

Parkinson's (disease) is a neurological condition that affects the brain's ability to control physical movement, such as walking, talking and writing.

## How does Parkinson's affect people?

Parkinson's affects different people in different ways and symptoms can vary.

## The main symptoms are:

### SHAKING OR TREMBLING (Tremor)

Approximately 70% of people with Parkinson's experience shaking or trembling in part of the body, such as the hand or leg.

### SLOWNESS OF MOVEMENT (Bradykinesia)

Starting a movement can become slow and fine movements, such as writing or doing up buttons, can become difficult.

### STIFFNESS OF MUSCLES (Rigidity)

Muscles may cramp or become stiff. This can make actions such as standing up from a chair or rolling over in bed difficult.

Medication can help ease the symptoms of Parkinson's, however symptoms will progress over time.

Other problems that can affect people with Parkinson's include poor balance, difficulty speaking and sleep disturbance.

Parkinson's is a *life-altering*, but not a life-threatening condition. While there is currently no known cause or cure, research is taking place around the world to develop ways to better diagnose the condition, improve symptom management and ultimately, find a cure.

With support, information and appropriate symptom management, people with Parkinson's can enjoy long and productive lives after diagnosis.

Support and information can make a significant and positive difference in the lives of those living with Parkinson's, carers and families.

## WHO IS PARKINSON'S VICTORIA?

Parkinson's Victoria is a not for profit organisation that provides a range of support services to assist in managing the condition and improve quality of life.

## WE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES & SUPPORT

- Information, advice and counselling
- A statewide network of 46 peer support groups
  - Community and professional education
  - 1800 number and website
- The Parkinson's Victoria Ambassadors of Hope community education program.
- We are also active in the area of advocacy, and support research into the cause and cure of Parkinson's, as well as improving quality of life.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are a number of ways you can support the work of Parkinson's Victoria and help make a difference in the lives of those living with Parkinson's:

- Support our work with a donation
- Honour a loved one with an "In Memoriam" donation
  - Remember Parkinson's Victoria in your will
  - Ask us about corporate partnerships
- Request a Parkinson's Victoria Ambassador to speak at your next social or corporate function

## Parkinson's Victoria

20 Kingston Road Cheltenham Victoria 3192  
(enter off Warrigal Road)

Tel: (03) 9551 1122

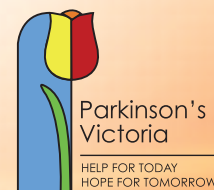
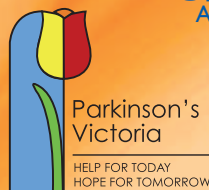
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# Parkinson's Victoria

## Ambassadors of Hope

Connecting with the community to inspire, engage and inform



# What is the Ambassador program?

**The Parkinson's Victoria Ambassador Program** provides engaging speakers to educate and inspire your organisation.

Ideal for corporate community relations programs and all types of community groups, our team of Ambassadors will take each audience on a journey that will move, inspire, engage and inform.

Improved community awareness is a priority of people living with Parkinson's. **The Ambassador Program** is central to Parkinson's Victoria's commitment to improve understanding and awareness in the community about Parkinson's. The program provides a unique and moving personal perspective on what it is like to live day to day with Parkinson's.

## WHO ARE THE AMBASSADORS?

Each of our Ambassadors is "living with Parkinson's" – either having been diagnosed with the condition or as the partner/carer of someone who has been diagnosed.

They have also undertaken training in delivering professional presentations.



# How does the program work?

## WHAT WILL THE AMBASSADORS SPEAK ABOUT?

Ambassadors share their personal story of living with Parkinson's while conveying essential facts and information about the condition, symptoms and symptom management, support, prevalence and research.

Throughout the presentation they will also share their experience of being diagnosed, how the condition impacts on friends, family, and employment, and the future.

Because of the personal nature of each story, every presentation is unique and imbued with the presenter's own style and personality.

The presentation can be adapted to suit your group's particular agenda and timetable, although a typical presentation, including time for questions, will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

## IS ANY SPECIAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED?

Ideally, presenters require an overhead projector and a screen or blank wall. Some Ambassadors use a laptop computer and data projector.

Of course, if these resources are not available, our Ambassadors are still able to deliver an informative and inspiring presentation.

## ARE THERE ANY COSTS INVOLVED?

No. **The Parkinson's Victoria Ambassador Program** is a voluntary program. Ambassadors volunteer their time and presentations are given free of charge.

There is also no obligation to make a donation to Parkinson's Victoria or participate in fundraising. However, if attendees would like to make a donation they are welcome to do so and donation envelopes will be made available at the conclusion of the event.

# How do I book an Ambassador?

To book a **Parkinson's Victoria Ambassador** for your next event or for more information, contact the Ambassador Administrator at Parkinson's Victoria: (03) 9551 1122 or email [info@parkinsons-vic.org.au](mailto:info@parkinsons-vic.org.au).

Bookings are confirmed in writing, and one of our Ambassadors will be in touch to finalise the details of your event.

Ambassadors are available to present to your group at a time and venue of your choice.

## The Parkinson's Victoria Ambassadors of Hope have presented to:

- Probus groups
- Rotary Clubs
- Lions Clubs
- School Children
- The Country Women's Association
- Carer Groups
- Nursing Homes
- Retirement Villages
- Community Health Centres
- Day Centre Facilities
- Government
- Community Health Workers
- Church Groups
- Hospitals
- Senior Citizens Groups
- U3A
- Support Groups
- University Students
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Multicultural Groups & Clubs
- Local Council Staff
- Corporate Australia

*Parkinson's is one of the most common brain (neurological) conditions. It can affect adults of any age. Every day in Australia, 25 people are diagnosed with Parkinson's. While the age of onset is usually over 60, approximately 1 in 5 people diagnosed are of working age. It is estimated that approximately 80,000 Australians, and 6.3 million people worldwide are currently living with Parkinson's.*