## CARLETON PLACE & DISTRICT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## **Understanding Parkinson's Disease**

Parkinson's disease is a chronic degenerative neurological disease. It is caused by a loss of dopamine producing cells in the brain. More than 100,000 Canadians have the disease.

Most common symptoms are: tremor (shaking); slowness in movements, muscle stiffness and problems with balance. Other symptoms may also occur such as fatigue, difficulties with speech, writing, sleep disorders, loss of sense of smell, depression and cognitive changes. If your doctor suspects Parkinson's, you will be referred to a neurologist for assessment and diagnosis.

Parkinson's will worsen over time, but each person with Parkinson's is unique and may experience different symptoms. Most people manage their symptoms through medication and lifestyle changes. Other interventions such as exercise programs and speech therapy can also help. A single cause for Parkinson's has not been identified. Researchers are studying many theories such as the role of genetics and environmental exposure.

CPDMH is pleased to collaborate with health partners to support people living with Parkinson's in our local communities. Parkinson Canada offers support groups in the local area in Almonte, Perth and Arnprior. The sessions provide an opportunity for people with Parkinson's and their care partners to share their experience and discover new resources for daily living. Counselling and education sessions are also offered.

For more information, visit www.parkinson.ca or call 613-722-9238.



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