

## What is a Support Group?

A support group is a **self-help group**. It is run by and for people who have in common a particular challenge of a life situation willing to talk freely and to trust openly in the good will within other group members.

A support group is a place to be **yourself**. The most difficult step is walking through the door. The program is about making yourself and others feel welcome and accepted. It means knowing that your privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

A support group is a source of **information**. Its members are a reservoir of practical experience! They are also great collectors of articles, newsletters, books and other types of information about Parkinson's to be shared and enjoyed with others.

A **PD** support group is an added circle of **friends**. Here is a place to talk, laugh and cry about life with **PD**...with people who will listen, laugh and cry too.

To summarize, a PD support group is an informal, self managed group of persons with Parkinson's, their caregivers, family and members of the community whose purpose is to share information and offer mutual support in the spirit of self acceptance.



## Parkinson's Disease Support Group Meetings

**When:** 3rd Saturday of  
every month (*except December*)

**Location:** The Parkinson  
Resource Centre,  
The Pine, St. Michael

**Time:** 3:00 p.m.

**E-mail**

barbados\_parkinsons\_disease\_sg@hotmail.com

**Barbados Parkinson's  
Hotline**

***Need Help? Have Questions?***

***Want To Help?***

**Call: 246 820-3206**

# Barbados Parkinson's Disease Support Group



Reg. No: 1217

**A  
BETTER LIFE**

**A  
BRIGHTER FUTURE**

## What is Parkinson's Disease?

**Parkinson's disease** (PD) is a chronic and progressive movement disorder, meaning that symptoms continue and worsen over time. The symptoms progress slowly in most people, taking years to develop. Parkinson's involves the malfunction and death of vital nerve cells in the brain. In short, a person's brain slowly stops producing a neurotransmitter called dopamine. With less and less dopamine, a person has less and less ability to regulate their movements, body and emotions

**Symptoms may include:** resting tremor, rigidity, slowness of movement, balance impairment, stooped shuffle gait, handwriting and coordination deficits, speech and swallowing changes, anxiety and depression, changes in memory and thinking, and bowel and bladder dysfunction. Everyone's experience of Parkinson's is different. Not everyone will experience all of these symptoms.

**Prevalence:** Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder after Alzheimer's disease and affects approximately seven million people globally. There are between 800 and 1000 people with Parkinson's in Barbados.

**Age of Onset:** Parkinson's is generally diagnosed at age 55 or over, however 10% are diagnosed under the age of 40.

**Care of Parkinson's:** Proactive lifestyle choices and a strong belief in one's ability to affect his/her destiny can have significant positive impact on the course of Parkinson's. Parkinson's is remarkably responsive to a good balance of regular exercise, a balanced diet and a fulfilling mix of activities and social connections. There are numerous risks for people to become isolated with Parkinson's which is why a Parkinson's Support Group is important. Overcoming barriers to create a better quality of life is very important both for those with Parkinson's and their loved ones.

**Caregivers:** Parkinson's disease does not just affect the person living with it, it affects the entire family and an extended community of friends and loved ones. If you are the care partner, child, parent, or loved one to a person with Parkinson's, you are familiar with the challenges that come with living with the disease. Your responsibilities may include helping with daily activities, managing medications and making financial decisions. As a care partner it may be difficult to let others help or to take time for yourself. Taking care of yourself can benefit both you and your partner. Benefits include revitalized energy, renewed interest in creative endeavors, new subjects to talk



about and the realization that you and your partner are not alone.

## Barbados Parkinson's Disease Support Group

### Our Mission

To enhance the lives of individuals managing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Our aim is to empower individuals to meet the challenges of living with Parkinson's through personal support, information and education.

### Our Objectives

- ◆ Support for people with PD and their care givers
- ◆ Opportunities for social and physical interaction for people with PD
- ◆ Public Education

