

## **PARKINSON’S: SO MUCH MORE THAN A MOVEMENT DISORDER**

As Parkinson’s advances, most people live between the daily extremes of constant involuntary movement, to not being able to move at all. Many take twenty or more pills each day in an effort to create some balance, but treatments provide varying degrees of relief. And that’s just the motor issues – Parkinson’s is so much more than a movement disorder.

“Parkinson’s often affects the autonomic nervous system that controls the bladder, bowel, blood pressure regulation, sexual function and swallowing,” reports Jon Stoessl, Director of the Pacific Parkinson’s Research Centre at the University of British Columbia. “And then there are the very difficult cognitive and psychiatric complications that affect a significant proportion of our patients.”

Parkinson Society Canada hosted a web cast to share information about these non-motor issues of Parkinson’s. With financial support from Novartis, and the help of Dr. Mandar Jog (London Health Sciences Centre) and Dr. Michel Panisset (Hotel-Dieu du CHUM), these presentations were designed to help people identify non-motor symptoms that are common in Parkinson’s disease, including the effects of medications “wearing off”. The specialists shared suggestions for managing these symptoms, including drug and non-drug approaches. Other topics of discussion included depression, cognitive changes, speech difficulties and emotional changes.

The web cast is just one example of how PSC works to “Ease the burden, Find a cure” through education, support, research and advocacy. “Education is central to easing the burden for those living with Parkinson’s today,” says Barbara Snelgrove, Director of Education and Services with Parkinson Society Canada. “Whether through our web site **[www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca)**, our national Information & Referral Centre **1-800-565-3000**, or programs delivered by our regional partners, we’re working hard to build understanding and support.”

These web casts are archived on Parkinson Society Canada’s web site in both English and French. To view, visit [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca).