



World Parkinson's Day & Tulip backgrounder

World Parkinson's Day

World Parkinson's Day is celebrated annually on April 11, Dr. James Parkinson's birthday. The day is dedicated to advocating for individuals living with Parkinson's and aims to increase awareness and spur new research and treatment initiatives. Parkinson Canada strives to educate the public, especially during the month of April, Parkinson's Awareness Month, by hosting fundraising and awareness events and reaching out to people living in Canada with Parkinson's, their care partners and the public.

Parkinson's was first described by English physician, Dr. James Parkinson, in his work titled *An Essay on the Shaking Palsy* (1817). In this essay, Parkinson wrote about "involuntary tremulous motion, with lessened muscular power, in parts not in action and even when supported; with a propensity to bend the trunk forwards, and to pass from a walking to a running pace: the senses and intellect being uninjured."

Four decades later, Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot added rigidity to Parkinson's clinical description and named the condition Parkinson's.

What is the Parkinson Tulip?

On April 11, 2005, the tulip was introduced as the global symbol for Parkinson's at the ninth World Parkinson's Day Conference in Luxembourg.

The story of the Parkinson Tulip began in 1980 in the Netherlands when J.W.S Van der Wereld, a Dutch horticulturalist with Parkinson's, developed the tulip. In 1981, Van der Wereld named his prized cultivar the 'Dr. James Parkinson' Tulip to honour the man who first described the condition and to commemorate the International Year of the Disabled.

The Tulip received the Award of Merit that same year from the Royal Horticultural Society in London, England, and also received the Trial Garden Award from the Royal General Bulb Growers of Holland.

The tulip is part of Parkinson Canada's logo to honour the history of Dr. James Parkinson and others who followed, dedicated to better care, research and support for people living with Parkinson's.

