COVID-19 has turned life upside down for everyone around the world. But the pandemic has posed even greater challenges for people living with Parkinson’s disease (PD). To find out how they’ve been coping, the Parkinson’s Foundation collaborated with the Columbia University Parkinson’s Disease Center of Excellence to conduct an anonymous survey. The goal was to inform clinicians, policymakers and the PD community on ways the virus has altered the lives of people with the disease and their access to care.

The Parkinson’s Foundation has always been committed to ensuring that everyone — no matter where they live or who they are — has access to top-notch care, ample resources and a support network that empowers people with PD to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life. The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the fact that we must do more to make this goal a reality, especially for the most vulnerable.

Learn more about PD and COVID-19 at Parkinson.org/COVID19 or by calling the Parkinson’s Foundation’s free Helpline at 1-800-4PD-INFO (473-4636).
PD GENEration: Mapping the Future of Parkinson’s Disease is a groundbreaking Parkinson's Foundation initiative that offers genetic testing and counseling at no cost to people with a diagnosis of PD.

Genetic testing is a cutting-edge tool that can help uncover biological pathways that cause the disease. This understanding can lead to new and improved treatments and care for all people with Parkinson’s.

Mel Mitchell, who was diagnosed with PD in 2013, says, “When the opportunity to get involved in PD GENEration came along, it struck a chord for several reasons. It piqued my curiosity. It seemed like an easy way to find out more, to help out, to take action.”

Mel’s testing showed no significant genetic link to his PD. But though he reports having “just run-of-the-mill Parkinson’s,” he’s glad to have participated in this one-of-a-kind study. “I think I have a responsibility to take part in research,” Mel stresses. “Today’s research is tomorrow’s cure.”

From Mel’s perspective, “PD GENEration is really about applying science to the disease in a way that hasn’t been done before. This is an opportunity to get a lot of people involved and discover what our genes say about this disease.”

To learn more about PD GENEration or enroll in the study yourself, please visit Parkinson.org/PDGENEration or email genetics@parkinson.org.

People Power: Adamas Corporate Team on the Move ... Virtually!

The Parkinson’s Foundation hosts Moving Day, a walk for Parkinson’s, around the country every year — a time for us to come together, move and show our strength and commitment to fighting PD. But, the pandemic caused us to rethink this! Never ones to throw in the towel, we transitioned Moving Day into a virtual walk rather than cancel it. The Foundation hosted 45 virtual events across 27 states. Thousands of volunteers and advocates connected with one another online, exercised from home and raised money for Parkinson’s Foundation programs.

The pharmaceutical company Adamas participated in one of these events, Moving Day San Francisco, and inspired more than 90% of its employees nationwide to join in — along with grandparents, parents, children and friends.

“We wanted to mark Parkinson’s Awareness Month and Moving Day, to really engage our people,” says Sarah Mathieson, Adamas Head of Corporate Communications, Patient Advocacy and Engagement. “One of the benefits of a virtual Moving Day team was that we were able to include all of our sales force and remote staff around the country.”

Adamas CEO Neil McFarlane fueled good-spirited competition among employees and gave a generous personal donation to support team efforts. “It was such a great success that we will be continuing it this year,” Sarah adds.

Adamas has been a national Moving Day sponsor since 2018 and continues to fund critical initiatives and programs alongside the Parkinson’s Foundation. Sarah explains, “It’s really important that we support Parkinson’s Foundation efforts because they do such a great job supporting so many diverse PD needs across multiple communities.”

To see all 2021 Moving Day events, start your own corporate team or become a Moving Day sponsor, visit MovingDayWalk.org.

BECOME A PARKINSON’S HERO!

Parkinson’s Heroes are a special group of donors who provide reliable, monthly gifts that allow us to do more research, education and outreach.

If you know someone with Parkinson’s or someone who is a caregiver ... you know that they are strong. But it is not easy. And the people we help need a hero — someone like you whom they may never meet ... but who is quietly supporting and rooting for them behind the scenes.

You can be that person. Become a Parkinson’s Hero today. To join, visit Parkinson.org/Hero.
Jerry Boster enlisted in the Navy at 17 and served for 24 years. Getting ready to retire in Hawaii in 2012, he noticed mild tremors on his left side and assumed they were pre-retirement nerves. But wife Janice also noticed his increasingly poor posture and slowing gait. He was diagnosed with Parkinson’s seven months later.

Jerry eventually started volunteering and is now a Parkinson’s advocate at the local and national levels.

Most recently, the veteran signed on as a Parkinson’s Foundation Aware in Care Ambassador. The Aware in Care hospitalization kit is part of Jerry’s own treatment. “I review and update the forms and rotate the medication every time I receive a refill. That way, my kit is always ready to go just like when I was an active-duty sailor.”

When it comes to living with Parkinson’s, Jerry emphasizes the “able” in “disable” and believes you “don’t set limits on unlimited potential.”

Jerry isn’t alone — the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) estimates 110,000 veterans have Parkinson’s disease. For some, developing PD can be associated with exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service.

With your generosity, the Parkinson’s Foundation is giving back to these veterans who gave so much to our country. This includes a recent virtual symposium exploring the range of specialized resources and services available to them through the Foundation and the VA.

If you’re a veteran with PD or care for one, learn more about our resources and services at Parkinson.org/Veterans.