



- + PD affects more than 1 million people in the U.S. and 6 million people worldwide.
 - + PD costs the U.S. economy \$52 billion a year, half of which falls to patients and families. The other half is covered by the federal government, mostly through Medicare, which provides health care to about 90 percent of U.S. PD patients.
 - + Scientific evidence points to a combination of genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors that can cause PD.
 - + PD symptoms and their degree of severity are different for every person.
 - + Everyone can play a part in the search for better treatments and cures.
- Parkinson's disease (PD) occurs when brain cells that make dopamine — a neurotransmitter that coordinates movement — stop working or die. Because PD can cause tremor, slowness, stiffness and walking and balance problems, it is considered a "movement disorder." But depression, dementia, memory problems, constipation and other non-movement symptoms also can be part of living with PD. PD is a progressive, lifelong disease.

What to Know About Parkinson's Disease



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Questions for Policymakers

- + The federal government spends about 100 times more to care for people with Parkinson's (\$25 billion) than it does researching the disease (\$250 million). What will you do to increase government's investment in finding better treatments and cures, and eventually prevent this disease altogether?
- + Limited or lack of access to specialists, treatments and long-term care and disability insurance are major issues for many of the 1 million Americans who live with Parkinson's. How will you support better access to high quality care?
- + Each year, Parkinson's patients spend around \$14,000 on prescription drugs to treat their symptoms. This doesn't include the cost of visits to movement specialists, neurological care or physical therapy. The rising costs of prescription drugs and treatment is an issue that reaches far beyond the Parkinson's community, but the detrimental impact is the same. How will you protect citizens facing cost challenges for health care?
- + When a cure for Parkinson's is found in my lifetime, how will you protect patients and ensure manufacturers aren't pricing out those drugs? How will you make sure that government programs like Medicare adequately cover access to prescription drugs and treatments?