

# Audio file

[Independent Perspective #1845 \(Christopher Jamele\).mp3](#)

Independent Perspective 1845 with Christopher Jamele on Parkinson's Disease and how the Parkinson's Foundation help deal with it.

## Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL). Our guest today is Christopher Jamele, advancement director of the New York chapter of the Parkinson's Foundation.

I'm your host, Ernie Churchwell.

To the program, Chris.

00:00:17 Speaker 2

Well, thank you very much for having me here.

00:00:19 Speaker 1

I'm delighted to have you.

I'm willing to bet that most people listening today have probably heard the term Parkinson's, but they probably don't know the specifics, what causes it, what it does to people and so forth, but I imagine you're prepared to tell them just what it's all about.

00:00:41 Speaker 2

Sure, sure.

Well, Parkinson's is a chronic, progressive neurological disease.

The basis of the disease is that there's a a protein mutation in the human body that creates a lack of dopamine production in the brain.

Dopamine is a catalyst that helps send the signals from our brain to our muscle groups.

And it keeps our muscles moving smoothly keeping when we wish to have them move, doing what we wish to have them do. And as this level of dopamine drops, those movements become harder and harder. Our arms and legs become a little stiff.

Walking cadence might become altered.

Posture will change.

And there are other non-movement symptoms that come along with Parkinson's as well.

But as I say, it's chronic progressive at this point.

We don't have a cure.

And more and more people are becoming aware of it because it is the fastest growing chronic neurological ailment in the world. Currently, over the last 2025 years.

Rate of diagnosis with Parkinson's has risen nearly eight times faster than Alzheimer's.

00:01:44 Speaker 1

My goodness, but I'm sure you've come up with some strategies to help people that have Parkinson's to live more successfully with it.

00:01:52 Speaker 2

Sure.

Well, you know, there are what we call 3 pillars to our mission at the Parkinson's Foundation.

One of those is research where we, of course, are doing our own research as well as providing funding for other research to try to find answers to Parkinson's.

In finding, you know new ways to treat and approach the symptoms, as well as trying to what we call disease modification, trying to find ways to stop the disease and to cure the disease.

But part of our research also is in identifying the best ways to care for people with Parkinson's or people affected by Parkinson's, who could be a care partner, a family member, a loved one and providing the resources and the materials necessary for them to better understand what Parkinson's is all about and what they can do.

To not only improve their quality of life, but extend that improvement.

00:02:42 Speaker 1

I imagine that one of the ways that someone who has Parkinson's can help deal with it is contacting someone from the Parkinson's Foundation and ask what they can offer the person.

00:02:56 Speaker 2

Absolutely. They could reach me.

I'm here in Buffalo and you know, I could certainly give you my number to have people reach out to me.

They can also reach out to our organization. We have a national helpline which is staffed by professionals who are qualified to answer questions about medications and different symptoms.

But also to direct people in their locales to where they can find some programming locally.

And that number is 1-800-473-4636. And again that's our national helpline.

00:03:30 Speaker 1

Have you found that most people that have come to your organization for assistance are able to live full, fulfilling lives because they've learned how to deal with it?

00:03:40 Speaker 2

Many people have improved their quality of life because we've been able to help through resources and guidance.

Unfortunately, with the disease being progressive, we often do see people who are in a very good stage early on and as those symptoms progress, the quality of life does tend to decline a bit.

But our role is to be an outreach organization to try to help people recognize what they can do.

To achieve that higher level of equality of life while they're dealing with Parkinson's and extend that quality of life to make life better for everyone involved in the equation.

00:04:12 Speaker 1

Chris, would you believe we're running short on time? I'm sure people will have questions.

How can they reach you?

00:04:17 Speaker 2

They can reach me directly at 716-301-0423.

My email is [cjamele@parkinson.org](mailto:cjamele@parkinson.org) and just a quick reminder that next month, April is National Parkinson's Awareness Month and Chapter Educational Symposium will be right here in Buffalo.

00:04:35 Speaker 1

Ah.

00:04:38 Speaker 2

We've got plenty of activities going on for the month to help raise awareness about Parkinson's.

00:04:43 Speaker 1

That sounds exciting.

Thanks so much for being with us.

00:04:45 Speaker 2

Well, thank you so much.

00:04:46 Speaker 1

You've been listening to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of WNYIL.

00:04:52 Speaker 1

Our guest today was Chris Jamele, advancement director of the New York chapter of the Parkinson's Foundation, and I've been your host, Ernie Churchwell.