



C-OPN NEWSLETTER RPCO INFOLETTRE

SPRING 2026

Together, the Future is Open for Parkinson's Research

Vol.4



2026 SUPERMOM WALK Calgary, AB

This May, members of C-OPN proudly participated in the 2026 SuperMom Walk in Calgary, an inspiring Mother's Day event dedicated to supporting women affected by Parkinson's disease. The event brought together families, advocates, researchers, clinicians, and community members for a meaningful morning of connection, awareness, and fundraising. Participants took part in a 5 km walk/run, enjoyed light refreshments, and joined in community activities, all while raising critical funds to support women in Canada living with Parkinson's. C-OPN was well represented at the event, with participation from Nyla, our

Knowledge Translation Lead; Iris, our Clinical Research Advisor; Laurine Fillo, member of the Parkinson Community Advisory Committee; and Parisa Alizadeh clinical site coordinator for University of Calgary. A highlight of the morning was an inspiring presentation by Dr. Veronica Bruno, neurologist at the Movement Disorders Clinic in Calgary, who spoke passionately about the urgent need for more Parkinson's disease research focused on women's experiences. Her remarks underscored the importance of addressing sex and gender differences in Parkinson's care and research to ensure better outcomes for all individuals living with the disease. Events like the SuperMom Walk continue to strengthen collaboration between researchers, healthcare professionals, and the Parkinson's community while shining a spotlight on women's health and advocacy, and we were so happy to be a part of this inspiring event.

C-OPN Quick Stats:



2630
Participants



494
Research Members



11
Sites



150
Projects

**FIND OUT MORE ON OUR
WEBSITE:**



<https://copn-rpcoc.ca/>





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C-OPN DATA AT WORK: PBMC Samples

Peripheral Blood Mononuclear Cells (PBMCs) are a key component of the blood's immune system, comprising of lymphocytes (T cells, B cells, and NK cells) and monocytes. Because they carry rich genetic and immunological information, PBMCs offer researchers a window into the biological processes driving disease without the need for invasive tissue sampling. This makes them exceptionally valuable for studying complex neurological conditions like Parkinson's disease. C-OPN is proud to house **the largest biobank of PBMC samples in Canada**, with 1,135 samples currently stored. Blood is collected

by certified technicians at C-OPN sites across the country, processed according to rigorous standardized operating procedures, and shipped to the C-BIG Repository in Montreal, Quebec. C-BIG is an open biobank and patient registry that accelerates neuroscience research worldwide through shared samples, clinical, imaging, and genetic data. There, experienced laboratory technicians isolate PBMCs from the collected blood samples and store all biospecimens under strictly controlled conditions, preserving their integrity for both current and future research. This national collection, built on the generosity of our participants and the dedication of our teams, is a valuable resource for scientists studying the mechanisms of Parkinson's disease. To find out more about C-OPN's biobank, visit us at: <https://copn-rpco.ca/biosamples-mri/>.



PD RESOURCE ALERT

Our Parkinson Community Advisory Committee (PCAC) had the pleasure of hearing from Dr. Larry Leung and his student, Heather Ranger, who introduced us to a variety of **Parkinson's disease resources** their team has developed out of UBC.

Scan the QR code below to explore these practical tools for people living with Parkinson's, care partners, and families:



- ✓ **Medication Support Groups** (in-person and online options available)
- ✓ **PD Medication Decision Support Tool**
- ✓ **PD Online Learning Program** (includes six online learning modules: Motor Symptoms, Motor Fluctuations, Non-Motor Symptoms, Cognitive Changes, Sleep Disturbances, and GI Disturbances)

Free resources to help you learn, manage medications, and connect with support.
<https://brain.pharmsci.ubc.ca/patient-educator-resources/>