TuSalud

Helping Latinos “Find Real Answers” About Parkinson’s Disease

For Parkinson’s Awareness Month, the Parkinson’s Foundation teams with the National Alliance for Hispanic Health.

April 27, 2026 By Eva Lorenz

For Parkinson’s Awareness Month this April, the Parkinson’s Foundation teamed with the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (NAHH) to kick-start conversations about Parkinson’s disease among Latinos. This year’s theme, “Find Real Answers,” identifies reputable resources for scientific information about Parkinson’s and amplifies the real-life experiences of Parkinson’s patients and their families as well as advocates.

“Many of the 90,000 people in the U.S. who will be diagnosed with Parkinson’s this year may feel overwhelmed by the many and often complex questions that follow,” said Parkinson’s Foundation president and CEO John Lehr. “As a trusted source for reliable information, we want to help people understand PD [Parkinson’s disease] and connect with the tools they need to live better.”

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Parkinson's is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by the breakdown of nerve cells in the brain called neurons. Many symptoms of the disease are caused by the loss of neurons that produce dopamine. While the disease primarily impacts movement, balance and motor control, some people experience mild cognitive impairment, such as loss of memory and focus and difficulty problem-solving, or changes in mood, smell, vision, sleep and personality.

The risk for Parkinson's increases with age; indeed, the average age at the onset of symptoms is 70, according to the Mayo Clinic. In addition to age, biological sex and genetics factor in the development of Parkinson's, which affects more men than women. At one point, it was thought the disease affected men twice as much as women, but recent research shows that the differences between the sexes may not be as stark (1.18 males with Parkinson's for every female). Approximately 15% of Parkinson's cases are related to genetic mutations of specific groups of genes, which could be hereditary or triggered by certain lifestyle choices (smoking and caffeine intake) or environmental factors (herbicide and pesticide exposure). It should be noted, however, that while toxins have been know to play a role in the development of Parkinson's, no environmental factor has proved to be a cause.

In a recent Instagram post, the Parkinson's Foundation shared that one in every six people with the disease experience avoidable complications in the hospital each year. The caption reads:

> "People with Parkinson's disease are at a higher risk of hospitalization and face many challenges, including avoidable complications, while in the hospital.
>
> This Parkinson's Awareness Month, Find Real Answers about hospital safety and PD. Learn how to advocate for yourself or a loved one during both planned and unexpected hospital visits by downloading or ordering your free copy of the Parkinson's Foundation Hospital Safety Guide: Parkinson.org/Awareness"



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Studies suggest that Latinos may be at higher risk for Parkinson’s. Not only that, Latinos diagnosed with the disease experience more cognitive impairment symptoms, higher rates of depression and worse overall well-being, according to Parkinsons.org. Latinos with Parkinson’s also often face gaps in health care access and coverage, faster disability progression and underrepresentation in research on the disease.

As part of its effort to amplify Latino voices in the Parkinson’s community, the Parkinson’s Foundation launched the bilingual campaign “Find Real Answers,” a collection of stories from real patients—and their family members—living with the disease.

“For most people and their families, a Parkinson’s diagnosis is difficult to process, and many people respond by isolating themselves,” said Robert Baittie, an advocate featured in the campaign. “Yet it was the Parkinson’s Foundation that helped me find the PD-specific support and community I needed, when I needed it. By sharing practical insight and experiences and emphasizing the importance of perspective and mindfulness, today I find hope in connecting with people who are newly diagnosed.”

As part of Parkinson’s Awareness Month, NAHH and Parkinson’s Foundation are highlighting some of their resources, including both of their helplines. Contact the Parkinson’s Foundation’s Helpline (800-4PD-INFO) for answers from an information specialist, or get information on local clinics at NAHH’s Helpline (866-SuFamilia). The Foundation also offers the AI-powered Parkinson’s Assistance Messenger “Ask PAM,” a chat tool that delivers trusted answers sourced from

Parkinson.org.



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“Access to accurate, science-based information is critical for individuals and families navigating Parkinson’s disease,” said Jane L. Delgado, PhD, NAHH President and CEO. “By working together, we can help ensure that communities have the information they need to make informed decisions.”

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