

New book details roadmap to prevent and treat Parkinson's

March 12 2020



Immunohistochemistry for alpha-synuclein showing positive staining (brown) of an intraneural Lewy-body in the Substantia nigra in Parkinson's disease. Credit: Wikipedia

A new book titled "[Ending Parkinson's Disease: A Prescription for](#)

[Action](#)" and authored by University of Rochester Medical Center neurologist Ray Dorsey, M.D. and his colleagues, lays out a new vision to prevent, advocate for, care for, and treat this major and growing global health threat.

"Parkinson's disease is a looming pandemic and we are woefully unprepared to meet this challenge—many people remain undiagnosed and untreated, [research funding](#) for the disease has stagnated, and the most [effective treatment](#) is now a half century old," said Dorsey, the David M. Levy Professor of Neurology and director of the Center for Health + Technology (CHeT). "At least some cases of Parkinson's are man-made and, therefore, preventable."

Parkinson's disease is the fastest growing [neurological disorder](#) in the world, outpacing Alzheimer's. Over the past 25 years, the number of people with the condition has jumped from three million to more than six million, and by 2040, it is projected to double again.

First described in early 18th century London at the height of the Industrial Revolution, Parkinson's and its rise have been fueled by environmental exposures to harmful chemicals. The two biggest culprits currently still in use are paraquat, a herbicide widely used in the U.S. despite being banned in 32 countries, and trichloroethylene (TCE), a solvent used in a wide range of industrial and consumer products. Not only are agricultural and industrial workers at risk of exposure, but these chemicals also enter the food chain, water supply, reside in the soil in brownfield sites, and impact indoor air quality.

The authors also advocate removing barriers to care. For example, over 40 percent of individuals with the disease do not see a neurologist soon after diagnosis, primarily because of where they live. Technologies like telemedicine have been shown to deliver effective specialized care to patients and improves their lives. However, Medicare policies often do

not pay for these services.

Confronting the Parkinson's pandemic will require marshalling the same focus and resources employed with success to address other public health challenges, such as polio, HIV, and breast cancer. The authors label their course of action PACT: prevent the disease, advocate for policies and resources, care for all affected, and treat the condition with new and more effective therapies.

URMC has a long been a leader in the field of Parkinson's research and care. Medical Center researchers were instrumental in conducting pivotal clinical trials that led to at least four FDA-approved drugs currently treat the disease. CHeT is a leading center for the application of new technologies to study and assess Parkinson's. The themes detailed in the book will form the basis of a new initiative launched by URMC in the coming months that will focus on the research, grassroots advocacy, and public policy steps necessary to prevent the [disease](#) and expand access to care.

Provided by University of Rochester Medical Center

Citation: New book details roadmap to prevent and treat Parkinson's (2020, March 12) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-roadmap-parkinson.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--