

## Press release

# People with Parkinson's experience variations in effects of oral medicines, but lack advice, international survey reveals

- Two in three people living with Parkinson's who take oral medications report some variation in their effects, a recently-published Parkinson's Europe international survey finds
- More than half of 992 survey respondents across 53 countries reported not feeling fully 'on' – i.e. with full effect of medication and control of motor function - for more than two hours per day; nearly half do not discuss disease progression or treatment options with healthcare professionals
- The survey, aimed at understanding the perceptions and knowledge of people with Parkinson's about their treatment options, was conducted by Parkinson's Europe with the financial support of STADA via its affiliate Britannia Pharmaceuticals Ltd

**Orpington, UK/Bad Vilbel, Germany – 30 August 2023** – Two-thirds of people living with Parkinson's are receiving oral levodopa or another single oral therapy, results from a 53-country study suggest. But two out of three people taking oral medications report variation in their effects, with the most common issues reported being the wearing-off of effects of a medicine dose before the next one is due, a partial response, or a delayed onset of effect.

Almost all – more than 96% – of survey respondents living with Parkinson's said they took medication for their condition, according to the findings of a multi-country survey conducted by patients' association Parkinson's Europe and developed in partnership with STADA via its Britannia Pharmaceuticals Ltd affiliate, which provided financial support. The survey focused on advanced<sup>1</sup> Parkinson's and on perception, awareness and knowledge of treatment

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<sup>1</sup> Advanced Parkinson's generally refers to a time when symptoms have become more complex and have a stronger effect on day-to-day life – and when non-oral therapies begin to be considered as a viable option to manage symptoms. In the Hoehn & Yahr rating scale, advanced Parkinson's is represented by stages 4 and 5. (See: [Stages of Parkinson's.](#))

options for the condition, as a significant percentage of people with Parkinson's do not discuss disease progression with healthcare professionals, or treatment options available throughout the course of the condition.

Approaching 90% of the 992 survey respondents across 53 countries were taking oral medications, including almost one in four (24%) who were doing so in combination with transdermal/patch therapies. The survey also covered other therapeutic options, such as deep brain stimulation and device-aided therapies.

Of the 65% of people who reported variations in the effects of taking oral medications, three in five (60%) said they 'regularly' or 'often' experienced the effect of a medication wearing off before the next dose was due. Around two in five mentioned partial response without the usual resolution of motor symptoms (42%) and a delayed onset of action (40%).

In addition, more than half of survey respondents (53%) reported feeling not fully "ON" – experiencing the full effect of their medication and having control of motor function – for more than two hours of the day, impacting their ability to conduct normal daily activities.

According to the survey, the most troublesome motor symptom reported were issues with their balance and walking or gait, followed by slowness of movement or bradykinesia, and rigidity. The most troublesome non-motor symptoms that people living with Parkinson's experience were issues with their sleep, along with memory and cognitive difficulties as well as bowel problems.

In the report's final recommendations, former Parkinson's Europe Board member Lizzie Graham commented: "The results show that a large percentage of people with Parkinson's continue to experience both motor and non-motor fluctuations, both of which have a significant impact on their quality of life, despite the use of multiple medications. These findings suggest that some people may need to consider alternative treatment approaches to maintain a good quality of life over the long term."

Other findings from the survey report, which has just been published in full by Parkinson's Europe and is available on the association's [website](#), include that almost one in two (46%) respondents have not discussed with their neurologist, family doctor or other healthcare professional the progression of the condition and advanced Parkinson's. A little over one in three (37%) have had such a discussion, and 16% have already been diagnosed with advanced Parkinson's.

"The survey highlighted the importance to people of, and the need for, clear and timely information from healthcare professionals about the progression of Parkinson's and the treatment options available throughout the course of the condition," Graham concluded.

Survey questions were devised by Parkinson's Europe in consultation with STADA. Responses to the multi-language online survey were received from 53 countries worldwide, with 992 people with Parkinson's or caregivers completing the survey. Respondents were equally distributed between males and females.

"As a growing supplier of specialty medicines in multiple therapeutic categories, including central nervous system, STADA is committed to listening and responding to the voices of people living with Parkinson's and their families," stated Bryan Kim, STADA's Global Head of Specialty. "We will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure people with Parkinson's have access to appropriate treatment options that they should discuss with their treating physician."

### **About Parkinson's Europe**

Parkinson's Europe is the only European Parkinson's umbrella organisation. Parkinson's Europe has been championing and working with the global Parkinson's community for 30 years.

As the leading voice for Parkinson's in Europe, we provide trusted information; advance and share good practices; raise awareness and improve understanding of the condition; and facilitate research collaboration.

Our vision is that people with Parkinson's and their families have access to the highest standards of treatment, support and care they need to live a full and comfortable life.

Executive Board: Peter Goldschmidt (CEO) / Simone Berger / Miguel Pagan Fernandez / Boris Döbler  
Chairman of the Supervisory Board: Dr. Günter von Au

**About STADA Arzneimittel AG**

STADA Arzneimittel AG is headquartered in Bad Vilbel, Germany. The company focuses on a three-pillar strategy consisting of consumer healthcare products, generics and specialty pharma. Worldwide, STADA Arzneimittel AG sells its products in approximately 120 countries. In financial year 2022, STADA achieved group sales of EUR 3,797.2 million and reported earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of EUR 884.7 million. As of 31 December 2022, STADA employed 13,183 people worldwide.

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