Dystonia Medical Research
Foundation (DMRF) Canada Presents

FREEDOM TO MOVE FOR DYSTONIA
RUN WALK & WHEEL

Your Race, Your Way

Virtually June 1-30th 2026
In person June 14th 2026 at
Downsview Park, Toronto

PARTNERSHIP PACKAGE

Dystonia
Medical
Research
Foundation
Canada

Fondation de
Recherche
Médicale sur la
Dystonie
Canada

serving all dystonia-affected persons
désservant toutes personnes atteintes de dystonie

Charitable Registration Number 12661 6598 RR0001

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DO IT FOR THE ONES NOT YET DIAGNOSED
DO IT FOR THE DYSTONIA THRIVERS
DO IT TO RAISE AWARENESS
DO IT TO FIND A CURE!

DMRF Canada Board Member, Casey Kidson-Reid completed her 2024 Virtual Freedom to Move race on the Rocky Mountains in Banff, AB

ABOUT DMRF CANADA

The Dystonia Medical Research Foundation was founded in 1976 by Samuel and Frances Belzberg of Vancouver after their daughter was diagnosed with generalized dystonia. DMRF Canada is a registered non-profit Canadian charity governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, and we now mark 50 years of advancing research, education, and support for the dystonia community.

DMRF Co-Founder, Frances Belzberg with 2023 Freedom to Move Ambassador, Jirome De Castro

Our Mission

The mission of DMRF Canada is to advance research for more treatments and ultimately a cure; to promote awareness and education; and to support the needs and well being of affected individuals and families.

By the Numbers

- 50,000 Canadians affected by Dystonia.
- $1 Million Invested in Research since our inception.
- 50 plus volunteers and 3 Full Time Staff members proudly serving every province and community across Canada.

Board Member, Catherine Mulkins, welcomes the crowd at the 2024 Toronto event.

Facts About Dystonia

Affects approximately 50,000 people in Canada

Dystonia can be inherited, acquired, or idiopathic (no known cause)

Despite treatment, 45% experience moderate-to-severe disability.

70% of patients identify chronic pain as one of their top challenges

Third most common movement disorder

32% of the community were incorrectly diagnosed with tremors and mental health disorders prior to receiving a diagnosis of Dystonia

47% experience mental health challenges as a result of their dystonia. These include depression, anxiety, and social withdrawal, often linked to the lack of timely support and resources.

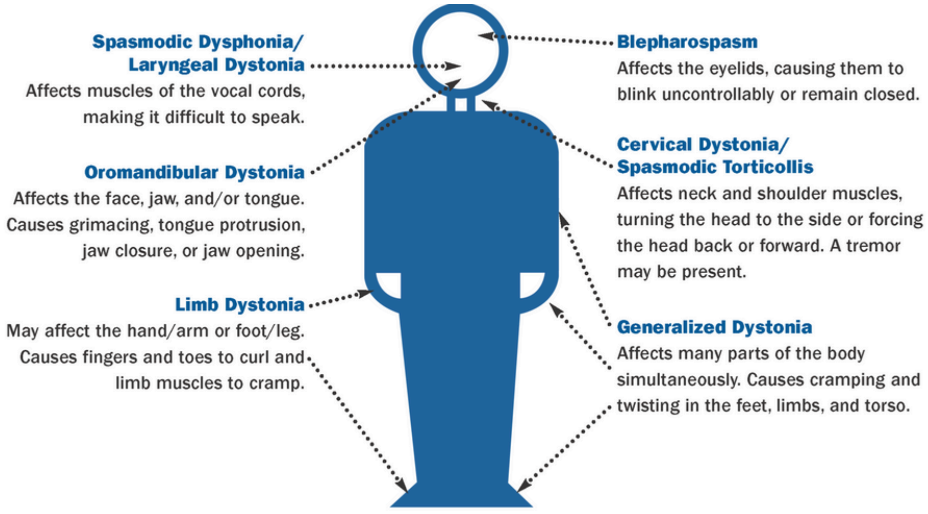
59% say dystonia has reduced their ability to work.

Men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds are affected

Source: DMRF Canada (2025). The 2025 Dystonia Canada Survey Key Findings

WHAT IS DYSTONIA?

Dystonia is a complex neurological movement disorder that causes involuntary muscle contractions, tremors, and twisting movements. It can affect any part of the body and disrupts daily life with pain, uncertainty, and isolation



Spasmodic Dysphonia/ Laryngeal Dystonia
Affects muscles of the vocal cords, making it difficult to speak.

Oromandibular Dystonia
Affects the face, jaw, and/or tongue. Causes grimacing, tongue protrusion, jaw closure, or jaw opening.

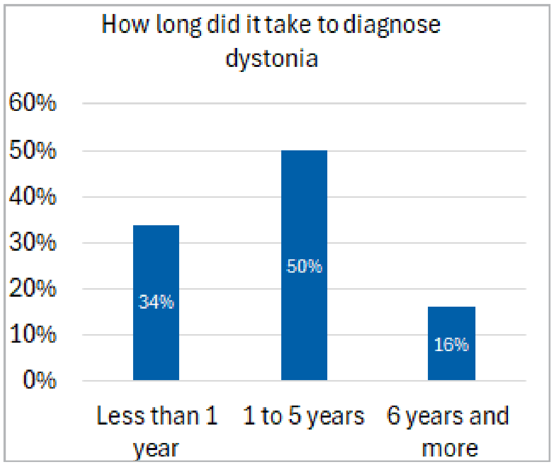
Limb Dystonia
May affect the hand/arm or foot/leg. Causes fingers and toes to curl and limb muscles to cramp.

Blepharospasm
Affects the eyelids, causing them to blink uncontrollably or remain closed.

Cervical Dystonia/ Spasmodic Torticollis
Affects neck and shoulder muscles, turning the head to the side or forcing the head back or forward. A tremor may be present.

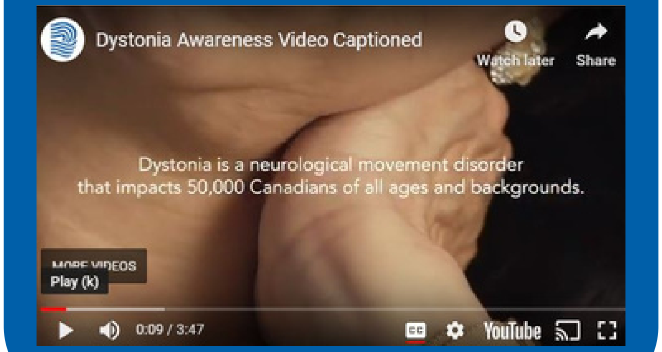
Generalized Dystonia
Affects many parts of the body simultaneously. Causes cramping and twisting in the feet, limbs, and torso.

Source: Understanding Dystonia Factsheet by DMRF



Source: DMRF Canada Survey 2019

Watch How Dystonia Affects Lives



Dystonia Awareness Video Captioned

Dystonia is a neurological movement disorder that impacts 50,000 Canadians of all ages and backgrounds.

Dystonia's complexity often leads to long delays in diagnosis and treatment. Patients typically wait 6 months to 3 years to see a specialist, with some experiencing diagnostic delays of up to 10 years. Even after diagnosis, limited treatment options and access to care can further postpone effective management.

These challenges highlight the urgent need for greater support, including accessible mental health resources, specialized care, and ongoing research, to improve patients' quality of life and address the complex impact of dystonia.

"The worst part of dystonia is the life it steals from you. I was at the height of my career only to have it ripped away from me."
Astrid Frauscher

FREEDOM TO MOVE

Freedom to Move (FTM): Run, Walk and Wheel for Dystonia is the Foundation's flagship community event taking place throughout June 2026. The annual event remains **the organization's largest fundraiser and in-person awareness event.** Participants will complete a walk, run, or wheel either virtually between June 1st - 30th anywhere in Canada or at our Toronto in-person event site on June 14th at Downsview Park.

Our community's involvement is crucial to the success of Freedom to Move. Having the option to participate virtually encourages people to support the dystonia community and expand their social impact within their networks to help maximize awareness and research funding for dystonia.

WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

Too often sidelined, dystonia receives far fewer resources than its true impact warrants. It remains one of the most underrecognized and under-resourced neurological conditions, despite its growing prevalence and increased recognition through improved diagnosis. Dystonia affects more than 30% of people living with Parkinson's disease, according to the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Across isolated and complex forms of dystonia, we estimate that over 50,000 Canadians live with this chronic, disabling condition that profoundly impacts quality of life.

Our vision depends on the strength of our community and partners. As a self-funded charity without government support, every Partnership helps sustain vital programs and prevent service cuts. We operate with exceptional efficiency, keeping administrative costs lower than they were a decade ago so that more of every dollar goes directly to research, support, and improved care.

Access to specialized care remains one of the greatest challenges for people living with dystonia. With fewer than 80 neurologists in Canada focused on movement disorders*, tens of thousands face limited access to timely treatment. DMRF Canada is helping address this gap by funding a clinical and research fellowship at SickKids and Toronto Western Hospital, where Dr. Lindsey Vogt is advancing expertise in both pediatric and adult dystonia.

We also invest in advanced medical education to help physicians improve their skills in diagnosing and managing dystonia. These programs ensure that new research discoveries translate into improved care and faster results for patients across Canada.

By partnering with Freedom to Move, your organization becomes a driving force behind greater inclusivity, accessibility, and innovation in healthcare. Your support directly expands research, improves access to care, and helps build a future where every Canadian—regardless of background or ability—has the freedom to move.

*Source: Parkinson Canada, *Explorations into Health System Solutions for Parkinson's in Canada*.

FTM Celebrations & Investing in a Dystonia-Free Future

Over the past 40 years, the dystonia community's Toronto walk has raised over $1 million, fueling significant advancements in research and providing essential support for those affected.

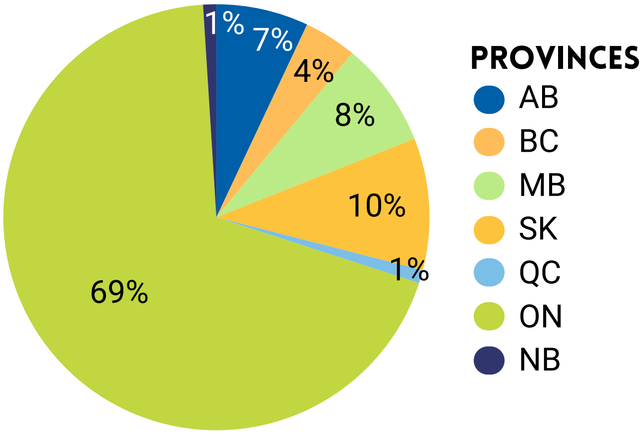
The event's greatest impact is that every dollar raised goes directly into services, support, and crucial dystonia research funding. Research is vital as it drives the discovery of better treatments and ultimately a cure, while support services improve the quality of life for those living with the disorder.

In 2025, FTM attracted participants, sponsors, and donors from 37 cities across Canada, raising over $50,000 for critical dystonia research and essential support programs.

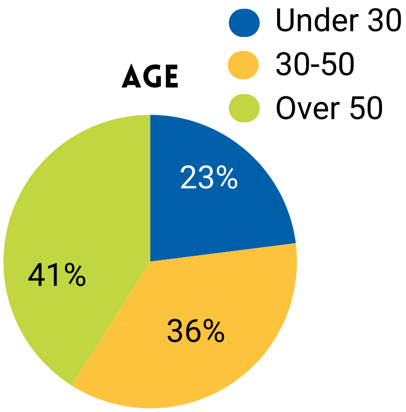
Jirome De Castro, our 2023 Freedom to Move ambassador, was diagnosed with cervical dystonia in 2015. He competes in marathons and triathlons, donating all funds raised towards improving the lives of others with dystonia.

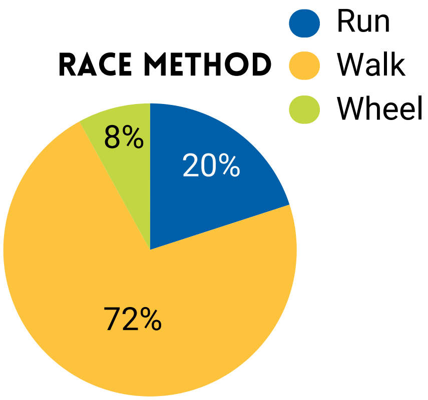
Freedom to Move provides a special opportunity to connect with others in the dystonia community; something that has been deeply important to Jirome ever since his diagnosis.

Our Community



Our participants are a diverse group, with a large contingent of Ontario-based walkers over 50 years of age. In addition to our dedicated team, the event is supported by dystonia ambassadors, support group leaders, patients, families, healthcare professionals, and advocates. This committed community helps raise funds and advance the mission of DMRF Canada, offering brands a unique opportunity to connect with a passionate audience.





Online Presence:

- **3,000+ Event website visitors and registrants**
- **7,000+ Social media impressions**
- **100,000+ Annual website visitors**

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING A PARTNERSHIP WITH US. YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP DRIVE VITAL PROGRESS FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY DYSTONIA.

For further details please contact:
National Director, Archana Castelino
info@dystoniacanada.org | 1-800-361-8061

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Contact DMRF Canada
Visit: www.dystoniacanada.org
Call: (416) 488-6974
Toll Free: (800) 361-8061
Email: info@dystoniacanada.org

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