



Vitruvian Health

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INFORMATION

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Bradley Wellness Center offers Parkinson's support group

DALTON, Ga. (April 13, 2026) – April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, and Vitruvian Health is encouraging those in the community to learn about the disease and realize there is support available if needed.

A support group for people living with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers launched last year at Bradley Wellness Center, part of Hamilton Medical Center and Vitruvian Health. It meets on the first Thursday of every month from noon to 1 p.m.

The group is led by Kenneth Lowery, who retired as executive director of the Peoples Cancer Institute in 2023 and has lived with Parkinson's for 11 years. Lowery said the group is designed for participants to share tips, resources and encouragement in a supportive environment – surrounded by people who understand. The group is designed to support people at every age and stage, from those newly diagnosed to patients who have lived with Parkinson's for a long time.

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological disorder with no known cure. Symptoms can vary widely among patients and can include tremors, difficulty speaking or swallowing, impaired balance and gait, and challenges with daily tasks such as buttoning clothing. Parkinson's can be managed with medication, lifestyle changes and various therapies.

Sometimes, accepting the diagnosis is one of the most difficult hurdles.

Lowery said he first noticed a problem with his health when he was typing at work and realized one hand "was not working as it should." He initially suspected a pinched nerve. Even after testing and a physician's evaluation confirmed Parkinson's, he struggled to accept the news.

"In reality, I was in denial for about nine years," Lowery said. "I thought I had something else. Parkinson's presents itself in so many ways."

The support group offers broad-ranging help, including shared resources, discussion, peer connection and question-and-answer opportunities. Some meetings will feature presentations from medical or therapeutic experts, while others will focus more on practical or emotional support.

Lowery noted that attendees may be in very different stages of the disease and cautioned that seeing someone with advanced symptoms does not forecast an individual's outcome. Support, he said, can make a meaningful difference both physically and mentally. Movement is critical to managing symptoms and slowing the progression of the disease.

The group is open to anyone, and there is no cost to attend. In addition to the support group, a Balance for Parkinson's class meets twice a week at Bradley Wellness Center and is open to patients and their caregivers, who may attend together for a collective \$25 per month, regardless of membership status.

Group fitness coordinator Laura Barnes said the Balance for Parkinson's class includes exercises in balance, gait and mobility; an obstacle course; large motor movements; pattern coordination; and finger-movement exercises, among other activities. Each patient may bring one support person, who can either assist or participate alongside them. Patients must receive approval from physical therapy or their physician before joining the class.

Bradley Whiteside Rehab (same building as Bradley Wellness Center) offers physical therapy and occupational therapy services on-site. Patients work on large movements, fine motor skills and voice therapy.

Those interested in joining the support group are encouraged to register by calling 706-278-9355.

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About Vitruvian Health

Vitruvian Health, formerly Hamilton Health Care System, is a not-for-profit, fully integrated health system serving the Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee regions. Vitruvian includes Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, Ga., and Bradley Medical Center in Cleveland, Tenn., affiliated physician practices, walk-in care centers, retirement and skilled nursing centers, a diagnostic center, a cancer institute, an institute for children with developmental delays, and more. Known for its advanced care and personalized service, Vitruvian Health offers innovative treatment options in state-of-the-art facilities while maintaining a compassionate, friendly and tranquil healing environment.

The Vitruvian name draws from the organization's recognizable da Vinci-inspired Vitruvian Man icon, which has been a prominent part of Hamilton's logo since 1976. Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man

represents harmony, balance, and the interconnectedness of all aspects of health, perfectly aligning with Hamilton's integrated system of care.

Bradley Wellness Center

Bradley Wellness Center (BWC) is a comprehensive fitness and wellness facility designed to support every level of fitness – from beginners to advanced athletes. BWC offers a wide range of exercise options and wellness amenities – all under one roof – including extensive cardio equipment, strength-training machines, Free weights, power racks, and functional training areas. BWC's Group Fitness Studio offers cardio classes, such as HITT, Zumba, Power, and Step. The Cycle Studio offers several levels of cycling classes. The Mind and Body Studio is designed for Yoga and Barre enthusiasts, with many different class options available. Other fitness options include an indoor arena for full court basketball, indoor and outdoor walking and jogging tracks, racquetball courts, tennis courts, and indoor and outdoor pickleball courts. BWC's 25-meter indoor pool offers lanes open for swimming during all operation hours along with aquatics classes. Sauna and steam rooms are available for member use in each locker room. Childcare is included for children ages 6 months to 11 years for members. Other BWC offerings include nutrition and personal training. Acupuncture and massage therapy are available for purchase by members and non-members.

About Hamilton Medical Center

The flagship affiliate for Vitruvian Health's Northwest Georgia region, Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) is a 255-bed regional acute-care hospital that offers major medical, surgical and diagnostic services, including accredited stroke and chest pain centers. Advanced technology and wellness are two significant areas of focus for HMC. Services include the freestanding Hamilton Ambulatory Surgery Center, Hamilton Diagnostics Center, and Bradley Wellness Center, as well as a Level II trauma center, Peeples Cancer Institute, Heart & Vascular program (including open heart surgery), Hamilton Spine Health and Sport, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and more.

About Bradley Whiteside Rehabilitation

Bradley Whiteside Rehabilitation provides comprehensive evaluation and treatment for patients of all ages and backgrounds, including athletes, weekend warriors, geriatric, neurologic, pediatrics, work-related injuries, trauma and post-surgical conditions, and many more.

Physical and occupational therapy licensed staff members at Bradley Whiteside Rehabilitation help patients recover and reach their goals. Therapists partner with patients to develop a plan of care that is tailored to their specific condition while providing one-on-one care for all patients.