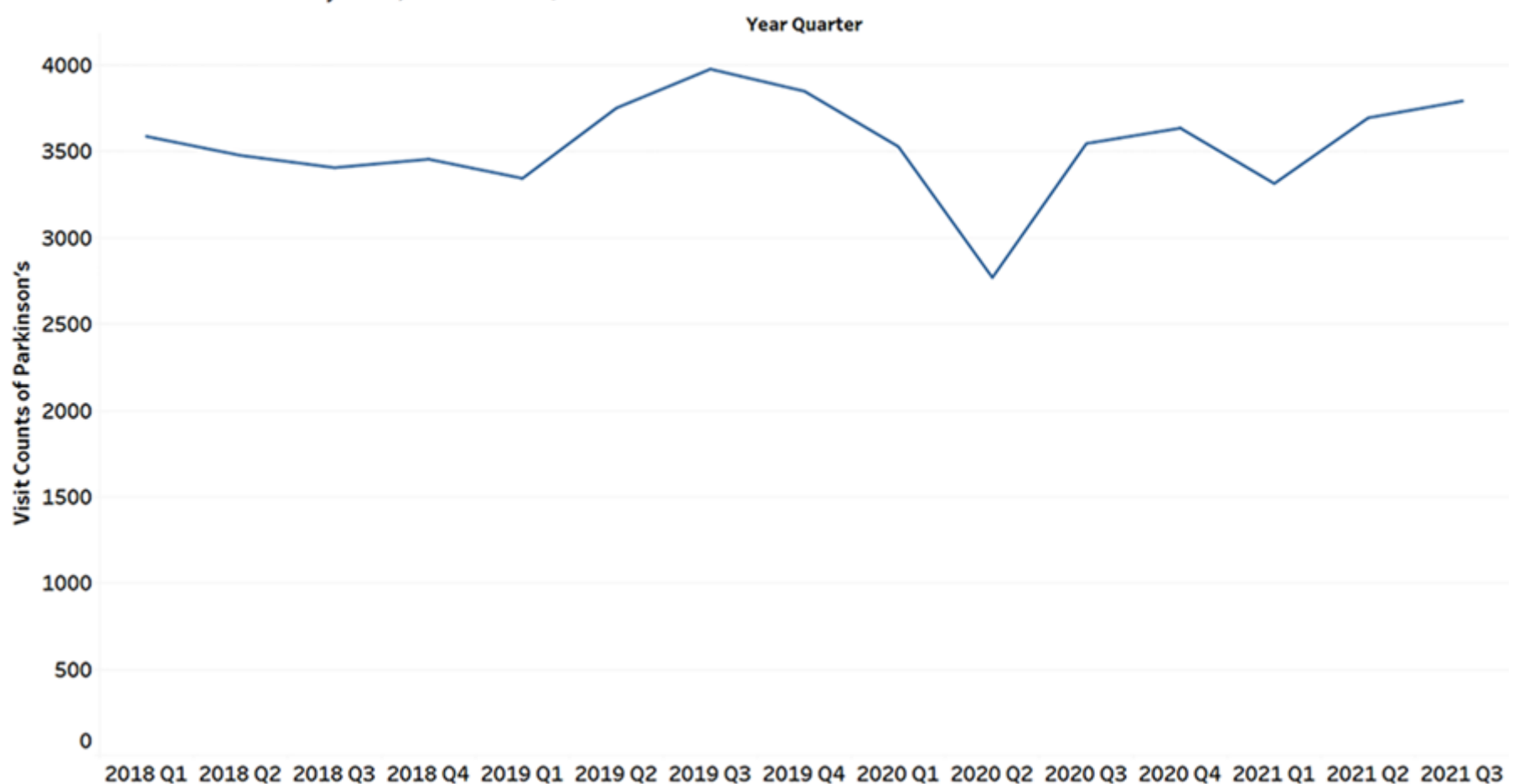


## Fast Facts from the WHA Information Center: April is Parkinson's Awareness Month

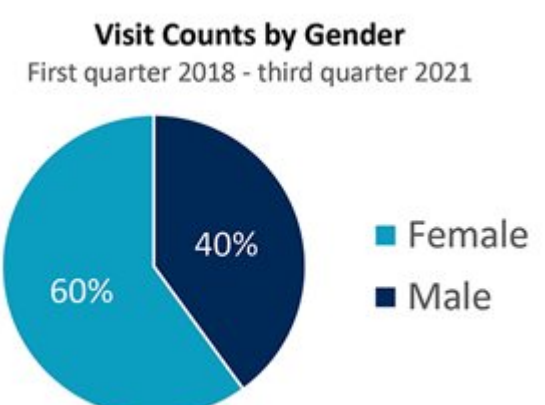
April is designated Parkinson's Awareness Month, creating an opportunity to increase understanding about the brain disorder. Parkinson's disease is a brain disorder that impacts one's coordination and balance, causing shaking and stiffness. The National Institutes of Health describes Parkinson's as a progressive disease that eventually may affect sleep, behavior and memory. Symptoms may develop slowly and gradually over the years. The Parkinson's Foundation notes that approximately 1 million people in the U.S. are living with Parkinson's disease, and nearly 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with the illness each year.

The WHA Information Center analyzed claims from Wisconsin data reflecting medical services related to Parkinson's disease from January 2018 to September 2021. The analysis shows high counts for treatments in the Milwaukee and Fox Valley areas during the period reviewed. The visit counts have slowly increased over the past three years, except for the months when the COVID-19 stay at home order was in place. Males accounted for 60% of all visits, which follows the national trend of men being more likely to be diagnosed with the disease. Inpatient and emergency department visits saw about the same number of visits.

Count of Parkinson's Visits by Time, 2018-2021 Q3



The incidence of Parkinson's increases with age, regardless of gender, but "an estimated 4% of people with [Parkinson's disease] are diagnosed before the age of 50," according to [Parkinson.org](http://Parkinson.org). A study by the Parkinson's Foundation Prevalence Project confirms that men are more likely than women to be diagnosed with the disease. The foundation's data on the prevalence of the disease in Wisconsin shows that roughly 15,000 people in the state are affected by Parkinson's disease (Marras, et al., 2018). Parkinson's can be caused by multiple factors including genetics, environment and lifestyle.



Notable Figures with Parkinson's disease include:

- Muhammad Ali: diagnosed in 1984
- Michael J. Fox: diagnosed in 1991
- George H.W. Bush: diagnosed in 2012
- Linda Ronstadt: diagnosed in 2012
- Neil Diamond: diagnosed in 2018

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