

New Insights To A Common Problem

(NAPSA)—Many people are uncomfortable discussing genital herpes with their partners, friends, or even their physicians. But opening the lines of communication may pave the way for better patient care. A recent worldwide survey called INSIGHTS explored patient and physician attitudes about genital herpes—one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases (STD)—and revealed that patients need more information.

Genital herpes is a life-long, incurable disease that affects more than one in five Americans over the age of 12, an estimated 80 percent of whom don't know they are infected. The good news is that, once diagnosed, the symptoms of this disease are treatable for many patients.

The INSIGHTS survey revealed that, upon diagnosis, Americans were concerned with how having genital herpes would affect their sex life (57 percent) and how easily the virus could be transmitted to someone else (38 percent).

Treatment is important in the management of genital herpes. The survey found that most patients treat the disease at the time of outbreaks; only 33 percent use antiviral medications daily to reduce outbreaks. However, most respondents said they would likely take an antiviral medication daily if it would significantly reduce outbreaks.

"I was surprised to see that many respondents didn't know that for many patients, suppressive therapy could reduce the number and severity of their outbreaks," said Jennifer Berman, M.D., best-selling author and co-director of the Female Sexual Medicine Center at UCLA. "Clearly, there's a need for more patient education regarding treatment approaches."



Data from a leading worldwide survey reveal that patients want more information about genital herpes—one of the most common STDs in the U.S. (one in five Americans).

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation is launching a new six-month clinical study called RELIEF that will explore the potential benefits of daily treatment versus episodic treatment with an oral antiviral medication, Famvir® (famciclovir) in appropriate patients. This information may prove useful for physicians in selecting a treatment regimen appropriate for their patients. Famvir is indicated for the treatment or suppression of recurrent genital herpes in otherwise healthy patients. The efficacy of Famvir has not been established for initial episode genital herpes infection. The safety and efficacy of Famvir for suppressive therapy have not been established beyond one year. There is no cure for genital herpes. Even with antiviral treatment, it is possible to spread the herpes virus to others. In clinical trials, the most commonly reported side effects were headache, nausea, and diarrhea.

For more information and complete prescribing information for Famvir, visit www.genitalherpes.com.