



# Health Awareness

## Treatment Benefits People Living With Schizophrenia

(NAPSA)—More than two million Americans live with schizophrenia, a brain disorder that impairs a person's ability to think clearly, relate to others and distinguish between reality and imagination. But schizophrenia is a treatable illness. And new research shows that medications, including a new long-acting medication that is taken once every two weeks, may have significant benefits for many people living with schizophrenia.

A recent study presented at the American Psychiatric Association (APA) annual meeting showed that people with schizophrenia who had a majority of symptoms under control experienced further improvements in their symptom control when they transitioned to the long-acting medication, Risperdal Consta (risperidone long-acting injection), from their previous medication.

According to John Kane, M.D., executive director of The Zucker Hillside Hospital and professor of psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, early intervention with antipsychotic medications has been shown to improve long-term outcomes in patients with schizophrenia who are experiencing their first psychotic episode.



### Study shows a new treatment may improve symptom control for schizophrenia patients.

“We’ve known for some time that early and consistent intervention in schizophrenia can improve patients’ long-term outcomes, such as reducing the need for hospitalization. However, many early-stage patients discount the need for treatment, which ultimately may lead to relapse and admission to the hospital,” said Dr. Kane. “This study suggests that consistent therapy with Risperdal Consta has real benefits.”

Risperdal Consta was approved late last year by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The medication uses an advanced drug-delivery technology that is given by injection every two weeks to provide consistent medication levels.

In clinical trials, Risperdal Consta was generally well toler-

ated. The most common treatment-emergent adverse events with an incidence of five percent or greater in at least one of the Risperdal Consta groups (25 mg or 50 mg) and at least twice that of placebo were: somnolence, akathisia, parkinsonism (bradykinesia, extrapyramidal disorder and hypokinesia), dyspepsia, constipation, dry mouth, fatigue and weight increase. As with all antipsychotic medications, prescribing should be consistent with the need to minimize the risk of tardive dyskinesia, a neurological side effect that can include repetitive twitching; if signs and symptoms appear, discontinuation of Risperdal Consta should be considered. In the integrated database of multiple-dose studies, the incidence of tardive dyskinesia was 0.6 percent (9/1499 patients).

“It is important for patients with schizophrenia to work closely with their doctor to manage the illness,” said Dr. Kane.

Some medications interact with Risperdal Consta. Please inform your health care professional of any medications or supplements that you are taking.

For more information about schizophrenia, visit [www.mentalwellness.com](http://www.mentalwellness.com).



**Note to Editors:** For more information, refer to the full prescribing information for Risperdal Consta or visit <http://www.risperdalconsta.com>.