



HEALTH AWARENESS

Movement Disorders Affect 40 Million Americans

(NAPSA)—Movement disorders are chronic, often painful, and debilitating conditions that affect the ability to control movement. Having a movement disorder can make it difficult—even impossible—to do the routine things in life. More than 40 million Americans—nearly one in seven people—are affected by a movement disorder, including tremor, Parkinson's disease, Tourette's syndrome, dystonia, and spasticity.

Movement disorders are caused by damage to or malfunction in specific regions of the brain and nervous system that are responsible for voluntary and involuntary movement. In many people, the cause is unknown. The onset of symptoms associated with a movement disorder may occur gradually over time or develop suddenly.

WE MOVE (Worldwide Education and Awareness for Movement Disorders) is spearheading *Life in Motion*—a campaign to raise awareness about the more than 30 neurological conditions that may be classified as movement disorders and encourage early diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

The campaign is supported by 50 patient advocacy organizations, foundations, and professional societies.

"The number of people challenged by movement disorders is more than twice the number of people with diabetes and more than four times the number of those surviving cancer," said Susan Bressman, M.D., President of WE MOVE and Chairperson of the Department of Neurology at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City. "Yet many people have little or no knowledge of such devastating disorders as restless legs syndrome or Hunt-



A patient with a movement disorder is estimated to visit more than 15 doctors over the course of five years before receiving an accurate diagnosis.

ington's disease that place a significant burden on patients' lives."

Though movement disorders cannot be completely cured, they can be effectively managed if they are properly diagnosed and treated, allowing patients to live with less pain, fewer limitations and greater confidence.

Effective treatment depends on the underlying cause of the condition and may include oral medications; botulinum toxin injection therapy targeted to spastic or abnormally contracting muscles; orthopedic surgery; neurosurgery (including deep brain stimulation and intrathecal baclofen therapy); and adjunctive therapies such as physical, occupational, and speech therapy.

WE MOVE established the *Life in Motion* Web site www.life-in-motion.org and an automated toll-free number 1-866-LIM-3136 which provide access to patient education brochures and information on movement disorders free-of-charge.