



HEALTH AWARENESS

New Hope For Millions Suffering From Undiagnosed Bleeding Disorder

(NAPSA)—An estimated three million Americans suffer from a serious condition—and most of them don't even know it.

The condition is called von Willebrand Disease, and although it's the world's most commonly inherited bleeding disorder, there has long been a serious lack of awareness and misperceptions about the problem.

Unlike the more well-known bleeding disorder—hemophilia, which primarily affects males—von Willebrand Disease affects men and women equally. However, women with von Willebrand Disease suffer in more extraordinary ways, with unusually heavy, lengthy periods classified as menorrhagia.

“People often consider the symptoms, especially heavy menstrual periods, as a family trait that should be endured, not discussed,” said Peter Kouides, M.D., an associate professor at the University of Rochester School of Medicine. “As a result, there is little or no dialogue between undiagnosed female patients and their family physician or ob/gyn.

“This silence can perpetuate misdiagnosis or the dismissal of symptoms altogether,” he added, “which, at the very least, can significantly impair quality of life and in some cases lead to tragic consequences, such as life-threatening bleeding after childbirth. Breaking the silence is the first step to ensuring accurate diagnosis and allowing people to have access to appropriate medical treatment.”

To help more people do just that, Renee Paper, R.N., and psychologist Lauren A. Kelley authored *A Guide to Living With von Willebrand Disease*. Distributed free through a grant from Aventis Behring, L.L.C., a leading manufacturer of treatments for bleeding disorders, the book was written to “break the generations of silence” that prevent thousands of people with the disorder from being helped.

For a free copy of the book, call the *Aventis Behring Choice Member Support Center* at 1-888-508-6978. You can learn more about the book and the disease online at www.allaboutbleeding.com.

Symptoms of von Willebrand Disease

According to a new book, *A Guide to Living With von Willebrand Disease*, the most common signs for men and women are:

Men

- easy bruising
- frequent nosebleeds
- prolonged bleeding after surgery, injury or dental work

Women

- easy bruising
- frequent nosebleeds
- prolonged bleeding after surgery, injury or dental work
- heavy menstrual periods
- extensive bleeding after childbirth