

Educational Material Available To Help Patients

New Kit Gives Patients Peace Of Mind When Managing A Serious Disease

(NAPSA)—Adrenal insufficiency (AI), a potentially life-threatening illness, is a deficiency of adrenal hormones (i.e., cortisol and aldosterone) that interferes with the body's ability to produce and maintain normal blood pressure, blood sugar and energy levels; recover from infection and other stresses; and maintain adequate levels of salt, potassium and water.

It is a rare disease that affects less than 0.1 percent of the population and is caused by a variety of different disorders, including a possible genetic condition called congenital adrenal hyperplasia.

An acute adrenal crisis can occur when a patient is too ill to take oral daily corticosteroid replacement doses and cannot keep the medicine down. Patients with this problem should see their doctor.

Symptoms of AI may include weakness, fatigue, dizziness, loss of appetite and weight, nausea, intermittent vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, salt cravings and darkened skin.

While AI can be managed and treated daily with oral corticosteroid replacement therapy, patients are at high risk for an acute crisis, which requires immediate medical attention.

As a result, AI patients must carry an injectable medicine (corticosteroid) with them at all times. In an effort to help patients better understand and manage their disease, CARES (Congenital Adrenal

Hyperplasia Research Education & Support) Foundation and Pfizer recently launched a tool kit—the care kit—for health care profes-

Adrenal insufficiency is a potentially life-threatening illness that may require prompt medical treatment.



sionals to use as they educate patients about their condition. Contents include relevant educational material, strategies for preventing and managing adrenal crises, and detailed instructions for administering an injection.

“An acute adrenal crisis can be an extremely frightening experience for patients, especially children,” said Kelly Leight, executive director, CARES Foundation. “And as an organization, we are committed to getting the right kinds of materials and tools in the hands of our patients and their caregivers so that they are prepared at all times.”

“Pfizer has had a long-standing and collaborative relationship with CARES Foundation, and we are thrilled that our partnership yielded such an important resource for health care professionals to use with their AI patients,” said Michael P. Wajnrajch, M.D., senior medical director, Pfizer.

For more information on adrenal insufficiency and the care kit, see www.caresfoundation.org.