

Study Results Show That Time To Nursing Home Placement Was Delayed For Close to 2 Years In Alzheimer's Patients Treated With Leading Alzheimer's Medication

(NAPSA)—Persistent treatment with ARICEPT® (donepezil hydrochloride) may have delayed dementia-related nursing home placement for Alzheimer's patients for close to 2 years (21 months), according to a new study. These results were presented recently at the 14th annual meeting of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry.

Delaying nursing home placement for any reason may have benefits to families and society by lessening emotional and financial burdens associated with caring for Alzheimer's disease patients.

"As Alzheimer's disease progresses, the burdens of caregiving may simply become too great, and families may be faced with the difficult decision to place their loved one in a nursing home," said David Geldmacher, M.D., Clinical Director, University Alzheimer Center, University Hospitals of Cleveland and Case Western Reserve University. "This study showed that persistent treatment with ARICEPT® may have allowed patients to stay at home with their families longer before requiring the skilled care and full-time supervision of a nursing home."

"Also, these findings reinforce the importance of beginning treatment with ARICEPT® as early as possible in the disease process and maintaining that treatment for long-term benefits, as medically appropriate," Dr. Geldmacher continued.

ARICEPT®, the no. 1 prescribed Alzheimer's medication, is a clinically proven, well-tolerated, once-daily treatment for mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease.

"Our doctor put my husband on ARICEPT® [as part of a clinical trial] shortly after he was diagnosed in 1994, and he has been on treatment ever since," said caregiver Janet Farr. "Early treatment bought us more quality time at home together, and we're both very grateful for that."

Alzheimer's disease exacts a major toll on society, with direct dollar costs estimated at \$29 bil-

lion a year in the U.S., with most of these costs related to nursing home care. The average annual costs of nursing home care are estimated at more than \$42,000 a year (1996 costs) per person. While Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance bear much of the direct cost, caregivers' costs can still be substantial.

Information about the Delay to Nursing Home Placement Study

In this study, the time to placement in a nursing home was analyzed for 671 patients with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease who had participated in 1 of 3 clinical trials with ARICEPT® versus a sugar pill, followed by studies where everyone took ARICEPT®. Patients' caregivers were interviewed to obtain information on the dates and reasons for nursing home placements that lasted for two weeks or more. Patients were categorized according to the length of effective treatment (5 mg or 10 mg a day) with ARICEPT® during the clinical trials and follow-up studies.

Using statistical analyses, times to nursing home placement for dementia-related reasons were estimated based on different periods of drug treatment. These time estimates took into account each patient's age, gender, and severity of illness as measured by Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE)* scores at entry into a clinical trial, as well as change in caregiver and the patient's use of other cholinesterase-inhibiting drugs after completing participation in the ARICEPT® clinical trials.

This study showed that patients who received ARICEPT® for longer periods (an effective dose of at least 5 mg a day for at least 9 to 12 months) had a 21-month longer delay in nursing home placement than patients who received no or limited ARICEPT® (sugar pill, or less than 5 mg a day, or at least 5 mg a day for less than 80 percent of the time during a clinical trial).

While there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, medical treat-

ments are available to manage symptoms of the disease. Once-a-day prescription ARICEPT® can improve cognition and maintain patient function in people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease. In a progressively degenerative disease such as Alzheimer's, improvement, stabilization or a less-than-expected decline is considered a positive response to treatment. These types of responses have been observed in patients treated with ARICEPT® in clinical trials. Individual responses to treatment may vary.

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Dr. Geldmacher



ARICEPT® is well tolerated but may not be for everyone. Some people may experience nausea, diarrhea, insomnia, vomiting, muscle cramps, fatigue, or loss of appetite. In studies, these side effects were usually mild and temporary. Some people taking ARICEPT® may experience fainting. People at risk for ulcers should tell their doctors because their condition may get worse.

It is estimated that 1 in 10 individuals older than age 65 has Alzheimer's disease. Approximately 4 million Americans are thought to have Alzheimer's disease; by the year 2050, it is estimated that nearly 14 million Americans will suffer from the disease.

To date, more than 1.4 million people in the United States have received a prescription for ARICEPT® contributing to a total of 450 million days of patient use worldwide.

For more information about managing Alzheimer's disease and about ARICEPT®, please call the Eisai Inc.-and Pfizer Inc.-sponsored toll-free number, (888) 999-9616, or see www.aricept.com.

* MMSE—A clinically validated measure of cognition.