



spotlight on health

People With Diabetes Fear Disability More Than Death

(NAPSA)—People with diabetes are four times as afraid of the disability associated with losing their sight and twice as afraid of losing a limb than of suffering a heart attack or stroke, according to a national survey of older Americans living with the disease. While heart attack and stroke are by far the leading cause of death and disability among people with diabetes—with stroke the primary cause of disability in the nation—one-third of those surveyed were not even aware that they are at increased risk for these events.

A new survey, known as the State-of-the-Heart-in-Diabetes Survey, found that most people surveyed are under the misconception that blindness and amputation are more prevalent disabling consequences of diabetes than heart attack and stroke.

"My mother died from complications of diabetes. She, like so many people surveyed was determined to live life to the fullest and not become a burden to her family as a result of the disease," said renowned singing artist and diabetes advocate, Gladys Knight. "Because of her experience, I'm determined to help people with diabetes *know more* and *do more* to prevent the devastating disability of cardiovascular complications of diabetes."

Ms. Knight has joined a new patient education program to urge Americans living with diabetes to "Know More, Do More" to reduce their risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

"This survey is a wake up call for the public and physicians. They need to understand the profound link between diabetes and heart attack and stroke, and recognize that these consequences of diabetes are far more likely to lead to disability and death than other diabetes complications," said Alan Garber, MD, PhD, a national authority on cardiovascu-

Singing Artist Gladys Knight urges Americans with diabetes to "Know more, Do more."



lar disease in patients with diabetes and a professor of Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine and Chief of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism at The Methodist Hospital in Houston.

Why Do More?

The State-of-the-Heart-in-Diabetes Survey, authored by Dr. Garber, revealed that almost two-thirds (63 percent) of older Americans with diabetes believed they could be doing more to further reduce their risk for stroke or heart attack, although 34 percent felt there was nothing more they could do. Those motivated to do more desire to lead a full and vital life (63 percent) and want to minimize the potential burden to their families of caring for someone with a disability (65 percent).

Of the 16 million Americans living with diabetes today, three-fourths will develop cardiovascular disease. People who survive a cardiovascular event (i.e., heart attack or stroke) may experience impaired movement, weakness and shortness of breath, trouble with speech, memory loss and emotional problems. Every year, nearly 77,000 people with diabetes die from heart disease. Conversely, up to 24,000 people with diabetes will suffer complete vision loss and 56,200 the loss of a foot or leg each year.

"In addition to strict management of blood sugar levels, there are more ways to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke that should be made well-known and available to people with diabetes," Garber says. "For example, a recent study

demonstrated that a drug called ramipril was found to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke in people 55 or older with diabetes plus one additional risk factor, even if they were already taking other medications." Ramipril is marketed in the United States as ALTACE.

The State-of-the-Heart-in-Diabetes National Education Program

"I'm pleased to be part of this important campaign, and to join with Dr. Garber and community hospitals around the country to provide the information that will help people to *do more*," says Ms. Knight. "In addition to diet and exercise, it's important for people with diabetes to know how they can further reduce their risk with medication, like ALTACE," Ms. Knight added.

The survey indicated that most people rely on their doctors and the news media for health information. With that in mind, using the survey as a guide, The State-of-the-Heart-in-Diabetes Educational program will provide educational information to people with diabetes through physician-directed seminars at medical centers around the country as well as through the news media.

The survey and consumer education program were developed through an unrestricted educational grant from Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, and Monarch Pharmaceuticals.

Prescription ALTACE® (ramipril) is not for everyone. ALTACE may cause swelling of the mouth, tongue, or throat, which could cause extremely serious risk and requires immediate medical care. Common side effects include persistent dry cough, dizziness, and lightheadedness due to low blood pressure. ALTACE should not be taken during pregnancy, as fetal death or injury may result, or if serious side effects related to previous ACE inhibitors have been experienced.