

# Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Need for New, Effective Therapies™

(NAPSA)—The ever-fluctuating temperatures of changing seasons often bring out aches and pains in many of us, but for the 2.1 million people in the United States with the chronic autoimmune disease rheumatoid arthritis (RA), those pains are a daily occurrence.

RA, one of the most serious and disabling forms of arthritis, causes chronic inflammation of the lining of bone joints in the body. Patients with this illness experience challenges performing basic activities throughout each day. The physical symptoms— inflammation of the joints, swelling, fatigue, stiffness and pain—can make simple activities, such as working, enjoying hobbies, or exercising, extremely difficult. As a result of these physical difficulties encountered on a daily basis, this condition also results in emotional symptoms of varying intensity in many RA patients, including feelings of depression, anxiety and helplessness.

Ultimately, RA can lead to a loss of normal daily function, including a limited range of motion, chronic pain and fatigue. According to the National Institutes of Health, the disease typically begins to affect adults between the ages of 25 and 55, but can occur at any age, including childhood.

## **Current Treatments— Inadequate for Many**

The goal of current RA treatments is to maintain normal joint function by alleviating pain, preventing joint damage and reducing joint swelling and stiffness.

Unfortunately, current common treatment methods—known as

drugs (DMARDs)—are leaving 67 percent of users with daily pain, stiffness and fatigue, according to the Arthritis Foundation's study "Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis: Unmet Needs." The same study also observed significant activity and lifestyle limitations among more than half of the DMARD users studied.

The Arthritis Foundation findings concluded that while medical advances in RA treatment have contributed to improved outcomes for patients, the majority continue to endure significant symptoms, experiencing compromised daily activities and quality of life.

According to the National Institutes of Health, RA reduces patient life expectancy by three to seven years, and those with severe forms of RA may die 10 to 15 years earlier than expected. After 15 or 20 years, 10 percent of patients are severely disabled and are incapable of simple daily living tasks such as washing, dressing and eating. Clearly, the severity of this disease points to a need for new, effective treatments.

## **New Research Underway, Participants Needed**

Clinical studies are now in progress to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of an investigational drug for the treatment of active RA. These studies, occurring at clinics throughout the country, are looking for participants who are 18 years of age or older and living with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis.

If you would like to find out more about these RA clinical research studies, call toll-free (877) STUDY17 (788-3917) or visit [www.researchra.com](http://www.researchra.com).