



Health Awareness

Understanding Parkinson's Disease Dementia

(NAPSA)—Parkinson's disease (PD) is a chronic and progressive neurological condition that affects more than 1.5 million Americans. The disease is known as a movement disorder. However, at any given time, 40 percent of patients with PD have Parkinson's disease dementia. Over the life span of PD patients, approximately 80 percent may develop Parkinson's disease dementia.

People with Parkinson's disease dementia have cognitive impairments related to planning abilities and attention (i.e., executive function), while memory problems, specifically learning new information, are often less pronounced than those seen in Alzheimer's dementia.

Understanding the risk factors of Parkinson's disease dementia is important. These risk factors include: advanced age at onset of disease, past medical history, and a history of depression. The inci-

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dence of dementia among PD patients is up to six times higher than elderly people without the disease.

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logy at the Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit.

A diagnosis of Parkinson's disease dementia can be devastating for patients and their loved ones, but there is treatment available for the mild to moderate stages of this disease. Rivastigmine, the active ingredient in Exelon® Patch, is the only FDA-approved medication to treat mild to moderate Parkinson's disease dementia. Now available as a once daily medication, Exelon Patch (rivastigmine transdermal system) can help people with mild to moderate Parkinson's disease dementia with their ability to process and recall information, as well as overall functioning.

Exelon Patch is also approved for the treatment of mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia in the U.S.

For more information about mild to moderate Parkinson's disease dementia, please go to www.PDDementia.com.

Note to Editors: EXELON® *PATCH* (rivastigmine transdermal system) is a prescription medicine used to treat people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia and mild to moderate Parkinson's disease dementia.

Persons who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease for at least 2 years and in whom other causes of dementia have been ruled out may have PDD if they experience trouble with the following: executive function (i.e. remembering things, solving problems, and planning), memory retrieval, and attention.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

EXELON *PATCH* should not be used if the patient is allergic to rivastigmine or any of the other ingredients of EXELON *PATCH*, or has had an allergic reaction to a similar type of medicine. Speak to the doctor before using EXELON *PATCH*.

At higher than recommended doses, EXELON *PATCH* is associated with significant stomach related side effects such as: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, decreased appetite, and weight loss. For this reason, people should always start at the low dose. After a minimum of four weeks of treatment, and if well tolerated, the doctor may increase the dose to the next level. If you have not applied EXELON *PATCH* for several days, do not apply the next patch before you have talked to a doctor.

In a study, the most common side effects were nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. People at risk for stomach ulcers who take certain medicines should tell their doctor before starting EXELON *PATCH*, because serious stomach problems such as bleeding may occur. People at risk for certain heart conditions should tell their doctor before starting EXELON *PATCH* because they may experience fainting. People with serious lung conditions and difficulty breathing, bladder problems, or seizures should consult their doctor before using EXELON *PATCH* therapy. People on EXELON *PATCH* who feel dizzy or drowsy should not drive or use machines.

Weight should be checked while the person is using EXELON *PATCH*. People below 50 kg, or 110 lbs, may experience more side effects and may have to stop using EXELON *PATCH* due to these side effects.

If you accidentally apply more patches than you should remove all patches and inform the doctor immediately.

In studies for Parkinson's disease dementia, parkinsonian symptoms, particularly tremor, occurred or worsened in some people taking EXELON® (rivastigmine tartrate) capsules.

Tell the doctor about all other prescription or nonprescription medicines the patient is taking. EXELON products should not be taken at the same time with other medicines that have a similar effect on the body and the brain (cholinergic agents) or with anticholinergic medicines. Inform the doctor if the patient needs surgery requiring anesthesia while using EXELON *PATCH*.