

Don't Let Headache Pain Ruin Your Holidays TM

(NAPSA)—Imagine you are at a festive holiday party celebrating with your friends and family when you are hit with a headache so bad that you become sick to your stomach, sensitive to light and sound, and are forced to lie down in a dark, quiet place, causing you to miss the fun. As bad as this sounds, this is often the case for the millions of diagnosed and undiagnosed migraine sufferers who worry about a migraine striking because they lack an effective way to manage their condition.

Migraine headaches affect more than 28 million Americans—including one of the nation's most famous TV actresses, Marcia Cross. But for migraine sufferers, the holiday season can be an especially tough time of year. During the holidays, exposure to migraine triggers may be more common. If left untreated, migraines can disrupt your life, even making it impossible to participate in daily activities.

"I used to struggle with painful migraine headaches, especially during the hectic holiday season. Fortunately, once I got diagnosed, my doctor gave me an effective treatment plan that has helped me manage my migraines," said Marcia Cross. "For example, I've learned that certain foods, like chocolate, cheese and nuts, often trigger my migraines, so I try to avoid eating these foods. Stress is also one of my migraine triggers, so I try to reduce my stress as much as possible. By using different management strategies, I don't have to let my migraines get in the way of my holiday plans."

You Can Do Something About the Pain

The holiday season should be a time of the year fun-filled with parties, friends, families and co-workers. But certain foods and hectic schedules that are common during the holidays can trigger a migraine and ruin what should be a festive time. By following a few simple rules, you can manage your migraines and enjoy the holiday season.

- Plan ahead, because stress can trigger a migraine.
- Eat regularly, because an empty stomach is known to spur a migraine.
- Try to keep a regular sleep schedule during the season, because a lack of sleep or too much sleep can trigger a migraine.
- Certain foods and beverages can fuel a migraine, so it's important to know your food triggers.
- Be prepared. Even when you're trying to avoid your triggers, you can still get a migraine. Always have your medicine with you so you can take it at the first sign of migraine pain and get back to your life more quickly.

Unfortunately, half of all migraine sufferers are undiagnosed and continue to suffer needlessly. If you suffer from frequent, bad headaches, it's important to talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

"A tool that can help is the Headache Quiz, available at www.headachequiz.com," said Dr. Lisa Mannix from Headache Associates in Cincinnati, Ohio. "Take the quiz and talk to your doctor about the results. If you are diag-

nosed with migraines, your doctor may prescribe a migraine-specific medication, like Imitrex[®] (sumatriptan succinate) Tablets, to treat your migraine attacks. As with any medication, however, you'll need to talk to your doctor about what's right for you.

"Getting the right diagnosis can mean the difference between debilitating pain and getting relief," added Dr. Mannix.

About Imitrex

If the diagnosis is migraine, then migraine-specific prescription therapies, like Imitrex, are available for the acute treatment of migraine attacks with or without aura. Imitrex was the first prescription drug in a class of drugs called triptans to receive U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for the acute treatment of migraine in adults. Imitrex provides relief of migraine pain and associated symptoms, without drowsiness, for many patients.

Patients should not take Imitrex if they have certain types of heart disease, history of stroke or TIAs, peripheral vascular disease, Raynaud's syndrome, or blood pressure that is uncontrolled. Patients with risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or being a smoker, should be evaluated by a doctor before taking Imitrex. Very rarely, certain people, even some without heart disease, have had serious heart-related problems. Patients who are pregnant, nursing or taking medications should talk to their doctor.