

Millions Live With Painful GI Symptoms, But Embarrassment Often Keeps Sufferers From Relief

(NAPSA)—Results from a Roper ASW survey found that the millions of Americans who live with painful and disruptive Abdominal discomfort or pain, Bloating and Constipation—the ABC symptoms of common GI problems, such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation (IBS-C) and Chronic Constipation—are having difficulty finding relief.

According to the survey, 92 percent of adults experiencing the ABC symptoms have tried to treat their symptoms, yet only 28 percent report that they are “very satisfied.” This is a problem given the more than 20 million Americans living with the painful and disruptive ABC symptoms.

Unfortunately, people who need help are not talking to their doctors about their ABC symptoms either. The same survey shows that 40 percent of sufferers have not discussed all of their symptoms and 51 percent have not discussed their prior treatments with their doctors.


To Dr. Christine Frissora, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, The New York-Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, this is not surprising.

“Many patients are intimidated or embarrassed about talking to their doctor about IBS with Constipation and Chronic Constipation, but doctors need to understand their troublesome symptoms—especially the impact they have on the patient’s life—to properly treat them,” said Dr. Frissora. “Every day, I see patients suffering from abdominal discomfort or pain, bloating and constipation. These

embarrassing symptoms affect many aspects of their lives. Patients are happy to know that there are effective treatments available that can treat all their symptoms.”

IBS Diagnosis Is as Easy as ABC:

- Abdominal pain/discomfort
- Bloating
- Constipation

For additional information, please visit the GI Relief Center on RealAge.com. 

According to Dr. Frissora, patients need to see their doctor to find relief. By openly discussing all their symptoms, how their symptoms affect their lives and what treatments they have tried previously, doctors can properly diagnose and provide patients with treatment for symptom relief.

New Online Center Launches to Help Sufferers Find Complete Relief

To help patients suffering with the painful ABC symptoms communicate with their doctors, RealAge.com and Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation are launching the ABCs of GI Relief campaign. As part of this campaign, RealAge has created the GI Relief Center—an online resource with educational materials including a symptom checklist and background information on Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation and Chronic Constipation.

This is great news for patients

like Lea Turano, an active graduate student who enjoyed skydiving and other activities until her IBS-C kept her grounded. Lea’s symptoms were so severe that the pain kept her from leaning over and caused people to ask if she was pregnant when she was bloated. After openly talking with her doctor, however, she was able to find relief from her ABC symptoms and return to the skies where she feels most comfortable.

“Living with abdominal pain, bloating and constipation is very debilitating; it affected many aspects of my life,” Lea remembers. “After talking to my doctor about all of my symptoms and how they affected my life, I was prescribed Zelnorm and finally found relief. I encourage anyone suffering with the ABC symptoms to openly talk with their doctor to receive a proper diagnosis and treatment that can bring relief.”

Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation and Chronic Constipation are dysmotility disorders that are among the most common GI disorders affecting up to one in five adult Americans and accounting for more than one in 10 visits to primary care doctors. They are also a leading cause of workplace absenteeism, second only to the common cold.

The survey of 219 American adults who experienced GI symptoms was conducted by Roper Public Affairs and was sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation.

To learn more about IBS-C and Chronic Constipation, please visit the GI Relief Center at www.RealAge.com.

Editors Note: Additional information regarding Zelnorm, Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Chronic Constipation is provided below for your information.

About Zelnorm

Zelnorm is indicated for the treatment of men and women less than 65 years of age with Chronic Idiopathic Constipation. The effectiveness of Zelnorm in patients 65 years or older with Chronic Idiopathic Constipation has not been established. Zelnorm is also indicated for the short-term treatment of women with IBS whose primary symptom is Constipation. The safety and effectiveness of Zelnorm in men with IBS with Constipation have not been established. Efficacy beyond 12 weeks has not been studied. Zelnorm is the first in a novel class of drugs that act as an agonist at 5HT₄ (serotonin type 4) receptors. Zelnorm mimics the natural effects of serotonin by activating 5HT₄ receptors, which normalizes impaired motility in the GI tract, inhibits visceral sensitivity and stimulates intestinal secretion. Overall, safety data is now available in more than 14,000 patients who have enrolled in clinical trials assessing Zelnorm’s safety and efficacy in various GI conditions.

Serious consequences of diarrhea, including hypovolemia, hypotension, and syncope, have been reported with Zelnorm. Zelnorm should be discontinued immediately in patients who develop severe diarrhea, hypotension, or syncope. Zelnorm should not be initiated in patients who are currently experiencing or frequently experience diarrhea.

Zelnorm should be discontinued immediately in patients with new or sudden worsening of abdominal pain. Ischemic colitis and other forms of intestinal ischemia have been reported in patients receiving Zelnorm during marketed use of the drug. In some cases, hospitalization was required. Patients who develop symptoms of ischemic colitis such as rectal bleeding, bloody diarrhea, or new or worsening abdominal pain should discontinue therapy immediately and be evaluated. Zelnorm should not be resumed if ischemic colitis or other forms of intestinal ischemia are diagnosed. A causal relationship between Zelnorm and these events has not been established. The only adverse events reported significantly more often with Zelnorm than with placebo were diarrhea (7% vs. 3%) in Chronic Constipation studies, and headache (15% vs. 12%) and diarrhea (9% vs. 4%) in IBS with Constipation studies.

Zelnorm was developed by Novartis and is also known in some countries as Zelmac. Approximately 3 million patients worldwide have been treated with Zelnorm to date. It is approved in more than 56 countries for IBS with Constipation. Zelnorm also is approved for use in Chronic Constipation in more than 20 countries, including Mexico and many of the Latin American countries.

About Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a motility disorder characterized by abdominal pain or discomfort, bloating and altered bowel function. IBS is one of the most common GI disorders affecting up to one in five adult Americans. IBS accounts for approximately 12% of all visits to primary care doctors and 28% of visits to gastroenterologists and is a leading cause of workplace absenteeism (second only to the common cold).

About Chronic Constipation

Constipation is a common disorder affecting nearly 18 percent of Americans or 37 million people. More than 4.5 million Americans report they are constipated most of the time. Chronic Constipation, as a whole, accounts for more than 5.7 million constipation-related outpatient visits each year, with 990,994 to emergency rooms.