

Important Health Information For People With Diabetes And High Blood Pressure

(NAPSA)—Type 2 diabetes in the United States is a growing epidemic. Statistics show that approximately 18 million Americans currently suffer from diabetes, and those numbers are expected to rise dramatically in the future. While diabetes can cause many complications, most people with the condition aren't aware of the biggest danger of all—heart disease.

If you have diabetes, you are at an increased risk for heart disease. In fact, heart disease is the leading cause of death among people with diabetes. This is because people with diabetes tend to carry one or more of the "risk factors" that are associated with heart disease, including: high blood pressure, insulin resistance, obesity and high levels of bad cholesterol and triglycerides.

High blood pressure is an important concern for people with type 2 diabetes, as an alarming 70 percent of people are affected. Although people with diabetes are often prescribed multiple medications to manage their heart disease risks for high blood pressure in particular, only 25 percent of people reach the recommended blood pressure goal. This places them at higher risk for a stroke, eye problems, kidney problems, and nerve damage.

New information released in a top medical journal and at a major medical meeting showed that the drug Coreg® (carvedilol) may provide benefits in patients with diabetes and high blood pressure. According to the study called GEMINI [Glycemic Effects in Diabetes Mellitus: Carvedilol—Metoprolol (Tartrate) Comparison in Hypertensives], the beta-blocker Coreg showed a positive impact on certain cardiovascular disease risk factors including blood pressure reduction, without negatively affecting HbA1c, a long term measure of blood sugar control, in diabetic patients with hypertension.

"These findings are crucial since very few patients with diabetes have cardiovascular risk factors that are adequately controlled. In



fact, it is estimated that only a little over seven percent of people with diabetes achieve treatment goals as recommended by medical experts," said Dr. George Bakris, Professor in the Departments of Preventive and Internal Medicine, and Director of the Hypertension Research Center at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "It is our hope that the GEMINI trial will impact the future of diabetes management in diabetic hypertensive patients because the results demonstrate a positive impact of Coreg on cardiovascular risk factors for this diabetic hypertensive patient population without negatively affecting HbA1c."

GEMINI was the first study of its kind to show that a beta-blocker could provide benefits to people with diabetes and hypertension. Beta-blockers are an established class of medications that physicians have been using for several years to successfully manage cardiovascular disease in patients with heart failure, high blood pressure and those who have had a heart attack. Despite the life-saving benefits of beta-blockers in heart failure and post myocardial infarction, many physicians have been reluctant to prescribe them to patients with diabetes because the older beta-blockers were known to raise blood sugar levels, which is undesirable for patients with diabetes. GEMINI showed that not all beta-blockers are alike and that the newer beta-blocker Coreg may help blood pressure without negatively impacting HbA1c levels.

About Coreg

Coreg is indicated for the management of essential hypertension. It can be used alone or in combination with other antihypertensive agents, especially thiazide-type diuretics.

Important Safety Information

Patients taking Coreg should avoid stopping therapy abruptly. With certain beta-blocking agents, stopping therapy abruptly has led to chest pain, and in some cases, heart attack. The dosage of Coreg should be reduced gradually over a 1- to 2-week period, and the patient should be carefully monitored.

As with any medicine, there are some people who should not take Coreg. The people who should not take Coreg include those with severe heart failure who are hospitalized in the intensive care unit. Also, people who require certain intravenous medications that help support their circulation (inotropic medications) should not receive Coreg. Other people who should not take Coreg are those with asthma or other breathing problems, those with a very slow heartbeat or heart that skips a beat (irregular heartbeat), those with liver disease and those who are allergic to Coreg.

Some common side effects associated with Coreg include shortness of breath, a slow heartbeat, weight gain, fatigue, hypotension, dizziness or faintness. People taking Coreg who have any of these symptoms should call their doctor. Additionally, if patients experience fatigue or dizziness, they should sit or lie down and avoid driving or hazardous tasks. People with diabetes should report any changes in blood sugar levels to their physician. Contact lens wearers may produce fewer tears or have dry eyes. As with any medicine, patients taking Coreg should also first tell their doctor what other medications they are taking.

For full prescribing information on Coreg, call GlaxoSmith-Kline's U.S. Customer Response Center at 1-888-825-5249 or visit www.gsk.com.