Understanding IPF—A Rare Lung Disease

(NAPS)—Imagine this: one day, you or someone you care about develops a persistent dry cough and shortness of breath. Doctors aren't sure what to make of it. It could be a common respiratory condition like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or bronchitis—or it could be a rare, irreversible lung disease called idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF).

Mark's Story

As an avid golfer and runner, Mark considered himself to be in relatively good health, which is why he was surprised when he developed a dry cough that wouldn't go away and was hospitalized with a bad case of pneumonia. His doctor was concerned and ran additional tests; it was then that Mark learned he has IPF.

Mark was diagnosed quickly, but many others with IPF do not have this experience. In one survey, more than half of people with pulmonary fibrosis reported at least a one-year delay between early symptoms and diagnosis.

What Is IPF?

IPF is a progressive disease that causes scarring of the lungs, making breathing difficult.

Since most people with IPF are over the age of 50, they may dismiss their symptoms as changes in health that come with aging. But with a median survival time from diagnosis of just 3-5 years, IPF is very serious.

Mark (left), who was diagnosed with IPF in 2016, and his wife, Melinda (right)

Because it is a rare disease affecting approximately 100,000 Americans, those diagnosed with IPF often feel isolated and don't know where to turn for help.

"I was shocked when I was diagnosed. Hearing from my doctor that IPF is unpredictable and can progress very quickly was overwhelming," Mark said. "It was an extremely hard time for me and my family."

What Can Be Done

Once Mark learned that the damage to the lungs caused by IPF cannot be reversed, he decided he wanted to act quickly and be proactive. Although there is no cure for IPF, there are ways to manage the condition.

With the help of his doctor, Mark found ways to safely continue doing some of the hobbies he enjoys, such as golfing and going on walks. They also discussed FDA-approved medicines that treat IPF, and he now takes Esbriet® (pirfenidone).

Every case of IPF is different, so it is important that, upon diagnosis, people work with their doctors to develop an individualized plan based on their specific needs, goals and what is important to them.

For some people with IPF, oxygen therapy, pulmonary rehabilitation and joining a support group may also be recommended and helpful.

Mark hopes that sharing his story will raise awareness of IPF symptoms and encourage those with the disease to discuss treatment options with their doctors as well as seek support from family and friends, which has been very important to him.

"IPF has certainly changed my life, but staying busy with my family business and spending time with my wife, twin sons and friends keep me motivated and focused on enjoying life," Mark says.

Learn More

For more information about IPF and Esbriet, visit www.esbriet.com and talk to your doctor. You can also call 1-844-693-7274 and press 3 to schedule an educational session.

About Esbriet

Esbriet is a prescription medicine used to treat people with a lung disease called idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF).

It is not known if Esbriet is safe and effective in children.

Important Safety Information

Before taking Esbriet, patients should tell their doctor about all of their medical conditions, including if they:

- have liver problems
- have kidney problems
- are a smoker
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Esbriet will harm the unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Esbriet passes into breast milk. Patients and their doctor should decide if they will take Esbriet or breastfeed.

Patients should tell their doctor about all the medicines they take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Patients should avoid:

- Sunlight. Esbriet can make skin sensitive to the sun and the light from sunlamps and tanning beds. Patients could get a severe sunburn. Patients must use sunscreen (SPF 50) and wear a hat and clothes that cover the skin if they have to be in sunlight. Patients should talk to their doctor if they get a sunburn or rash.
- Taking Esbriet with other medicines that can make your skin sensitive to the sun, the light from sunlamps and tanning beds.
- Smoking. Smoking may affect how well Esbriet works.

Esbriet may cause serious side effects, including:

- **liver problems.** Patients must call their doctor right away if they have unexplained symptoms such as yellowing of their skin or the white part of their eyes (jaundice), dark or brown (tea-colored) urine, pain in the upper right side of their stomach area (abdomen), bleeding or bruising more easily than normal, or feeling tired. A patient's doctor will do blood tests to check how his/her liver is working during treatment with Esbriet.
- **sensitivity to sunlight (photosensitivity) and rash.**
- **stomach problems.** Esbriet may cause stomach problems such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, indigestion, heartburn, and stomach pain. Patients must tell their doctor right away if their stomach problems get worse or do not go away. A patient's doctor may need to change his/her dose of Esbriet.

The most common side effects of Esbriet include feeling tired, insomnia, upper respiratory tract infections, sinusitis, headache, dizziness, and decreased or loss of appetite.

These are not all the possible side effects of Esbriet. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or www.fda.gov/medwatch. You may also report side effects to Genentech at 1-888-835-2555.

Please visit www.esbriet.com for the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information, for additional important safety information.