



spotlight on health

How To Manage COPD Effectively: *New Insights From Patients And Caregivers*

(NAPSA)—If you or someone close to you lives with COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), then you are aware of the daily struggles that may coincide with managing this disease. Patients with COPD report symptoms of breathlessness, coughing, wheezing and tightness in the chest that may affect one's quality of life by limiting physical activity or routine daily tasks.

A recent telephone survey found that patients who have COPD feel more in control when they actively manage their disease. The survey, commissioned by the COPD Foundation and Dey, L.P., asked 400 people living with COPD and 400 people who provide care for someone with COPD about their thoughts on using a nebulizer (a device that turns medications into a fine mist for delivery to the lungs) to treat their COPD and how they best manage the condition.

Managing COPD

There is no cure for COPD, but there are several lifestyle changes that patients and caregivers can make to help manage this disease. For example, rehabilitation exercises and quitting smoking may help. Patients should also seek medical treatment and talk with their doctor about the use of nebulization therapy as a way to manage their COPD successfully with medication.

A recent survey showed that nine out of 10 patients who use nebulization therapy report satisfaction with their current treatments. Sixty-five percent of caregivers surveyed were significantly more likely than patients to wish that those they cared for had been placed on nebulization therapy sooner.



“COPD patients and their caregivers can make an incredible difference working together to improve their quality of life by being proactive in the day-to-day management of their health,” said John Walsh, president of the COPD Foundation. “Caregivers are the unsung heroes who help keep patients on track and focus on achieving a better, active lifestyle.”

Caregivers and Appropriate Therapy: Key Considerations for Effective Disease Management

November, which is designated as National Family Caregivers Month, provides an opportunity to recognize the significant role that caregivers play in the daily lives of those living with chronic diseases such as COPD. The survey found that 58 percent of caregivers spend at least five hours each week assisting someone with his or her breathing disorder.

The survey also found that most patients and caregivers reported that the benefits of nebulization—mainly the perception of easier and more comfortable breathing—outweigh any challenges or constraints; specifically:

- Eighty percent of patients and caregivers surveyed preferred using a nebulizer over only an inhaler, a device that delivers medication directly to the lungs.
- Sixty-eight percent of patients reported easier breathing as the most positive aspect of nebulization therapy, and 86 percent reported a more comfortable feeling in their chest as a result of their nebulization use.
- Active living is also a factor, with patients noting their daily activity improved since initiating the nebulization therapy.
- Seventy-four percent agree they have been able to be more physically active in their daily lives.
- Twenty-five percent of patients surveyed cited the immobility of the nebulizer as a disadvantage of the therapy.

About COPD

COPD affects an estimated 24 million Americans and is the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for over 100,000 deaths per year. While the disease is often attributed to smoking, that's not the only cause. Secondhand smoke, occupational dust and chemicals, air pollution and genetic factors can also be behind COPD.

This year's World COPD Day will be held November 18 and is an annual event organized by the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) to improve awareness and care of COPD around the world.

Learn More

For more information about COPD, visit www.copdfoundation.org. Those seeking information about caregiving may want to research the National Family Caregivers Association.