



HEALTH NEWS

When The Going Gets Tough, Could It Be Interstitial Cystitis?

(NAPSA)—Interstitial cystitis, also known as IC, is a painful, and often debilitating, chronic condition in which the bladder lining becomes irritated and inflamed. The symptoms of IC include pain in the pelvic area, an urgent and frequent need to use the bathroom, and pain during or after sex.

“Imagine you have a deep paper cut that you pour acid into every day. That is only a fraction of what many IC patients feel in their bladder on a regular basis,” says Susan Wysocki, President and CEO, National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health. “Some IC patients describe throbbing, stabbing pains and muscle spasms that take their breath away.”

Despite these painful symptoms, IC can be difficult to diagnose, causing many people to suffer in silence for years. Research indicates that most IC patients consult at least five physicians, including psychiatrists, sometimes over a period of more than four years, before interstitial cystitis is diagnosed. One of the reasons for this is that IC symptoms can be easily confused with the symptoms of other health conditions like recurrent urinary tract infections, overactive bladder or endometriosis.

As IC sufferer Kristine Caruso recalls: “I first started having IC symptoms when I was around 19 years old. I constantly felt like I had a urinary tract infection, but I always tested negative when I went to the doctor’s office. It was very frustrating; so much so that I started questioning myself. I felt as if nobody was listening.”

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To help raise awareness of IC, the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health and the Interstitial Cystitis Network have partnered with Ortho Women’s Health & Urology™, Division of Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., to launch a downloadable podcast series covering different aspects of living with and managing IC. The three-part series, called “When the Going Gets Tough, Could it be 123 IC?” is available for free at www.AllAboutIC.com.

“Living with IC is tough. By recognizing the three symptoms most commonly associated with IC—Pain, Urgency, Frequency, which we refer to as the ‘123 of IC’—we can help the thousands of people out there who are suffering without knowing why. When the going gets tough, they need to ask ‘could it be IC?’ sooner,” states Wysocki.

There is no cure for IC, but once diagnosed, patients do have treatment options to help manage the condition. When treating IC, a multimodal approach, including dietary restrictions and other pain management options, is often recommended.

For more information about the IC podcast series, the condition, its symptoms, and coping options, please visit: www.AllAboutIC.com.