



Health Bulletin



Important News For African Americans In Battle Against Alzheimer's Disease

*Alzheimer's Incidence Up To Three Times Higher In African Americans;
Patients Tend To Go Longer Without Diagnosis*

(NAPSA)—It is being called a silent epidemic among African Americans. Alzheimer's disease (AD), a progressive brain disorder affecting approximately 4.5 million Americans nationwide, is reported to be two to three times more common in African Americans than in Caucasians. Over the next 30 years, the number of African Americans entering the age of risk (65+) will more than double to 6.9 million. With increasing age being a major risk factor for AD, the magnitude of this public health crisis will continue to grow.

African Americans also tend to be diagnosed at later stages of the disease, when cognitive function, such as learning and memory, has already substantially declined. Although there is no cure for AD, there is evidence that an approved Alzheimer's treatment can benefit African Americans with mild to moderate AD. A recent open-label study of 126 African American patients with mild to moderate AD, who were evaluated over 12 weeks, found that those treated with the prescription medication Aricept® (donepezil HCl tablets) showed significant improvements in learning and memory. This was the first study to assess the benefit of the drug exclusively in this population.

"These findings are important because they suggest the benefits of treatment in African-American patients with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease," said Patrick Griffith, M.D., professor of clinical medicine (Neurology) at More-

Dr. Griffith recommends answering the following 10 questions to help determine if the memory problems experienced by your loved one could be symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Your answers do not mean your loved one has Alzheimer's, but may mean a doctor's visit is needed.

- Does he/she often repeat himself/herself or ask the same questions over and over?
- Is he/she more forgetful; that is, have trouble with short-term memory?
- Does he/she forget appointments, family occasions or holidays?
- Does he/she seem sad, down in the dumps, or cry more often than in the past?
- Has he/she started having trouble doing calculations, managing finances or balancing the checkbook?
- Has he/she lost interest in his/her activities such as hobbies, reading, attending church or other social activities?
- Has he/she started needing help eating, dressing, bathing or using the bathroom?
- Has he/she become irritable, agitated or suspicious, or has he/she started seeing, hearing or believing things that are not real?
- Are there concerns about his/her driving—for example, getting lost or driving unsafely—or has the person had to stop driving?
- Does he/she have trouble finding the words he/she wants to say, finishing sentences or naming people or things?

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house School of Medicine in Atlanta, who was the study's lead investigator. "Older African Americans, caregivers and their physicians should watch for early signs of Alzheimer's disease symptoms, such as memory loss, and intervene with treatment."

Once-a-day prescription Aricept is indicated for mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease. Aricept is well tolerated but may not be for everyone. Some people may have nausea or diarrhea, not sleep well or vomit. Some people may

have muscle cramps, feel very tired or may not want to eat. In studies, these side effects were usually mild and went away over time. People at risk for stomach ulcers or who take certain other medicines should tell their doctors because serious stomach problems, such as bleeding, may get worse. Some people who take Aricept may experience fainting.

For full Aricept prescribing information, please call (888) 999-9616 or visit www.aricept.com. *Sponsored by Eisai and Pfizer*