



Health Bulletin



Living with Alzheimer's Disease: One Man's Story Provides Hope to Others

(NAPSA)—People who have loved ones with signs of Alzheimer's disease (AD) shouldn't give up hope—medical treatment is helping millions of patients and their caregivers cope with this devastating illness. William's story is one example of the difference that diagnosis and treatment of the disease can make.

William's life was completely disrupted by AD. Although he had a master's degree in science, untreated AD caused him to stop talking and made this normally gentle man abusive and aggressive. Eventually, William's troublesome behavior left his family with no choice but to admit him to an AD unit in a nursing home.

When Dr. Ghooray saw the 79-year-old man, his diagnosis was an advanced moderate stage of AD. Along with William's behavioral problems, he was almost entirely unable to care for himself, so Dr. Ghooray started him on Exelon® (rivastigmine tartrate) therapy. Exelon is a prescription medication that is used to slow the progression of the symptoms of mild to moderate AD.

After a year on Exelon, Dr. Ghooray now stages William's disease as mild and has discontinued treatment with two psychiatric medications prescribed to help William's behavioral problems. According to Dr. Ghooray, William's response to his Alzheimer's treatment is the best he's ever seen.

Most notably, William has been released from the nursing home. He simply no longer belongs there. Back at home, his wife sees a big



Medical therapy has helped people like "William" (right) living with Alzheimer's.

change in William. In the nursing home, William needed constant care. Now he can stay home alone while his wife does the shopping.

"Not all people with Alzheimer's disease will have the same response to treatment as William, but his story is a prime example of why it is important to be proactive and not bury our heads in the sand when it comes to treating this disease," said Jay Ellis, a neurologist with Alzheimer's Support Services in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Dr. Ellis chairs the expert advisory panel of a program called "Daily Victories: Cases for a Cause," which recently profiled William's story in an effort to educate others about the importance of early diagnosis and treatment of AD. "Through this program, we hope to show how medical therapy has helped people like William living with Alzheimer's so that more patients may benefit from treatment," said Dr. Ellis.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Cor-

poration has donated funds to AD advocacy groups across the country for each case of an Exelon patient submitted to the "Daily Victories: Cases for a Cause" program. In total the program has raised \$50,000 for organizations including the National Council on the Aging (NCOA), the National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) and various state chapters of the Alzheimer's Association.

The benefits observed with Exelon may be due to the way it works in the brain. Although the exact causes of AD are not fully understood, it is related to chemical changes in the brain involving a neurotransmitter called acetylcholine. This neurotransmitter is related to memory and ability to carry out daily activities. Exelon increases the amount of acetylcholine in the brain by blocking two enzymes—acetylcholinesterase (AChE) and butyrylcholinesterase (BuChE)—that are involved in breaking it down. While the clinical significance of BuChE has not been established, blocking *both* AChE and BuChE may present another therapeutic approach in AD.

For further information, consult your doctor or visit www.AlzheimersDisease.com.

Free Resource Available:

Free "ID.A.D. (Identify Alzheimer's Disease) Resource Kits" are available by calling toll-free 1-877-439-3566 or visiting www.nfca.org. The kit contains educational materials such as a video, a memory questionnaire and informational brochures specifically for family caregivers.

Note to Editors: William's story represents the successful treatment with EXELON® (rivastigmine tartrate) of an actual patient with Alzheimer's disease. Because every patient responds differently, results may vary. EXELON® is approved for mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease. **EXELON use is associated with significant stomach-related side effects, including nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, and weight loss. If therapy is interrupted for longer than several days, treatment should be reinitiated with the lowest daily dose in order to avoid the possibility of severe vomiting and its potentially serious consequences.** In clinical studies, stomach-related side effects occurred more frequently as doses were increased. The weight loss associated with EXELON occurred more commonly among women receiving high doses in clinical studies. Because these side effects can be serious, caregivers should be encouraged to monitor for these adverse events and inform the physician if they occur. People at risk for certain heart conditions or stomach ulcers should notify their doctor before starting EXELON therapy. In clinical studies, some patients also experienced fainting, weakness and upset stomach. For more information, please see complete prescribing information at www.AlzheimersDisease.com.