

Symptoms Checklist Helps Families Identify Potential Memory Problems

Television & Radio Star Leeza Gibbons Urges Families to Recognize Symptoms Early

(NAPSA)—When television and radio personality and *Extra!* host Leeza Gibbons' mother began to repeat herself, her family initially suspected a drinking problem. "We started thinking, maybe she really can't have a glass of wine with dinner," said Gibbons. "She's not handling it very well. Our real wakeup call came from mom herself when she told my dad, 'I've paid this bill three times. Something's not right.'"

Memory problems such as those Gibbons describes can be more than frustrating—they may be early signs of something more serious such as Alzheimer's disease and an indication to look for answers. Now, families concerned with the memory lapses of a loved one can complete the Memory Problems Checklist and share it with a physician to assist in patient evaluation.

"The Memory Problems Checklist, a quick and easy questionnaire that can be completed in the privacy of the home, helps families identify concerns about memory problems they've observed in someone for whom they care and discuss these concerns with their doctor," said Jeffrey Gelblum, MD, associate professor of Neurology, University of Miami. "Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment of Alzheimer's disease may slow the progression of symptoms, offering patients additional time at a higher level of cognitive function, and frankly, for Alzheimer's disease patients and their families, time together is precious."

The 11-question checklist takes only minutes to complete and can help family members and their physicians in the evaluation of memory problems, or possibly early symptoms of dementia, of which Alzheimer's disease represents the majority. While the checklist does not offer a diagnosis, responses to the questions may further reinforce the need for



a visit to a doctor's office for a complete evaluation, diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

The checklist also provides a starting point for discussion among patients, families and physicians with questions such as, "Does he/she need reminders to do things like chores, shopping, or taking medicine?" In any case, individuals are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with a healthcare professional.

The checklist, developed with funding from Pfizer Inc. and Eisai Inc., makers of ARICEPT® (donepezil hydrochloride), is now available nationwide by calling 800-760-6029 or through local physicians' offices.

While there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, medical treatment is available to manage symptoms of the disease. One prescription treatment is once-a-day ARICEPT® that can improve cognition and maintain patient function in people with mild and moderate Alzheimer's. ARICEPT®, the number one prescribed Alzheimer's medication, is a clinically proven, well-tolerated, once-daily treatment for mild and moderate Alzheimer's disease.

"Once my mom started taking ARICEPT® we felt that the medication was able to keep her at a

place where we still had our mother," said Leeza Gibbons. "In fact, her performance on the cognitive test she took the day she was diagnosed and her performance on the same test almost two years later had not changed. We felt it was a major victory."

In a progressively degenerative disease such as Alzheimer's, in addition to improvement, no further decline or less-than-expected decline are considered positive treatment responses. Improvement, no change, or decline have been observed in patients treated with ARICEPT® in clinical trials. Individual responses to treatment may vary.

In controlled clinical trials of up to six months, more than 80 percent of patients taking ARICEPT® experienced improved cognition or exhibited no further decline compared to 58 percent of patients on placebo.

ARICEPT® is well tolerated, but some people do experience side effects like nausea, diarrhea, insomnia, vomiting, muscle cramps, fatigue, and loss of appetite. In clinical studies, these effects were generally mild, temporary, and went away with continued use; two percent of people taking ARICEPT® experienced fainting. People at risk for ulcers should tell their doctors because their condition may get worse.

To date, more than 1.4 million people in the United States have received a prescription for ARICEPT®, contributing to a total of 450 million days of patient use worldwide.

For more information about managing Alzheimer's disease call the Eisai Inc.- and Pfizer Inc.-sponsored toll-free number, (888) 999-9616 or see www.aricept.com.

Eisai Inc. and Pfizer Inc. are dedicated to advances in Alzheimer's therapy. Full prescribing information is available at www.aricept.com.