



spotlight on health

Survey Shows People With Epilepsy Could Have Better Quality Of Life

(NAPSA)—Researchers are working on new ways to help people with epilepsy, it's the third most common neurological disorder.

Epilepsy, when diagnosed, is usually treated with a number of antiepileptic drugs or AEDs, many of which can cause distressing side effects.

College student Kristen Peters was diagnosed with epilepsy at the young age of 15. "I had just made the dance team at school, I was taking driver's education and had received my permit. I was an A student, active in my church youth program and enjoyed going to movies and dances with my friends," says 19-year-old Peters.

"When I was diagnosed with epilepsy my life changed rapidly. I was put on medication, which made me very drowsy and prevented me from concentrating in school. I also experienced side effects: muscle tremors, dizziness, weight gain and loss, mouth sores and memory loss. My grades suffered along with my social life, relationships and independence. Epilepsy made me feel very scared and alone."

A new survey, "Quality of Life in Epilepsy," which was sponsored by Cyberonics Inc., has shown that people with epilepsy often experience these debilitating side effects, yet many do not proactively seek new treatments that could help. Three-quarters of the epilepsy patients surveyed strongly believe that even modest improvements in seizure control would greatly improve their daily lives but only one-third of them regularly ask their doctor if new or alternative treatments are available.

New treatments are available that have fewer side effects. Unfortunately, many people with epilepsy and their caregivers are unaware of these new treatments.



Many people with refractory epilepsy don't yet know about a new treatment that could change their lives.

Effectively managing epilepsy means balancing seizure control and medication side effects. Vagus Nerve Stimulation Therapy, or VNS Therapy, can reduce the number of medications a person needs to take to achieve seizure control.

VNS Therapy is an innovative long-term therapy for central nervous system disorders, which has been demonstrated as safe and effective for people with epilepsy. The therapy is delivered via a small pacemaker-like device, implanted just under the skin in the chest. It sends mild electrical stimulation to the brain via the left vagus nerve.

"Starting VNS Therapy was a turning point in my life," Kristen Peters says. "I was able to bring my grades up, stay out late with my friends and start working part-time. I've been seizure-free, attending college away from home, and living a happy, fulfilling life."

For more information visit www.cyberonics.com.