



spotlight on health care

Hector Elizondo: Caring For A Loved One With Alzheimer's Dementia

(NAPSA)—For Emmy Award-winning actor Hector Elizondo, the challenges of caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's dementia are very personal. In the 1960s, Elizondo's mother was afflicted with Alzheimer's dementia, a degenerative disease that alters the brain, causing impaired thinking, memory and attention.

For Elizondo's father, the primary caregiver, taking care of his wife was a 24/7 commitment. Although the family was willing to do whatever it took to care for Hector's mother, the demands, coupled with unpredictable days, were physically exhausting. Back then, there weren't any treatment options to help with the worsening of Elizondo's mother's symptoms. The lack of caregiver support resources brought emotional chaos and physical exhaustion to Elizondo's father, and his health eventually declined.

"While my family had nowhere to turn, it is important for today's caregivers to recognize that they now have access to medical treatments, educational information and resources that can help," said Elizondo. "I encourage caregivers to visit www.CaringForAlz.com, an online resource from Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, for



Actor Hector Elizondo (front left) with his parents and younger sister in New York City circa 1944.

information that can provide answers to common caregiver challenges. The resources may also offer stability to those caring for loved ones with mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia, and put them in touch with a community of caregivers so they know they are not alone."

Today, more than 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, many of whom are in the mild to moderate stages of the disease. Additionally, nearly 10 million Americans provide unpaid care for a person with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia. As the disease can present unpredictable chal-

lenges on a daily—or even hourly—basis, caring for a person with Alzheimer's dementia is often very difficult. However, while medical treatment options did not exist in the 1960s, recent advances may help today's patients.

"Fortunately, today, patients have access to the latest medical treatments, such as the Exelon® Patch (rivastigmine transdermal system), which is the first and only skin patch for the treatment of mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia," said Dr. Gus Alva, director of ATP Clinical Research in Costa Mesa, Calif. "By providing continuous delivery of rivastigmine over 24 hours, Exelon Patch represents a different treatment option for people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia."

For more information about caring for a loved one with mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia and treatment options, visit www.CaringForAlz.com.

Emmy Award-winning actor Hector Elizondo has appeared in more than 80 motion pictures and made-for-TV movies, as well as critically acclaimed TV series such as "Chicago Hope" and "Cane." He is currently featured in the Golden Globe Award-winning USA Network series "Monk."

About Exelon Patch

EXELON® PATCH (rivastigmine transdermal system) is a prescription medicine used to treat people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia and mild to moderate Parkinson's disease dementia.

Important Safety Information

EXELON PATCH should not be used if the patient is allergic to rivastigmine or any of the other ingredients of EXELON PATCH, or has had an allergic reaction to a similar type of medicine. Speak to the doctor before using EXELON PATCH.

At higher-than-recommended doses, EXELON PATCH is associated with significant stomach-related side effects such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, decreased appetite, and weight loss. For this reason, people should always start at the low dose. After a minimum of four weeks of treatment, and if well tolerated, the doctor may increase the dose to the next level. If you have not applied EXELON PATCH for several days, do not apply the next patch before you have talked to a doctor.

In a study, the most common side effects were nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. People at risk for stomach ulcers who take certain medicines should tell their doctor before starting EXELON PATCH, because serious stomach problems such as bleeding may occur. People at risk for certain heart conditions should tell their doctor before starting EXELON PATCH because they may experience fainting. People with serious lung conditions and difficulty breathing, bladder problems or seizures should consult their doctor before using EXELON PATCH therapy. People on EXELON PATCH who feel dizzy or drowsy should not drive or use machines.

Weight should be checked while the person is using EXELON PATCH. People below 50 kg, or 110 lbs, may experience more side effects and may have to stop using EXELON PATCH due to these side effects.

If you accidentally apply more patches than you should, remove all patches and inform the doctor immediately.

In studies for Parkinson's disease dementia, parkinsonian symptoms, particularly tremor, occurred or worsened in some people taking EXELON® (rivastigmine tartrate) capsules.

Tell the doctor about all other prescription or nonprescription medicines the patient is taking. EXELON products should not be taken at the same time with other medicines that have a similar effect on the body and the brain (cholinomimetic agents) or with anticholinergic medicines. Inform the doctor if the patient needs surgery requiring anesthesia while using EXELON PATCH. For full prescribing information, visit www.ExelonPatch.com.