

Celebrating A Breakthrough In Mental Health Leading Anxiety Treatment Turns 40

(NAPSA)—Until as recently as 40 years ago, the millions of people suffering from anxiety and its related disorders had little hope of therapeutic relief. Then the hard work of scientist Dr. Leo Sternbach led to the introduction of a solution in 1963.

“We set out to create innovative options for patients suffering from anxiety disorders in an attempt to improve their quality of life,” said Dr. Sternbach. “Medicines have come a long way in the last 40 years, but it is rewarding to see the tremendous impact Valium (diazepam) still has on patients’ lives today. I am proud to say that I was a part of the discovery process, and I am still a part of Roche today.”

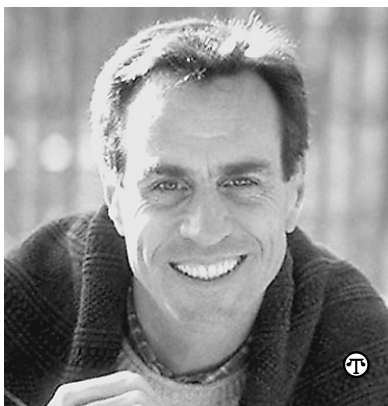
Since its discovery, Valium has been used by millions of Americans to alleviate anxiety and muscle spasms. Between 1969 and 1982, Valium was the most frequently prescribed drug in the United States and in 1978, nearly 2.3 billion doses of the tablets stamped with the trademark “V” were taken. Valium is currently available in more than 70 countries worldwide.

Still, anxiety and its related disorders affect many millions of people around the world. In the United States alone, 19 million people are affected by these debilitating illnesses every year. Fortunately, anxiety disorders can be effectively treated with medication.

Valium is an important part of what’s been called the revolution of biological psychiatry, which began in the 1950s and enabled, for the first time, effective drug treatment for psychological and neurological conditions. As a member of the benzodiazepine family of drugs, Valium acts on GABA (gamma amino butyric acid), the most important inhibitory neurotransmitter in the brain, to bring relief from the symptoms of anxiety and its related disorders.

On the 40th birthday of the drug, the people at Roche are now reflecting on it and the innovative new therapies it led to. Valium began a legacy at Roche of developing innovative new products that fill previously unmet medical needs.

“The success of Valium served as a foundation for Roche to invest in



Millions of people are leading happier lives thanks to a revolutionary discovery about mental health care made 40 years ago.

the research and development of additional breakthrough products,” said George B. Abercrombie, President and Chief Executive Officer, North American Pharmaceuticals Operations, Roche. “This evolution was a precursor to other Roche therapeutics, like Fuzeon™ (enfuvirtide) and Pegasys® (peginterferon alfa-2a), both of which will pave the way for the discovery of the innovative medicines of tomorrow.”

Roche is a global leader in oncology and a leader in transplant in the United States. The company also introduced the first protease inhibitor and the first fusion inhibitor, both used to treat HIV/AIDS.

Valium is contraindicated in patients with acute narrow angle glaucoma and in pediatric patients under six months of age. Patients receiving Valium should be cautioned against engaging in hazardous occupations requiring complete mental alertness such as operating machinery or driving a motor vehicle. Patients should be advised against the simultaneous ingestion of alcohol and other CNS-depressant drugs during Valium therapy. Side effects most commonly reported were drowsiness, fatigue and ataxia. You can learn more from the Physicians Desk Reference (PDR) or www.rocheusa.com.

Valium is only available on a doctor’s prescription. If you think you have an anxiety disorder, you should consult your doctor, who can discuss appropriate treatment options with you.