PRESS RELEASE

Louisiana Pharmacists Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Louisiana Pharmacists Association Educates Patients about Carbon Cystic Fibrosis

Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is a life- threatening disease that primarily affects the lungs and digestive system. Usually diagnosed early in life it affects over 300,000 people in the United States.[2]Individuals with CF inherit a gene that causes a buildup of thick mucus in the lungs, pancreas and other organs. When mucus clogs the lungs, it can become difficult to breathe. The thick mucus also traps bacteria in the airways, which can result in infections and inflammations and often leads to severe lung damage, and eventually, respiratory failure. In the pancreas, the buildup of mucus prevents the release of digestive enzyme that helps the body break down food and absorb important nutrients. [3] The symptoms of CF include persistent cough, frequent lungs infections, wheezing or shortness of breath, poor growth, malnutrition and frequent greasy, bulky stools often coupled with difficult bowel movements.[4]

There is no cure for CF, but supportive treatments are available to help improve quality of life. The goals of CF treatment include: preventing and controlling lung infections, loosening and removing thick, sticky mucus, preventing blockage in the intestines, providing enough nutrition, and preventing dehydration.[1] Treatments for lung symptoms in people who have CF include chest physical therapy, exercise, and medicines. Chest physical therapy includes lung percussion. This involves pulsations applied to the chest by trained therapists or specialized devices to loosen the mucus from the lung. Aerobic exercise is often used to a similar effect. Drug treatments include the aggressive use of antibiotics, anti-inflammatory medicines, bronchodilators, and medicines to help clear the mucus. These medicines help treat or prevent lung infections, reduce swelling and open up the airways, and thin mucus.[2]

CF can cause many digestive problems, such as bulky stools, intestinal gas, a swollen belly, severe constipation, and pain or discomfort. Digestive problems also can lead to poor growth and development in

children.[3]Oral pancreatic enzymes is usually prescribed to aid in the digestion of fats. Supplements of vitamins A, D, E, and K may also be needed. A registered dietitian is often called on to create a nutritional plan customized to the individual and their family.[2]

Joining support groups can also be beneficial for the individual and the caregiver for an individual with CF. Individuals and families with CF should establish a long term relationship with their pharmacist to better manage the pharmacologic and non-pharmacological therapies they will need.[3] The important use of antibiotics, anti-inflammatory medicines, bronchodilators, and medicines to help clear the mucus also entails careful monitoring for drug-drug, drug-food and drug-disease interactions. Additionally many of these treatments may require special techniques to administer them properly. [1] A long term relationship with the pharmacist will help the patient and his or her families cope with CF and achieve the long and happy life they deserve.[4]

Resources:

1. Board, A.D.A.M. Cystic Fibrosis. U.S. National Library of Medicine.Web. 16 Jan. 2015. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001167/>.

2. Cohen, Taylor Sitarik, and Alice Prince. "Cystic Fibrosis: a Mucosal Immunodeficiency Syndrome." Nature medicine 18.4 (2012): 509–519. PMC.Web. 30 Jan. 2015.

3. "Cystic Fibrosis." Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.Web. 16 Jan. 2015. <http://www.cff.org/>.

4. "What Is Cystic Fibrosis?" - NHLBI, NIH. Web. 17 Jan. 2015. <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/cf>.

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The Louisiana Pharmacists Association, established in 1882, strives to promote the interests of all pharmacists of the State of Louisiana. For more information about the LPA and its benefits, contact Julie Fuselier or Phyllis Perron, LPA Co-Executive Directors at 225/346-6883 or visit our website at www.louisianapharmacists.com.

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