

THE BRITISH CARDIAC PATIENTS ASSOCIATION

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New research shows lack of awareness over main symptom of UK's biggest killer

Patient charity calls for action as angina patients continue to suffer frequent attacks after diagnosis

3 April 2007: New research released today by The British Cardiac Patients Association (BCPA) highlights a worrying level of ignorance amongst the population about angina, despite it being the main symptom of coronary heart disease (CHD), the UK's biggest killer.¹

In the UK there are about 345,000 new cases of angina each year², while CHD kills almost 20% of people.¹ However, a new survey of 2,062 adults revealed that the risk of developing angina was greatly underestimated.³ More people believed they were at a higher risk of being affected by breast or lung cancer when, in fact, angina is far more common.³⁻⁵ Worryingly, almost a quarter of people admitted they did not know the main symptoms of the disease.³

Angina attacks continue after diagnosis and treatment

A second piece of research, also released today, highlights the huge burden of angina for those who develop it and issues around the effectiveness of current treatments.⁶ Feedback from over 600 angina patients showed they typically experience up to 79 attacks a year, seriously impacting their quality of life.⁶ Amazingly, over half of those questioned continued to experience at least one attack a week after being diagnosed and treated⁶, while over two thirds stated their angina continued to have a moderate to severe impact on their lifestyle.⁶

A call for action was made by Eve Knight, from The BCPA: "Angina is the main sign of CHD, the UK's biggest killer. The lack of awareness of the risk factors and symptoms is very worrying. Far more must be done to educate the general public about how to reduce their risk of angina. In addition, we need to educate those with angina about available treatments as there are options which could help reduce the burden of both symptoms and side effects."

Side effects are major issue

In addition to suboptimal efficacy, side effects associated with current treatments for angina are a key issue for those with the condition. Over a quarter of respondents stated side effects such as fatigue, impotence and joint pains had a significantly or extremely negative impact on their life.⁶

Servier Laboratories Ltd have been involved in the creation of this Press Release

Over half of respondents felt their work and/or daily activities were limited by the side effects of their treatment⁶ and nearly two-thirds claimed their sex life had been affected.⁶

Dr Adrian Brady, Consultant Cardiologist at Glasgow Royal Infirmary, confirmed the burden of side effects, commenting: "These results demonstrate what many of us have long felt. We need to strengthen our drive to help those with angina find a treatment option that works for them, as the burden of this disease can be extremely debilitating. Angina which is not adequately controlled impacts on all aspects of quality of life. There are ways of managing these side effects and to achieve better symptom control and patients and their doctors need to be aware of the options available to them."

Notes to editors

About the surveys

The survey of 2,062 adults aged 15+ from across Great Britain was developed by The British Cardiac Patients Association, sponsored by Servier Laboratories Limited and conducted in collaboration with GfK NOP in order to establish greater understanding of angina by the British public.³

GfK NOP interviewed a representative sample of 2,062 adults aged 15+ across Great Britain between 5th and 10th October 2006. Weights were applied to the data to bring it into line with GB profiles.

A second survey of 600 adults who have or have had angina was developed by The British Cardiac Patients Association, sponsored by Servier Laboratories Limited and conducted in collaboration with Research Quorum.⁶

About angina

- In the UK there are about 345,000 new cases of angina each year² compared to around 44,100 cases of breast cancer⁴ and around 37,100 cases of lung cancer⁵
- It is estimated that around 2 million people are currently affected by angina⁷
- Angina is the main symptom of coronary heart disease and is characterised by chest pain⁸

About The British Cardiac Patients Association (BCPA)

The BCPA covers all patients suffering from any kind of cardiac problem. They offer unconditional support, reassurance and advice to cardiac patients, their families and carers and pride themselves in being the independent voice of the patient and carer. The BCPA represents the patient on Government bodies, research working groups, Health Improvement Programmes, nursing bodies, and many others.

Further information on angina can be found on the BCPA's website: www.bcpa.co.uk

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