



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Don't Let Pain Get On Your Nerves

Patients can now break away from nerve pain as there are safe and effective medications that target nerve pain – medications that can truly relieve your pain

KUALA LUMPUR, 8th November 2013 – Neuropathic pain or more commonly known as nerve pain refers to a major subtype of chronic pain caused by damage to a nerve, or a dysfunction within the nervous system. The word neuropathic means “pathology in the nerves.”

“Neuropathic pain is a type of chronic pain that results from damage to either the nerves that normally sense pain or parts of the nervous system that transmit pain signals, such as the spinal cord or the brain,” said Dr. Gayathri, Product Physician for Pfizer Malaysia.

“Neuropathic pain can be described as burning, shooting, stabbing, tingling, and numb, depending on the circumstances and particular type of condition.”

Living with neuropathic pain may have led you to feel that you have lost control of your life. Unremitting neuropathic pain can rob a person of the ability to enjoy life, maintain important relationships, fulfill spousal and parental responsibilities, perform well at a job or work at all.

“Light touch or pressure is unusually painful, so you find daily activities such as dressing, walking or even just lying down uncomfortable. Your pain has been there for months, and now you feel anxious and frustrated because you have tried many different pain medicines and none of them have given you relief,” added Dr. Gayathri.

Nerve Damage is Common in Diabetes

Diabetic Nerve Pain, also known as Painful Diabetic Neuropathy is one of the most common types of nerve pain. An estimated 200 million people in Asia Pacific (including China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) suffer from diabetes, and around 60% to 70% of them suffer from some type of nerve damage.

In some of these people, the nerve damage causes pain – about 1 in 4 diabetics suffer from diabetic nerve pain.¹

“Painful Diabetic Neuropathy is the result of nerve damage due to high blood sugar levels that have persisted for a long period of time. Painful diabetic neuropathy is a condition in which patients with diabetes suffer burning pain, pins and needles, or shooting pain in the feet and hands,” said Prof. Dato’ Dr Mafauzy Mohamed, Senior Consultant Endocrinologist at Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia who was speaking at the “Know Your Pain, Stop the Pain” press conference organised by Pfizer Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

¹ *Know Your Pain Asia*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 22, 2013, from Know Your Pain Asia: <http://knowyourpainasia.com/diabeticnervepain.aspx>



Experts recommend that people with diabetes to have a comprehensive foot exam each year to check for peripheral neuropathy. People diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy need more frequent foot exams.

“Your healthcare provider can diagnose peripheral neuropathy by conducting a physical exam of your feet. A comprehensive foot exam checks the skin, muscles, bones, circulation, and sensation of the feet. It’s important to check sensation in the feet because if you lose sensation, you might be at risk for developing foot sores and other problems²,” said Dato’ Mafauzy.

When Back Pain Strikes a Nerve

Low back pain is the leading cause of disability and the highest cost for workers compensation in industrialized countries. Up to 50% of the working population suffers from back pain every year, with many experiencing functional limitation.

“Besides having pain due to tissue or muscle damage, these low back pain patients also simultaneously suffer from radiculopathy, hence having a mixed type of pain. Radiculopathy is often referred to as sciatica, a nerve root irritation resulting in a sharp or burning pain radiating down the posterior or lateral aspect of the lower limb, usually to the foot or ankle,” said Dr. Ozlan Izma Muhamed Kamil, Consultant Orthopaedic and Spine Surgeon at Hospital Pusrawi and Prince Court Medical Centre.

Anyone who has experienced sciatica is familiar with its presentation. Some flare-ups are mild; others are severe. The telltale pain ranges from muscle ache to shooting or stabbing pain, limited flexibility and/or range of motion, or an inability to stand straight.

“The goal of treatment is to decrease pain and increase mobility. The good news is, in many cases, the condition can be treated without surgery. However, nerve pain is not ordinary pain. Conventional painkillers often don’t work well for treating it. This has led to the development of safe and effective medications specific for nerve pain,” added Dr. Ozlan.

Take steps toward relieving your pain

In an effort to increase awareness of nerve pain and treatment available for the pain conditions that patients suffer from, Pfizer Malaysia organized a press conference with Dato Mafauzy and Dr Ozlan to empower Malaysians to reach out and seek help from doctor.

“If you think that you have nerve pain, make an appointment to see your doctor. When you talk to your doctor, make sure to clearly describe the pain you feel and which parts of your body it affects. Show your doctor your pain diary,” advised Dr. Ozlan.

“Use pain descriptors such as burning, shooting, stabbing, tingling, numb – any adjective that can paint an accurate picture of your pain to your doctor.”

² (AADE), A. A. (n.d.). Take Time to Learn About the Complications of Diabetes. Retrieved July 2013, from Take Back Your Life: <http://www.diabetesselfcare.org/complications/diabetes-nerve-damage/>



Working together for a healthier world™

“We hope that through this workshop, more and more patients will seek help from doctors. The key to relieving nerve pain is to keep to the pain management plan that you and your doctor developed. There are now safe and effective medications that target nerve pain – medications that can relieve your pain.”

Pregabalin is a prescription medicine approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat fibromyalgia, diabetic nerve pain, spinal cord injury nerve pain and pain after shingles. In clinical studies, Pregabalin was proven effective in 2 difficult-to-treat nerve pain conditions — diabetic nerve pain and pain after shingles — and fibromyalgia. Pregabalin is believed to work within your body to calm the damaged or overactive nerves that cause pain.

“The key to relieving your nerve pain is to keep to the pain management plan that you and your doctor developed. Importantly, you need to take your medication exactly as your doctor tells you to do,” advised Prof. Datuk Dr Mafauzy.

“If your current prescribed medicine isn’t helping, speak up! Talk to your doctor about other options or adjusting the dose of your medication and other ways of fine-tuning your pain management plan,” he added. It is important for patients to know that they don’t have to live with pain and to seek proper treatment so they can enjoy a better quality of life.

For more information on nerve pain, please visit <http://www.knowyourpainasia.com>. Patients can answer simple questions on the website to find out if you are suffering from nerve pain.

###

About Pfizer Inc: Working Together for a Healthier World™

At Pfizer, we apply science and our global resources to improve health and well-being at every stage of life. We strive to set the standard for quality, safety and value in the discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines for people and animals. Our diversified global healthcare portfolio includes human and animal biologic and small molecule medicines and vaccines, as well as nutritional products and many of the world’s best-known consumer products. Every day, Pfizer colleagues work across developed and emerging markets to advance wellness, prevention, treatments and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time. Consistent with our responsibility as the world’s leading biopharmaceutical company, we also collaborate with healthcare providers, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world. For more than 150 years, Pfizer has worked to make a difference for all who rely on us. To learn more about our commitments, please visit us at www.pfizer.com.

Issued by: Geometry Global

On behalf of: Pfizer Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.

For more information, please contact:

Melissa Hon

Account Director

DL: +603 2178 0034

HP: +6012 389 6125

E-mail: melissa.hon@g2.com

Cherry Lui

Account Manager

DL: +603 2178 0355

HP: +6012 609 9866

E-mail: cherry.lui@g2.com