Landmark IBS Study Highlights Physical, Emotional and Social Toll that Digestive Conditions Take on Sufferers.

Monday 17 April, 2017

‘Living with IBS in the UK’ Landmark Study by Alflorex Highlights Physical, Emotional and Social Toll that IBS Takes on Sufferers

35.2% of IBS sufferers confirm that there is still a big stigma associated with having IBS.

38.2% say their IBS is a huge source of embarrassment for them.

72.4% report that stress is a major cause of IBS flare-ups.

To mark IBS awareness month (April 2017) a new, independent IBS study, "Living with IBS in the UK" commissioned by Alflorex, set out to produce the most comprehensive study ever conducted on IBS sufferers. More than 1,000 IBS sufferers were polled in an effort to better understand how this chronic digestive condition impacted on their lives.

Unmanaged IBS can lead to social isolation and even depression:

53.6% believe that their IBS can lower their self-confidence.

46.3% of respondents said their IBS makes them feel depressed.

(1 in 5) 18.6% of sufferers say their IBS makes them feel lonely or isolated.

According to Dr Simon Smale, Consultant Physician and Gastroenterologist at York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust:

“IBS significantly affects quality of life and patients can end up being isolated from friends, family, colleagues and even their partners as a result of IBS flare-ups. IBS symptoms such as unpredictable bowel movements may mean they constantly need to be within reach of a toilet. There is also the pain from abdominal cramps and the distress caused by bloating

For many sufferers, it can also lead to anxiety and depression.”

48% say they are too embarrassed to ask for help because of their IBS:

22.6% are too embarrassed to tell a close friend about their IBS.

32% have not told their partner.

IBS compromises lives of under 34s – with 70% suffering in silence.

Speaking about IBS and embarrassment, Dr Simon Smale says:

“This survey shows that the stigma of living with IBS is a major cause for concern. Patients struggle to discuss symptoms like unpredictable diarrhoea, constipation, wind or bloating with their families and friends. IBS is a complex condition and patients have to deal with one or more symptoms at a time.

It’s also a complex condition and patient’s journeys can be long before getting a diagnosis.

Media:

Related Sectors:

Children & Teenagers :: Food & Drink :: Health :: Leisure & Hobbies :: Medical & Pharmaceutical :: Men's Interest :: Women & Beauty ::

Related Keywords:

IBS :: UK :: SUFFERING :: SURVEY :: LANDMARK :: STUDY :: ALFLOREX :: NEWS :: HEALTH ::

Scan Me:

Consequently, there can be an implication that the symptoms aren't really that bad, or are all in a sufferer's head or imagined."

Many sufferers fear having a flare up on a night or other social occasion:

Over half (51.6%) of IBS patients are terrified of not being able to access a bathroom in time.

Before heading out socially, 48.6% of IBS sufferers will map the nearest toilets to where they are going to be.

Almost 1 in 5 (17.2%) participants have experienced an IBS flare up while they were out socialising.

Speaking about the unpredictable nature of irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, Dr Simon Smale said:

"One of the most stressful symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome is probably urgency. Many IBS patients have to be near a bathroom at all times and this really affects their ability to enjoy their social life or even, at times, leave their homes to go on a shopping trip.

Fear of an IBS flare-up can rule patient's outings.

37.4% say their IBS limits their work and social life.

IBS affects day to day lives of older sufferers more than it does younger sufferers.

28.8% have to avoid having any alcohol.

Almost a third of women (29.2%) say their IBS affects what they wear.

Dr Smale comments:

"Many sufferers fear being caught short whilst out and about. The fear or frustration of having to deal with a flare-up while you're out and about and away from home can often prevent sufferers from scheduling social activities and even sadly becoming housebound leading to social isolation."

What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

IBS is a chronic condition affecting almost 1 in 5 people in the UK today. Symptoms such as bloating abdominal pain, and unpredictable bowel movements that mean that having to rush to the loo are a typical struggle. Many get symptoms in their late teens and continue to suffer for years, sometimes decades, before being diagnosed or getting an effective treatment.

About Dr Simon Smale:

Dr Simon Smale is a consultant gastroenterologist providing outpatient, in-patient and endoscopy services both privately at the York Nuffield Hospital and also for the NHS at York Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

His interests include the diagnosis and treatment of functional gastrointestinal disease (such as irritable bowel syndrome), oesophageal physiology, achalasia, patient safety and patient empowerment.

He is the Royal College of Physicians tutor in York and works as the Deputy - Training Program Director for Continuing Medical Trainees (CMTs) in the York & East Yorkshire.

About Alflorex®:

Alflorex® is a probiotic, available in pharmacies throughout the UK that contains the unique **35624®** culture.

The **35624®** culture has been clinically studied in IBS patients and has been shown to lower abdominal discomfort, passage of gas, bloating/distension and regularise bowel movements.

The **35624®** culture is the number one recommended probiotic by Gastroenterologists in the United States.

Alflorex® should be taken daily as part of a healthy lifestyle. When starting, take **Alflorex®** for 4 weeks to prime the gut and continue to use it thereafter.

Company Contact:

Rachel Dalton Communications

E. rmartin@rdcommunications.ie
W. https://www.rdcommunications.ie/

View Online

Additional Assets:
IBS Patient Eithne Moran Tells Her Misery of IBS.
PDF version of the press release
https://www.alflorexbiotics.com

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.ieso-digital-health.pressat.co.uk