Pfizer Logo

Pfizer Voluntarily Withdraws Lipitor Advertising Featuring Dr. Robert Jarvik

Sunday, February 24, 2008 - 10:51pm

Company Commits to Ensuring Greater Clarity Regarding Spokespeople

(BUSINESS WIRE)--Pfizer said today that it is voluntarily withdrawing Lipitor advertising and promotion featuring Dr. Robert Jarvik and committing to ensuring greater clarity in the roles and responsibilities of its spokespeople in its consumer advertising and promotion.

Commenting on the withdrawal of the Jarvik advertising and promotion, Pfizer's President of Worldwide Pharmaceutical Operations Ian Read said:

"The consumer advertising featuring Dr. Jarvik, a well-respected heart expert and inventor of the Jarvik artificial heart, provided valuable and medically accurate information about the risks of high cholesterol and how Lipitor can help patients reduce their risk of heart attack and stroke. Direct-to-consumer advertising is an important way to provide consumers with information about their health and treating disease, and at least 29 million Americans have talked to their physicians about a health condition for the first time after seeing a pharmaceutical advertisement.

"Nevertheless, the way in which we presented Dr. Jarvik in these ads has, unfortunately, led to misimpressions and distractions from our primary goal of encouraging patient and physician dialogue on the leading cause of death in the world -- cardiovascular disease. We regret this. Going forward, we commit to ensuring there is greater clarity in our advertising regarding the presentation of spokespeople.

"Raising awareness of the dangers of cardiovascular disease in the U.S. remains an urgent public health priority. Only half of all Americans who have high LDL cholesterol are even diagnosed, and just half of those are being treated. Future Lipitor campaigns, to be launched in several weeks, will continue to stress the critical importance of patients talking to their doctors so they can make informed choices about their treatment options," he added.

The benefits of statins such as Lipitor in treating heart disease are validated in clinical guidelines including those from the National Institutes of Health National Cholesterol Education Program, the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology and the American Diabetes Association. Lipitor has an established safety profile across the full dose range which is based on more than 15 years of clinical trial experience and nearly 144 million patient-years of experience.

Important US Prescribing Information

Lipitor is a prescription medication. It is used in patients with multiple risk factors for heart disease such as family history, high blood pressure, age, low HDL ("good" cholesterol) or smoking to reduce the risk of a heart attack and stroke, certain kinds of heart surgery and chest pain.

Lipitor is also used in patients with type 2 diabetes and at least one other risk factor for heart disease such as high blood pressure, smoking or complications of diabetes, including eye disease and protein in urine, to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Lipitor is used in patients with existing coronary heart disease to reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, certain kinds of heart surgery, hospitalization for heart failure, and chest pain.

When diet and exercise alone are not enough, Lipitor is used along with a low-fat diet and exercise to lower cholesterol.

Lipitor is not for everyone. It is not for those with liver problems. And it is not for women who are nursing, pregnant or may become pregnant.

Patients taking Lipitor should tell their doctors if they feel any new muscle pain or weakness. This could be a sign of rare but serious muscle side effects. Patients should tell their doctors about all medications they take. This may help avoid serious drug interactions. Doctors should do blood tests to check liver function before and during treatment and may adjust the dose. The most common side effects are gas, constipation, stomach pain and heartburn. They tend to be mild and often go away.

For additional product information, visit www.Lipitor.com.

Pfizer IncVanessa Aristide, 212-733-3784Ray Kerins, 212-733-9203