International NASH Day Gets a Major Awareness Push

Advocates at the Global Liver Institute are declaring the liver disease a “hidden epidemic” across the globe.

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NASH refers to the liver disease non-alcoholic steatohepatitis. Today, June 12, is International NASH Day, and dozens of organizations and events worldwide have come together to educate people about the condition and to advocate for both people at risk for the disease and those already living with it.

To mark the event, advocates at the Global Liver Institute (GLI) have declared NASH a “hidden epidemic” across the globe. NASH is a potentially fatal condition that affects up to 12% of adults around the world, or an estimated 115 million people. In recent surveys, only 6% of at-risk individuals had heard of the condition.

NASH is the progressive form of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), which develops in approximately 20% of NAFLD patients over time. The condition occurs when fat accumulates in liver cells, leading to cell death, inflammation and liver fibrosis. Once NASH becomes severe, cirrhosis can occur, which can result in liver failure and liver cancer.

“We feel an urgent need to raise awareness for and educate on non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis so that these liver diseases are included in every health care conversation when obesity and diabetes are mentioned,” said Donna R. Cryer, JD, CEO of the Global Liver Institute, in a recent press release. The report notes that more than 70% of NASH patients are obese, up to 75% have type 2 diabetes and anywhere between 20% and 80% have high cholesterol, or hyperlipidemia.

Experts estimate that approximately 30 million Americans have NASH. Its prevalence is expected to increase by more than 60% by 2030 if current rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes remain the same.

For more information, visit www.international-nash-day.com/ or lend your support on social media using hashtag #NASHday.

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