



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

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American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) Launches “Picture My IBS” Campaign to Improve Patient-Physician Communication about Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Las Vegas, Nevada (October 17, 2016) – The American College of Gastroenterology (ACG), in collaboration with Allergan and Ironwood Pharmaceuticals, Inc., today announced the launch of the *Picture My IBS* campaign, an initiative aimed at helping individuals with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) express their experience artistically, with the goal of improving patient-physician communication and patient care.

Picture My IBS seeks to engage, connect, inspire and motivate the IBS community to communicate openly with physicians about the impact of symptoms, leveraging visual communication when words are difficult to find or uncomfortable to articulate.



"IBS is not a condition that is easy for people to talk about – the *Picture My IBS* campaign allows patients to express the impact symptoms have on their life through the artistic medium of their choice," said Dr. Brian E. Lacy, Co-Editor-in-Chief of *The American Journal of Gastroenterology* and judge for the *Picture My IBS* art contest. "The College recognizes Allergan and Ironwood Pharmaceuticals for their collaboration to bring the *Picture My IBS* campaign to life. ACG's goal is to help physicians better understand the serious impact IBS can have on patients."

The College is launching the campaign via the *Picture My IBS Art Gala* during its 2016 Annual Scientific Meeting in Las Vegas. Previously collected original artwork depicting the impact of living with IBS was on display yesterday, October 16, at the campaign kick-off event. All artwork will remain on display at the ACG Annual Scientific Meeting through Tuesday, October 18 at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, Rooms 2401 A-B.

Hess Polanco, an IBS patient, noted, "To live with IBS, or any chronic illness, for that matter, is to be willing to wake up every morning and fight the same battles that left you with battle wounds the day before. My IBS has led me down some pretty dark roads, but I manage to see the positive through the negative, and I continue to fight every day, no matter how bad the pain gets. Since being diagnosed with IBS, it's been a goal of mine to raise and spread awareness about IBS through creative forms of entertainment. The *Picture My IBS* campaign is a creative opportunity for patients to express themselves in their own unique way."

Following the campaign launch at ACG this week, IBS patients will be encouraged to visit the *Picture My IBS* campaign hub and submit their own original artwork for a chance to win a trip for two to New York City.

For additional information about the *Picture My IBS* campaign and contest, or to submit your own original artwork, visit PictureMyIBS.org.

*NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. OPEN TO LEGAL RESIDENTS OF THE FIFTY UNITED STATES, D.C., AGE 18 OR OVER. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. APPROXIMATE RETAIL VALUE OF ALL PRIZES IS \$6,500. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON NUMBER AND QUALITY OF ENTRIES RECEIVED. ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1, 2016 AND FEBRUARY 28, 2017. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS APPLY. PLEASE SEE COMPLETE CONTEST TERMS AND CONDITIONS AT PICTUREMYIBS.ORG.

About IBS

IBS is a chronic gastrointestinal condition marked by recurrent abdominal pain that occurs in association with defecation or a change in bowel habits (constipation or diarrhea), as well as other symptoms that do not seem to relate to the gut.¹ The condition affects an estimated 35 million Americans and is associated with emotional distress, impact on quality of life, disability, and high health care costs.²⁻⁶ A recent study indicated that nearly half of IBS patients experience symptoms for more than 10 years before receiving a diagnosis.⁷

IBS consists of a constellation of gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms, such as abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea, gassiness, bloating or cramping. Some people experience IBS with constipation (IBS-C), which is characterized by abdominal pain and difficult or infrequent bowel movements, while others may experience IBS with diarrhea (IBS-D), characterized by frequent loose stools, often with an urgent need to move the bowels. Others may also alternate between constipation and diarrhea. Since there are multiple factors that may contribute to the pathophysiology of IBS, treatment strategies are based on the nature and severity of symptoms

and may include diet or lifestyle modifications, over-the-counter products or prescription medicines.

About the American College of Gastroenterology

Founded in 1932, the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) is an organization with an international membership of almost 14,000 individuals from 86 countries. The College's vision is to be the pre-eminent professional organization that champions the evolving needs of clinicians in the delivery of high-quality, evidence-based and compassionate health care to gastroenterology patients. The mission of the College is to advance world-class care for patients with gastrointestinal disorders through excellence, innovation and advocacy in the areas of scientific investigation, education, prevention and treatment. www.gi.org Follow the College on Twitter [@AmCollegeGastro](https://twitter.com/AmCollegeGastro).

References

¹ Lacy, B et al. *Gastroenterology*, 2016; 150:1393-1407.

² Canavan C et al. *Clin Epidemiology* 2014; 6: 71-80.

³ Saito YA et al. *Am J Gastroenterology* 2002; 97: 1910-1915.

⁴ Drossman DA et al. *Gastroenterology* 2002; 123: 2108-2131.

⁵ Hulisz D. *J Manag Care Pharm* 2004; 10: 299-309.

⁶ "Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)." *Encyclopedia of Molecular Pharmacology* (n.d.): 665. Web.

⁷ CONTOR Study – Conducted in Partnership with Ironwood, Allergan and Optum 2016.