

Society for Endocrinology and the Addison's Disease Self Help Group - Media Release

For immediate release

ADDISON'S DISEASE AND PATIENT INFORMATION

The Addison's Disease Self Help Group, the main UK support group for patients with Addison's disease, has received a number of enquiries from the public following stories in the media that watching scary films could lead to shock and death in some people with Addison's.

Professor John Wass, speaking on behalf of the Addison's Disease Self-Help Group and Society for Endocrinology said:

"We were very concerned to see recent stories in the press indicating that watching scary films could cause shock and death in some people with Addison's disease. This statement is not true and we would like to reassure all Addison's patients and their friends and family.

Addison's disease is a condition where the adrenal glands stop working so that the body no longer produces enough of certain hormones that are essential for life, affecting the body's response to stress. However it can be very successfully treated with daily steroid medication. There is no reason for patients who are currently receiving treatment for Addison's disease to be alarmed by this story. People with Addison's have a normal life expectancy and can lead full and active lives, including taking part in normal sporting activities. People with Addison's have even been known to go bungee jumping, skydiving and other thrill-seeking activities. They just need to make sure that they carry medication with them, in case they need to take extra."

If patients have any concerns, please email the Addison's Disease Self-Help Group at info@addisons.org.uk

Website: <http://www.addisons.org.uk/>

Addison's disease is an endocrine condition where the adrenal glands stop working, meaning that they don't produce enough of two essential hormones: cortisol and aldosterone. Patients need to take lifelong treatment with steroid replacement therapy. However, with the right balance of daily medication, people with Addison's disease are able to continue life much as it was before their illness. Addison's disease affects approximately 8,000 people in the UK.

Steroid treatment is life saving in Addison's disease and only replaces what is missing because the adrenal glands stopped working. Steroid replacement therapy does not suppress the immune system in Addison's disease. Only very high doses of steroids suppress the immune system, which is desirable in diseases such as asthma or rheumatoid arthritis.

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Notes for editors

The Addison's Disease Self Help Group is a national UK charity, which works to support people with adrenal failure and to promote better understanding of this rare endocrine condition. For more information, visit <http://www.addisons.org.uk>

The Society for Endocrinology is Europe's largest national organisation promoting endocrinology and hormone awareness. For general information, please visit our website: <http://www.endocrinology.org/>

If patients have any enquiries, please visit the Addison's website at www.addisons.org.uk or email: info@addisons.org.uk

For any press enquiries, please contact the Society for Endocrinology press office:

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For further background information on nature of Addison's and the effects of stress, please read the attached briefing notes.

About the ADSHG: <http://www.addisons.org.uk/comms/publications/AbouttheADSHG.pdf>

About Stress ADSHG Newsletter No. 90 – December 2007
– *ADSHG members only (requires login)*

<http://www.addisons.org.uk/group/members/newsletters/nl90dec07/adshgnl90dec07page5.pdf>

<http://www.addisons.org.uk/group/members/newsletters/nl90dec07/adshgnl90dec07page6-7.pdf>