

Hypertension: Servier launches, with the endorsement of the International Society of Hypertension, a new edition of the public awareness campaign “Because I Say So” focused on adherence to treatment

- *Hypertension is the number one risk factor for death, responsible for around 10 million deaths worldwide per year.¹*
- *After only 6 months, more than a third, and after 1 year, about half, of people with hypertension have stopped their initial treatment.²*
- *This lack of adherence has very damaging consequences for people with hypertension as they increase their risk of a cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack or stroke, by a third.³*

Paris (France), September 3rd, 2020 - [Servier](#), in collaboration with the International [Society of Hypertension](#) (ISH), is launching a new edition of “Because I Say So,” a worldwide public campaign to raise public awareness about the importance of taking one’s blood pressure treatment every day, and following the doctor’s advice about treatment.

Hypertension: a global public health challenge

As the leading cause of morbi-mortality in the world (death from a disease), responsible for nearly 10 million deaths worldwide per year, hypertension currently affects close to 1.2 billion people.¹

Hypertension is known as a “silent killer” because there are often no symptoms of hypertension and yet it can lead to serious cardiovascular diseases.

This lack of symptoms means that most patients go undiagnosed, and when they are treated, more than half stop their treatment before 12 months.

Moreover, hypertension is the leading risk factor for heart attack and stroke. Other complications include heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, kidney damage, dementia, retinal hemorrhage, and visual impairment.

With an estimated **1.2 billion sufferers¹ in the world**, hypertension is the number one risk factor for death

More than **1/3 of people treated for hypertension stop their treatment after only 6 months²**.

50% of people with hypertension stop their treatment completely after 1 year².

The lack of adherence to the antihypertensive treatment **increases by 1/3 the risk of cardiovascular event**.

¹ Source: World Health Organization (WHO). ² Chowdhury R et al. *Eur Heart J*. 2013;34(38):2940-2948. ³ Bohm M et al. *Am Heart J*. 2013;166:306-314.e7.

The crucial role of adherence in the treatment of hypertension

“Adherence to treatment” can be defined as the patient's ability to fully and accurately follow a physician's advice and instruction. While adherence to treatment plays a key role in treating every type of disease, its importance is often overlooked.

The majority of people treated for hypertension either stop their treatment or forget to take it every day within months of starting therapy. This lack of adherence leads to lack of blood pressure normalization and has very significant and severe consequences, including an increased risk of developing cardiovascular events such as a heart attack or stroke. In addition, there are adverse economic implications for health authorities as these people will require additional hospitalization and treatment.³

Most patients need to take several drugs in order to get their blood pressure under control. Nevertheless, the more drugs they have to take, the higher the risk of nonadherence. Single-pill combinations can be a solution for improving adherence in addition to giving more information to patients about the disease and the consequences of a lack of adherence.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of people suffering from chronic diseases, such as hypertension, who stopped treatment, increased significantly. In Europe, almost 10%² of such people stopped their treatment during the months when the pandemic was at its highest.

Launched in more than 40 countries, “Because I Say So,” is a worldwide awareness campaign to inform people on treatment for hypertension to follow their doctor’s advice, not to stop their treatment prematurely, and to take it every day.

“Servier has been committed to fighting hypertension for 50 years, and we know that there is still a lot to do to improve blood pressure control, as an increasing number of people suffer from hypertension and its consequences,” said David Pédelabat-Lartigau, Marketing Director hypertension at Servier. “This new campaign, done in collaboration with the International Society of Hypertension, directed at the public, aims to raise awareness of the severe consequences of a lack of adherence to antihypertensive treatment, as we know it is one of the reasons for a low rate of blood pressure control in the hypertensive population.”

A first part of this adherence campaign was implemented during the Covid-19 crisis across the globe. The concept of *BecauseI sayso* was adapted to the health crisis and **43.5 million people were reached** with the global posts and messages in different social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter).

The first *BecauseI sayso* campaign was launched in 2018, with the aim of increasing awareness and diagnosis of hypertension. During the second edition in 2019, the campaign reached more than 150 million people in 70 countries. With this new chapter dedicated to adherence, the *BecauseI sayso* campaign demonstrates the importance of public awareness campaigns for addressing health issues.

All antihypertensive treatments have to be taken every day. Doing so, as well as following doctors’ advice, are the only ways to ensure that the treatment will effectively control blood pressure in the long-term, while protecting people against the risk of cardiovascular events.

More information on www.becauseisayso.net

² Carenicity survey, May 2020 (Europe & U.S.)



About Servier

Servier is an international pharmaceutical company governed by a non-profit foundation, with its headquarters in France (Suresnes). With a strong international presence in 149 countries and a total revenue of 4.6 billion euros in 2019, Servier employs 22,000 people worldwide. Entirely independent, the Group invests on average 25% of its total revenue (excluding generics) every year in research and development and uses all its profits for its development. Corporate growth is driven by Servier's constant search for innovation in five areas of excellence: cardiovascular, immune-inflammatory, and neurodegenerative diseases, cancer and diabetes, as well as by its activities in high-quality generic drugs. Servier also offers eHealth solutions beyond drug development.

A key player in hypertension for the last 50 years, number 2 worldwide (outside US and Japan), Servier has 11 major drugs on the market for Hypertension and 17 million people are treated daily with one of the Servier medicines. New innovative combinations are currently developed in order to individualize the treatment to the different patient's profiles but also innovative digital services for supporting the hypertensive people in their daily life. More information: www.servier.com

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About the International Society of Hypertension (ISH)

The International Society of Hypertension (ISH) is dedicated to the prevention and management of cardiovascular diseases around the world. The ISH has 100 affiliated societies in 95 countries. The ISH has identified that awareness is a key issue in the fight against hypertension³ and therefore set up the May Measurement Month (MMM) initiative, with the aim of increasing awareness of the issues surrounding raised blood pressure and the importance of having it checked. In 2018 and again in 2019, over 1.5 million adults worldwide had their blood pressure measured as part of MMM. Servier will be partnering with the ISH again in order to help raise awareness and motivate those at risk to have their blood pressure checked in 2021.

More information: <http://ish-world.com/about/about-us.htm>

³ ISH. May Measurement Month – get involved now! <http://ish-world.com/news/a/May-Measurement-Month-Get-Involved-Now/>.