

# The Faces of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

## NATIONAL TRAVELING PHOTO EXHIBIT

### What is the photo exhibit?

The photo exhibit is a central part of the first-ever nationwide education and awareness campaign for CFS in the United States. In addition to the photo exhibit, this public health campaign includes television and radio public service announcements, advertising in selected national magazines, widespread media coverage of CFS, and partnerships with health care organizations to educate the medical community about the illness.

Although more than 4 million Americans suffer from CFS, less than 20% have been diagnosed, compromising their health care. The campaign is designed to educate the public and health care professionals about diagnosis and treatment of this medical condition and to help Americans learn to recognize the symptoms of CFS and seek medical care if they think they or a family member may be suffering from CFS. The theme of the campaign is "Get informed. Get diagnosed. Get help."

The photo exhibit features huge full-color portraits of 8 CFS patients and 2 CFS experts, including quotes from each person about their experiences with the illness. Together, the 10 banners and first-person accounts tell a compelling story about CFS and how it affects lives. The exhibit also includes take-away brochures with important information about symptoms, diagnosis and treatment.

The portraits were taken by famous fashion and celebrity photographer George Lange, who has aimed his lens at the famous, the infamous and the just plain ordinary. He has photographed presidents and celebrities, models and fashion designers, artists and CEOs, top chefs and musicians. Lange brilliantly captured the strength and resilience of people who suffer with CFS.

### Who is in the exhibit?

The photo exhibit puts a face on CFS by showing real people whose lives have been profoundly affected by the illness. These include women and men, adults and children, patients and physicians. The portraits of the patients help show a central facet of CFS--it's an "invisible illness," and people with CFS often don't look sick, affecting the way the public views the illness and complicating diagnosis.

Eight CFS patients are pictured in "The Faces of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome":

- Brian Bernard, New Jersey
- Rich Carson, California
- Wilhelmina Jenkins, Georgia
- Jacqueline Niederle, New Jersey
- Meaghan Peterson, Massachusetts

- Kathy Rabin, Massachusetts
- Adrienne Ryan, New York
- Vivian Treves, New York

The photo exhibit also includes two CFS physicians who are acknowledged experts in the field. They have not only treated hundreds of patients with CFS, they have conducted research in the field and contributed to the scientific literature on the illness. They are:

- Anthony Komaroff, MD, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts
- David Bell, MD, Primary Care Pediatrics, Lyndonville, New York

### When is the photo exhibit being displayed?

"The Faces of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome" began crisscrossing America to help educate the public about CFS in August 2006, with its debut at the largest mall in the country, the Mall of America in Minneapolis. The photo exhibit is still touring the country and will continue to be displayed through October 2009.

### Where is the photo exhibit traveling?

The photo exhibit has been exhibited at nearly 30 public venues and at 9 medical conferences in cities across the country. So far, more than 6 million people have seen "The Faces of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome" at cultural centers, malls, museums, government buildings and high-traffic venues.

Those venues range from Union Station in Washington, DC, to Penn Station in New York City, from Stonestown Galleria in San Francisco to Westfield North BridgeMall in Chicago, from the Boston Public Library to the Dallas Public Library, from the Global Health Odyssey at the CDC in Atlanta to the Museum of Science & Industry in Tampa.

There is still time to see the exhibit. A list of venues and cities where the photo exhibit can be seen during 2009 can be found at [www.cfids.org/sparkcfs/photo.asp](http://www.cfids.org/sparkcfs/photo.asp).

### About the CFIDS Association

The CFIDS Association of America is the nation's leading nonprofit organization committed to conquering CFS. The Association is second to the federal government in funding initiatives for CFS. Since 1987 the CFIDS Association has invested \$25.7 million in CFS education, public policy and research.

Learn more by visiting the CFIDS Association of America at [www.cfids.org/cfs](http://www.cfids.org/cfs)