



For Immediate Release

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“Spirit of the Heart” Awareness Event in Baltimore Helps African Americans with Hypertension Take Charge of Their Heart Health

BALTIMORE, June 6, 2009 – Almost one-third (29 percent) of the adults living in the Maryland/Washington D.C. metro area suffer from high blood pressure (also known as hypertension) and that number is continuing to rise, according to the Maryland and Washington D.C. Divisions of Public Health.^{1,2} This is especially alarming for the African American community, considering that more than 42 percent of African American men and 46 percent of African American women in the U.S. have the condition.³ To help address the high rate of hypertension, Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. and the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. (ABC) are teaming up on Saturday, June 6, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Security Square Mall located at 6901 Security Blvd., for “The Spirit of the Heart” event, a health and wellness community education and health risk assessment program.

The event will feature health screenings for blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), waist circumference, glucose and cholesterol. Carlos Ince, Jr., M.D. of MidAtlantic Cardiovascular Associates, P.A. and President of the Association of Black Cardiologists is the local host for the “Spirit of the Heart” health program and will discuss how crucial it is for African Americans to take the right steps toward a fit and healthy lifestyle. Community health and wellness experts will provide tips on achieving a healthy, balanced lifestyle through diet and exercise.

“It is essential for African Americans to have their blood pressure checked regularly and keep it at a healthy level, because the African American community has one of the highest rates of high blood pressure of any other racial or ethnic group, and often it's more severe,”⁴ said Dr. Ince. “Many people with high blood pressure don't even realize they have it because the condition typically does not produce any

noticeable symptoms.⁵ However, leaving the condition undiagnosed and uncontrolled can put those with the condition at risk for potentially fatal complications like stroke, heart attack, and even death.”⁶

The “Spirit of the Heart” program will provide educational and screening events that will arm the African American community with the information they need to know about their blood pressure, the risks associated with the condition and ways to achieve a balanced and healthy diet and lifestyle – for their heart, family and loved ones.

For more information, please visit www.abc cardio.org.

About the Association of Black Cardiologists

The Association of Black Cardiologists, located in Atlanta, GA, was founded in 1974 to bring special attention to the adverse impact of cardiovascular disease on African Americans. A nonprofit organization, the ABC has an international membership of 2,300 members, including 600 health care professionals, and is holding Spirit of the Heart on cooperation with Minority Health Month, a well-organized effort to eliminate health disparities across the country. The ABC is dedicated to eliminating the disparities related to cardiovascular disease in all people of color. For more information, call 800-753-9222 or visit www.abc cardio.org.

About Daiichi Sankyo, Inc.

Daiichi Sankyo Inc., headquartered in Parsippany, New Jersey, is the U.S. subsidiary of Tokyo-based Daiichi Sankyo Co., Ltd., which is a global pharmaceutical innovator. The headquarters company was established in 2005 from the merger of two leading Japanese pharmaceutical companies. This integration created a more robust organization that allows for continuous development of novel drugs that enrich the quality of life for patients around the world. A central focus of Daiichi Sankyo’s research and development is cardiovascular disease, including therapies for dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes and acute coronary syndrome. Also important to the company is the discovery of new medicines in the areas of infectious diseases, cancer, bone and joint diseases, and immune disorders. For more information, visit www.dsi.com.

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¹ National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion. Prevalence and Trends Data: Maryland-All Available Years Hypertension Awareness. Available at:

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/display.asp?yr=All+Years&state=MD&qkey=4420&grp=0&SUBMIT3=Go> . Accessed May 8, 2009.

² National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion. Prevalence and Trends Data: District of Columbia-All Available Years Hypertension Awareness. Available at:

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/display.asp?state=DC&cat=HA&yr=All+Years&qkey=4420&grp=0&SUBMIT4=Go>. Accessed May 8, 2009.

³ American Heart Association, Key Statistics. Available at:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3041646>. Accessed March 26, 2009

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: What Every African American Should Know.

http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/mission/partner/african_americans.pdf. Accessed May 4, 2009

⁵ American Heart Association. Blood Pressure. Available at:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4473> . Accessed May 4, 2009.

⁶ American Heart Association. High Blood Pressure. Available at:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=2114>. Accessed May 4, 2009.