



Daiichi-Sankyo



For Immediate Release

Contacts:

Alyssa Dargento
Daiichi Sankyo, Inc.
(973) 944-2913
(973) 727-1604 (cell)
adargento@dsi.com

Porlan Cunningham
Hill & Knowlton
(212) 885-0551
(212) 300-7470 (cell)
porlan.cunningham@hillandknowlton.com

Andre Williams
Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.
(202)-375-6524
awilliams@abc cardio.org

**“Spirit of the Heart” Awareness Event Helps African Americans with Hypertension in Los Angeles
County Take Charge of Their Heart Health**

LOS ANGELES, November 4, 2009 – According to the Los Angeles County Health Survey, 1.7 million adults (one in four) living in the county have been diagnosed with high blood pressure (also known as hypertension), and the prevalence of diagnosed high blood pressure in Los Angeles County increased significantly from 18 percent in 1997 to 25 percent in 2005.^{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 hypertension.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, November 7, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza Mall located at 3650 Martin Luther King Blvd., in Los Angeles, CA 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. Richard Allen Williams, M.D., clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles and founder 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.

“The highest rates of hypertension are seen in the African American community, more so than any other racial or ethnic group, and it often develops earlier and is more severe.”⁴ While it is not known why this is the case, many factors contribute to African Americans’ predisposition toward high blood pressure including genetic make-up, the environment or a combination of both,⁵ said Dr. Williams. “It’s important for African Americans to know their blood pressure and check it regularly, because undiagnosed or uncontrolled hypertension can lead to heart attack, stroke, heart failure 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.

The “Spirit of the Heart” event is one example of ongoing partnership efforts between Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. and ABC to further educate African Americans about high blood pressure. Recently, Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. and ABC launched the national consumer education campaign, ‘**My Pressure Points**’, which aims to draw attention to the prevalence of high blood pressure in the African American community, and encourage African Americans to focus on an important *internal* pressure – high blood pressure – in addition to their external life pressures.

For more information about the local Spirit of the Heart event or the ‘**My Pressure Points**’ campaign, please visit www.abc cardio.org or www.mypressurepoints.com, respectively.

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 in 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 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 Los Angeles Department of Public Health. LA Trends: The Silent Killer: Hypertension in Los Angeles County Adults. Available at: http://www.lapublichealth.org/ha/reports/Hypertension_final.pdf. Accessed September 2, 2009.

² Ibid

³ American Heart Association. Key Statistics. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3041646>. Accessed June 16, 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 February 11, 2009

⁵ WebMD: Hypertension in African Americans. Available at <http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/hypertension-in-african-americans>. Accessed February 10, 2009.

⁶ American Heart Association: What About African Americans and High Blood Pressure? Available at <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1196270659962AfAmerHBP.pdf>. Accessed April 20, 2009.