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**NEW PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGN DEPICTS SERIOUS LINK
BETWEEN DIABETES AND HEART DISEASE**

PSA to Debut in Times Square on Nov. 5

New York (Nov. 4, 2002) – Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for more than 17 million Americans with diabetes, yet a recent survey shows that more than two-thirds of people with diabetes are not aware of their increased risk for the disease. According to the survey, recently commissioned by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and American College of Cardiology (ACC), three-quarters of respondents report having risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol, but they fail to link these problems to their diabetes. This link is the focus of a new public service campaign set to debut in Times Square tomorrow (Nov. 5). Millions of Americans will be able to view the PSA on the NBC Astrovision by Panasonic during the month of November, which also is Diabetes Month. The campaign is driven by the ADA and the ACC as part of their joint initiative entitled, *Make the Link! Diabetes, Heart Disease and Stroke*. This initiative emphasizes the need for comprehensive diabetes care that goes beyond lowering of blood sugar and targets other diabetes-related cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure and cholesterol.

"Diabetes is more than just managing blood glucose. It's also about managing blood pressure and cholesterol," said John Buse, M.D., chair of the Association's cardiovascular disease initiative. "We want to better educate people with diabetes about their special vulnerability to cardiovascular disease - particularly heart attack and stroke."

The public service announcement visually portrays the devastating effect that diabetes can have on the heart. While the PSA is designed to sound an alarm on the link between diabetes and heart disease, it also sends a hopeful message that people with diabetes can reduce their risk for a heart attack or stroke by managing their blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.

“We hope that this important public service announcement will make more Americans with diabetes realize that they may be at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke,” said Robert S. Rosenson, M.D., F.A.C.C., member of the ACC advisory group to *Make the Link!* “But we also want to encourage them that there are things they can do to reduce those risks.”

The PSA has been produced for television, radio and print in both English and Spanish. In addition to traditional media and Times Square, the PSA will also be widely distributed among health advocacy groups, civic organizations, union and corporate wellness programs, and will be utilized in other donated space.

One aspect of the *Make the Link!* initiative highlights the “ABCs” of diabetes. **A** is for the A1C test, a measure of average blood glucose over the last three months; **B** for blood pressure; and **C** for cholesterol. For most people with diabetes, the American Diabetes Association recommends an A1C goal of less than 7, blood pressure lower than 130/80 and LDL (or “bad”) cholesterol less than 100. To help reach these “ABC” goals, people with diabetes follow a personal meal plan, exercise and most often take medications. People with diabetes should work closely with their health care provider to determine the best approach for treating their diabetes and preventing heart disease and stroke.

The public can learn more about the link between diabetes and heart disease by visiting the ADA Expo in New York on Sat., Nov. 16 at the Jacob J. Javits Conventions Center, 11th Ave. between 34th and 39th streets. Exhibition hours are from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. *Make the Link!* materials will be on the road at other expos and professional health society meetings across the country during the next year.

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy. Founded in 1940, the Association has offices in every region of the country, providing services to hundreds of communities.

The American College of Cardiology, a 28,000-member nonprofit organization, is the leading professional medical society and teaching institution for the nation's cardiovascular healthcare specialists. The College is dedicated to fostering optimal cardiovascular care disease prevention through professional education, promotion of research, leadership in the development of standards and guidelines, and the formulation of healthcare policy.

To learn more about the risks of cardiovascular disease among people with diabetes, call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit www.diabetes.org/makethelink. The *Make the Link!* initiative is made possible by generous support from the following corporations: AstraZeneca LP, Aventis, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Eli Lilly and Company, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck & Co., Inc. and Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals, Monarch Pharmaceuticals and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, and Pfizer Inc.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: To view the PSA, visit www.diabetes.org/makethelink.