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PROSTATITIS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY THREE LEADING HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

Men's Health Network seeks to educate the public on this common disease

September 12, 2000, Washington, D.C., A National Survey released today out of Baltimore, MD, reveals that Americans are virtually unaware of a very serious and painful condition that will affect about half of the male population at some point in their lives. Only 15 percent of Americans are aware that Prostatitis even exists and, of those who claimed to be knowledgeable of this disease, 16 percent believe that women and men were both affected by this exclusively male condition.

In response to these alarming statistics, the Men's Health Network (MHN), American Foundation for Urologic Disease (AFUD) and Bayer Corporation have formed a national partnership to educate Americans about prostatitis. MHN and AFUD are providing a fact sheet and a quiz about prostatitis on their websites at www.menshealthnetwork.org and www.afud.org. Bayer has provided a toll-free line at 800-206-6300 for the public to call and obtain a free brochure about prostatitis, its symptoms and available treatments.

Prostatitis is an inflammation of the prostate gland. Symptoms may include fever, chills, urgent, burning or painful urination, sometimes accompanied by pain in the lower back and genital area. These symptoms can become severe if left untreated and could require hospitalization. Typically, men don't seek out medical attention for any ailment, much less a prostate related disease. The survey also reflected this lack of knowledge about their health and the related fear that can sometimes accompany these kind of symptoms.

Of those respondents who were "knowledgeable" about this condition, 83 percent believe prostatitis is a warning symptom or leading indicator of prostate cancer. "Men who begin experiencing prostate problems often fear the worst - prostate cancer," said Jean Bonhomme, M.D., M.P.H., and Board Member of the Men's Health Network. "This fear can be paralyzing and in some cases may prevent men from seeing a doctor. We're hoping to alleviate some of these fears and inform men that not all prostate conditions are pre-cancerous. However, since the symptoms are similar, prompt medical attention is necessary to obtain a correct diagnosis."

The Men's Health Network is pleased to be involved in this important mission to keep men informed of the health risks they face. MHN is a non-profit, educational organization, recognizing men's health as a specific social concern.

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