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Dangers of High Blood Pressure Visualized for the First Time Through Unique Medical Imagery

Dramatic Images Illustrate Consequences of and Damage Caused by High Blood Pressure in Actual Patients

East Hanover, November 1, 2005 – Novartis Pharmaceuticals today announced that, for the first time, the more than 65 million Americans—one in three adults—suffering from high blood pressure can see how this serious disease can damage their body with every beat of their heart. Highly advanced and proprietary imaging technology was used to develop 3D visualizations from inside the bodies of actual patients. The resulting images show people the consequences of uncontrolled high blood pressure on their bodies, including heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and vision problems. Novartis plans to use the images, which can be viewed online at www.SeeYourBP.com, to educate people about high blood pressure and the need to get to goal.

“With these images, high blood pressure, the so-called ‘silent killer,’ is no longer silent,” said Alex Gorsky, head of pharma, North America and chief executive officer, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation. “There is a clear need to find better ways to educate the public about high blood pressure and its complications but until now it was a challenge to help people understand and have a sense of urgency about a disease they could neither feel nor see. Our hope is that with innovative new approaches such as this, a picture will indeed be worth a thousand words and, together, patients and physicians will strive to achieve healthier blood pressure goals.”

The dramatic series of images were created by the award-winning production company Anatomical Travelogue and underwritten by Novartis as part of its national *Blood Pressure Success Zone* initiative. The images serve as the center piece of a book “The InVision Guide to a Healthy Heart”, published by HarperCollins, a unique interactive website www.invisionguide.com/heart, and will be featured in a documentary film.

One high blood pressure sufferer who enthusiastically volunteered to be scanned and see Anatomical Travelogue create 3D images of his actual cardiovascular system and internal organs was Ryan Bendixen. This Colorado husband, father and mountain climber was diagnosed with high blood pressure in 1990 at the age of 20 — a diagnosis that unfortunately led to his honorable discharge from an elite unit of the U.S. Army.

“When I was first diagnosed, I couldn’t believe it — I was told that I was seriously ill, but I didn’t feel or look sick,” says Bendixen. “Despite that warning, I admit that I didn’t always follow my doctor’s advice or take my medication regularly. I’ve learned a lot about my body and my health since then and now I’m pleased to say my blood pressure is under control. I was eager to participate in this project because I feel that it will help others to literally see high blood pressure in a new way and understand why it is so important to maintain blood pressure levels within a healthy range.”

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, is a serious chronic disease. Each time the heart beats, blood is pumped through the body, creating pressure against the inside walls of the blood vessels. High blood pressure means the force of this pressure inside the blood vessels is too strong and may be causing damage to blood vessels throughout the body – in turn causing damage to organs such as the heart, brain, kidneys and eyes. Normal blood pressure for most adults is <120/80 mm Hg.

Although high blood pressure is easy to measure and can be successfully treated, there remains a critical lack of public awareness about the disease and its consequences. A recent Canadian survey found that the majority of the public are unaware of the association between high blood pressure and heart disease (80%), heart attack (66%), kidney disease (98%), damage to blood vessels (95%), and premature death (74%). Such common misconceptions may, at least in part, account for the fact that 70% of people with this condition do not have it under control. In fact, even among patients taking medication for high blood pressure, one out of two is still uncontrolled.

“This entirely new way of seeing what actual damage is being done heartbeat by heartbeat when a person has poorly controlled high blood pressure could really help me speak with my patients, who typically have no obvious symptoms so don’t feel threatened,” said James M. Rippe, M.D., Founder and Director of the Rippe Lifestyle Institute, Shrewsbury, Mass. and Associate Professor of Cardiology at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Mass. “These amazing images show patients why it’s vital to make appropriate lifestyle changes and take their medication to bring their blood pressure under control.”

About Novartis’ Initiative with Anatomical Travelogue

The new book, interactive website and film take people on a journey through the cardiovascular system, showing views inside real people, from the heartbeat of a newborn baby to damage to the retina in a hypertensive person and the heart attack caused by a blocked artery. The visualizations are accompanied by clear explanations, case examples, and effective strategies for achieving cardiovascular health. The book is now available in bookstores and online and the film is in development.

About Anatomical Travelogue

Anatomical Travelogue creates their stunning visualizations of the inside of the human body from actual patient data acquired from pioneering technologies such as MRIs, CT scans, Electron Microscopy and other medical imaging equipment. All visualizations are 3D, unprecedented in their scientific accuracy and range from the molecular level up to the gross anatomy. For the first time ever, Anatomical Travelogue’s artistic, breathtaking visualizations take viewers on incredible journeys through the living human body. Alexander Tsiaras, CEO and founder of Anatomical Travelogue, spent over 25 years developing the pioneering technology Anatomical Travelogue uses to visualize the human body.

About Novartis' *Blood Pressure Success Zone* program

The *Blood Pressure Success Zone* program is a hypertension awareness and education program designed to help patients and health care professionals work together to achieve healthier blood pressure numbers. The program is available to patients taking selected Novartis high blood pressure medications. At the core of the program are customized patient support and education materials designed to help change patients lifestyle behavior in areas such as smoking cessation, physical activity, decreasing salt intake, stress management and weight loss, so that together with taking their medication as prescribed, patients can live a healthier lifestyle. Additionally, as part of the program, patients can receive a free trial of Novartis high blood pressure medication, a rebate offer for a FREE Omron blood pressure monitor and a money back guarantee. Limitations may apply. Full details are available by visiting www.BPSuccessZone.com. The medications in this program are approved to treat high blood pressure and are not approved to prevent heart attack or to prevent or treat stroke, kidney disease or eye damage.

About Novartis

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation researches, develops, manufactures and markets leading innovative prescription drugs used to treat a number of diseases and conditions, including central nervous system disorders, organ transplantation, cardiovascular diseases, dermatological diseases, respiratory disorders, cancer and arthritis. The company's mission is to improve people's lives by pioneering novel healthcare solutions.

Located in East Hanover, New Jersey, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation is an affiliate of Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS) —a world leader in pharmaceuticals and consumer health. In 2004, the Group's businesses achieved net sales of USD 28.2 billion and pro forma net income of USD 5.6 billion. The Group invested approximately USD 4.1 billion in R&D. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ about 91,700 people and operate in over 140 countries around the world.

For further information please consult <http://www.novartis.com>.

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Editor's Note: To request images, go to <http://www.pimsmultimedia.com/novartis>

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