

FOR RELEASE
Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2008

CONTACT:
Elisa Ramirez-Johnson: (214) 706-1508
Elisa.Ramirez-Johnson@heart.org



Families urged to use Go Red Corazón family tree to begin a heart-healthy legacy

Hispanic Heritage Month is from Sept. 15 – Oct. 15

DALLAS, Sept. 2 — Maria Elena Salinas is painfully aware of the importance of knowing her family’s heart-health history.

Both her parents died from illnesses related to high blood pressure.

“My family has been very aware of the risks we face and has tried to take the necessary steps to maintain a healthy life,” said Salinas, co-anchor of Noticiero Univision and co-host on the Spanish-language television news magazine *Aqui y Ahora*.

Recently, her 38-year-old niece died in her sleep of hypertensive heart disease. She battled with weight, high blood pressure and diabetes for decades.

“The one thing she had no control over was her family history with the disease,” Salinas said.

Too many lives have and will be cut short from heart disease and its risk factors; however, early detection, lifestyle changes, and other intervention can improve certain conditions.

As Salinas and other Hispanics celebrate culture and tradition during Hispanic Heritage Month, the American Heart Association is encouraging women and their families to trace their health history and learn about heart disease risk.

To map out your family’s heart health, download the American Heart Association’s **Go Red Corazon Hispanic Family Tree (in English)** at www.americanheart.org/familytree. To register for other heart-health information or updates, visit www.americanheart.org/GoRedForWomenRegister.

Uncovering family history can help you to better understand your risk for heart disease. If you have a blood relative with heart disease or a risk factor for genetic heart disease, your risk for developing it significantly increases.

Hispanics are at high risk of death from heart disease — the nation’s No. 1 killer — due to factors such as diabetes, physical inactivity and obesity. In fact, 20 percent of Hispanics in America have hypertension, 8.3 percent have heart disease, and 5.9 percent have coronary heart disease.

Certain health conditions are genetically passed from one family member to another, but healthy habits can also be passed from generation to generation. So, as part of Hispanic Heritage Month, take steps to adopt a heart-healthy lifestyle — to help ensure that your heritage continues.

Go Red Corazón can help women and their families take charge of their heart health. For free information about Hispanics and heart disease risk factors, prevention tips, a heart-health guide and free recipes, visit www.goredcorazon.org or call 1-888-MY-HEART (1-888-694-3278).

About Go Red For Women

Since 2004, Go Red For Women has captured the energy, passion and intelligence of women to work collectively to wipe out heart disease — the No. 1 killer of women. We want millions of women across America to take heart disease personally. Go Red For Women engages women and the men who love them to embrace the cause. Healthcare providers, celebrities and politicians also elevate the cause and spread the word about women and heart disease. For more information about Go Red For Women, please call 1-888-MY-HEART (1-888-694-3278) or visit GoRedForWomen.org. The movement is nationally sponsored by Macy’s and Merck & Co., Inc.

About the American Heart Association

Founded in 1924, the American Heart Association today is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary health organization dedicated to building healthier lives, free of heart disease and stroke. These diseases, America’s No. 1 and No. 3 killers, and all other cardiovascular diseases claim nearly 870,000 lives a year. In fiscal year 2006–07 the association invested more than \$554 million in research, professional and public education, advocacy and community service programs to help all Americans live longer, healthier lives. To learn more, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visit americanheart.org.

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