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News Release

Medical College of Wisconsin
Office of Public Affairs
8701 Watertown Plank Road
Milwaukee, WI 53226
Fax (414) 456-6166

For more information, contact:
Toranj Marphetia (toranj@mcw.edu)
Director of Media Relations
Cellular: 414-303-1242
Office: 414-456-4700
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CONTACT for MUM/INMP: Ken Chawkin,
641-470-1314, kchawkin@mum.edu

Transcendental Meditation helped heart disease patients lower risks of heart attack, stroke, and death by nearly 50 percent

*Results of first-ever study to be presented at annual meeting of the
American Heart Association in Orlando, Nov. 16*

Patients with coronary heart disease who practiced the stress-reducing Transcendental

Meditation® technique had nearly 50 percent lower rates of heart attack, stroke, and death compared to

nonmeditating controls, according to the results of a first-ever study presented during the annual

meeting of the American Heart Association in Orlando, Fla., on Nov.16, 2009.

The trial was sponsored by a $3.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health–National

Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and was conducted at The Medical College of Wisconsin in

Milwaukee in collaboration with the Institute for Natural Medicine and Prevention at Maharishi

University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa.

The nine-year, randomized control trial followed 201African American men and women,

average age 59 years, with narrowing of arteries in their hearts who were randomly assigned to either

practice the stress-reducing Transcendental Meditation technique or to participate in a control group

which received health education classes in traditional risk factors, including dietary modification and

exercise.

All participants continued standard medications and other usual medical care.

The study found:
- A 47 percent reduction in the combination of death, heart attacks, and strokes in the participants
- Clinically significant (5 mm Hg average) reduction in blood pressure associated with decrease in clinical events
- Significant reductions in psychological stress in the high-stress subgroup

According to Robert Schneider, M.D., FACC, lead author and director of the Center for Natural Medicine and Prevention, "Previous research on Transcendental Meditation has shown reductions in blood pressure, psychological stress, and other risk factors for heart disease, irrespective of ethnicity. But this is the first controlled clinical trial to show that long-term practice of this particular stress reduction program reduces the incidence of clinical cardiovascular events, that is heart attacks, strokes and mortality."

"This study is an example of the contribution of a lifestyle intervention—stress management—to the prevention of cardiovascular disease in high-risk patients," said Theodore Kotchen, M.D., co-author of the study, professor of medicine, and associate dean for clinical research at the Medical College. Other investigators at the Milwaukee site included Drs. Jane Kotchen and Clarence Grim.

Dr. Schneider said that the effect of Transcendental Meditation in the trial was like adding a class of newly discovered medications for the prevention of heart disease. "In this case, the new medications are derived from the body's own internal pharmacy stimulated by the Transcendental Meditation practice," he said.

Fast Facts on Coronary Heart Disease
- Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the leading cause of death in the United States
- There are nearly 1.5 million heart attacks per year in the US, according to the American Heart Association
- An American will suffer a heart attack every 34 seconds
- Coronary heart disease is also the leading cause of health care costs. More than $475 billion is spent annually on treating CHD, including:
    - $100,000 for each coronary bypass surgery
    - $50,000 for each angioplasty
    - $30,000 for each diagnostic cardiac catheterization
- There are nearly 500,000 coronary artery bypass grafts and 1.3 million angioplasties performed every year
- Stress is thought to contribute to the development of CHD