

Continuing Progress Against Heart Disease And Stroke

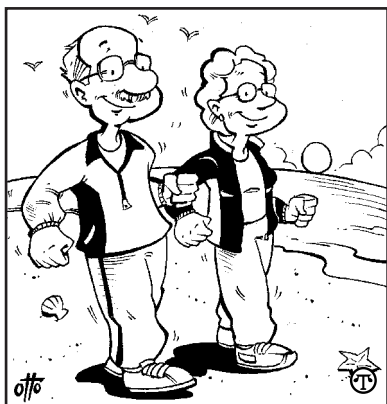
(NAPSA)—Keeping up the momentum of drug discovery that has cut deaths from heart disease and stroke in half over the past three decades, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies continue to work on new medicines for these diseases. Recently, the research-based pharmaceutical manufacturers announced 123 treatments either in clinical trials or awaiting approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, and stroke is number three. But, thanks in large part to new drug treatments, death rates from these diseases are falling. This reduction is “one of the great triumphs of medicine in the past 50 years,” according to cardiologist Dr. Eugene Braunwald of Harvard Medical School.

Much of the progress is due to the development of effective medicines to control both blood pressure and cholesterol. In addition, the treatment for heart attacks has vastly improved; doctors today have medicines that can stop a heart attack in mid-stream, as well as other high-tech treatments.

But, experts warn, the war is not yet won. Every 33 seconds, an American dies of either heart disease or stroke. Nearly 62 million Americans have one or more types of cardiovascular disease, and many people who survive heart attacks develop congestive heart failure; hospitalizations for this disease increased by 165 percent in the past two decades.

The incidence and cost of cardiovascular disease are likely to increase as the population ages, unless better treatments are found. The new medicines in the pipeline give evidence that the



New medications are continuing to help reduce incidence of heart disease and stroke.

pharmaceutical industry is continuing the progress against these diseases. Many use cutting-edge technologies and new scientific approaches. For example:

- A new medicine that shifts the heart's metabolism to a fuel source that requires less oxygen, reducing episodes of pain and allowing angina patients to be more active.
- A medicine that promotes blood vessel growth and may enable patients to grow their own heart bypasses around blocked arteries.
- A medicine that blocks a hormone that forces the heart to pump harder, straining the heart muscle and often leading to heart failure.
- A medicine that protects the brain from the damage that occurs in the aftermath of a stroke.

These new medicines promise to continue the already remarkable progress against heart disease and stroke and to raise the quality of life for patients with these diseases. The complete survey can be viewed at www.phrma.org.