

# Hispanics Urged To Take Charge Of Heart Health

(NAPSA)—Heart disease and stroke rank as the number one cause of death among Hispanics in the United States, reports the American Heart Association. In 2002, diseases of the heart and stroke accounted for 27 percent of total deaths among Hispanic males and 32 percent among Hispanic females. In addition, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control notes that high blood pressure affects about one in five Hispanics in the United States.

In response to this under-recognized public health crisis, the American College of Physicians and the National Hispanic Medical Association have created “Guide to a Healthy Heart for Latinos,” a program designed to combat these statistics and explain the role of blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and weight control on long-term health. The program is supported by an educational grant from Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp.

“Guide to a Healthy Heart for Latinos” is a culturally relevant heart health education program featuring a video on DVD and guidebook that educates Hispanics on positive health behavior and empowers them to talk to their doctor about blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar numbers, to assure they are in a healthy range. The program features well-known

Latin celebrities, Rita Moreno and Esai Morales, whose lives have been affected in one way or another by heart disease. By sharing their personal experiences, these celebrities provide a call-to-action for the Hispanic community to become more aware of heart health.

“Hispanics are more likely to be overweight and diabetic, major risk factors for cardiovascular disease and other health problems,” said Oscar Murillo, MD, FACP, internal medicine specialist at Hanover General Hospital in Pennsylvania, and featured on the video. “As a Hispanic physician, I

see a critical need to teach patients, in their own language, why they should know their blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.”

The video and accompanying guidebook offer numerous tips and practical tools for:

- Working with a physician or health care provider;
- Managing blood pressure and cholesterol;
- Controlling weight, and
- Following a healthy lifestyle.

For more information or to download the guidebook and view a vignette of the video, visit [www.doctorsforadults.com](http://www.doctorsforadults.com).