

For Immediate Release

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Spirit of the Heart: Preventing Cardiovascular Disease: A Community Call to Action

**Association of Black Cardiologists and African American Churches
Reach Out to Educate Community about Heart Health**

Heart Attacks, Strokes Hit African Americans Disproportionately

Chicago, March 28, 2008 – The Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. (ABC) will team up with African American churches in the Chicago area Sunday, April 20, to help educate people about heart health and provide screenings for those at risk.

On that day, 14 participating churches will host a member of the Association of Black Cardiologists to talk about heart health during their Sunday services. Salem Baptist Church of Chicago and Jesus Name Apostolic Church of Waukegan, in cooperation with Advocate Health Care and Lake County CareCoach, will offer health screenings to members of their congregations and members of the community. The screening events will take place at Salem Baptist Church will take place from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and at Jesus Name Apostolic Church the screening schedule is from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

“It is essential people understand that heart disease is preventable, and heart healthy practices are important for longevity,” said Kim A. Williams, MD, Chair of the Board of ABC, and Professor of Medicine, Director, Nuclear Cardiology at University of Chicago. “Regular screening for blood pressure and cholesterol levels including LDL, HDL and triglycerides is especially important because people with these conditions often don’t have any symptoms. Too many of our people are dying too young because of undiagnosed and untreated heart disease.”

Each day 110 Illinoisans lose their lives to cardiovascular disease, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health’s Web site. ABC believes that “children should know their grandparents” and has developed a series of materials for African Americans to educate them about healthy living, lifestyle choices and heart health. Materials are available at their Web site www.abcadio.org.

The Sunday educational and screening events follow a community leaders forum the previous day, also hosted by ABC, featuring a call-to-action from ABC members and leaders from the Chicago community including Terry Mason, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Public Health, Dr. Linda Murray, Chief Medical Officer, Cook County Department of Health and Dr. Sandra Burke of the American Heart Association.

The ABC, located in Atlanta, GA, was founded in 1974 to bring special attention to the adverse impact of cardiovascular disease on African Americans. A nonprofit organization, the ABC has an international membership of more than 600 health care professionals and is holding Spirit of the Heart on cooperation with Minority Health Month, a well-organized effort to eliminate health disparities across the country. The ABC is dedicated to eliminating the disparities related to cardiovascular disease in all people of color. For more information, call 404-201-6600 or visit www.abcadio.org.

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