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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 8, 2010

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Bonnie Bernstein and St. Mary's Medical Center Get San Francisco Moving for Deep-Vein Thrombosis Awareness and Prevention

The Coalition to Prevent DVT Brings DVT Awareness in Motion to San Francisco on March 11, 2010 Educating Area Residents About the Importance of Preventative Care Through Movement

SAN FRANCISCO, March 11, 2010 – St. Mary's Medical Center welcomes Bonnie Bernstein, ESPN sportscaster and national patient spokesperson for the Coalition to Prevent DVT, to share her personal experience about the importance of deep-vein thrombosis (DVT) education and risk assessment. This event will commemorate the seventh annual DVT Awareness Month.

As part of the Coalition to Prevent DVT's recently launched *DVT Awareness in Motion* campaign, Bernstein will be joined by Bradley H. Lewis, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine in Hematology at the University of California San Francisco, SF General Hospital and Richard Podolin, MD, St. Mary's Chief of Staff and cardiologist. Dr. Lewis will discuss prevention and treatment for DVT and ways to reduce risk through movement, especially in places where mobility is restricted. St. Mary's nurses and physical therapists will also be on hand to answer questions about DVT and demonstrate movement exercises. This free educational program will be held from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, March 11, 2010 in St. Mary's Medical Center's Cafeteria.

"From my own experience, I know that DVT can happen to almost anyone, which is why programs like *DVT Awareness in Motion* are so important," said Bonnie Bernstein. "The best thing you can do for yourself is to take action by knowing the signs and symptoms and taking the appropriate preventative care. I encourage everyone to attend the event, or download information from the web site, to learn more about the role of movement in helping to reduce your risk."

DVT is a blood clot that forms inside a deep vein, most often in the lower leg. Once formed, a blood clot can break off and may cause severe complications, some even fatal. A DVT blood clot has the potential to move into the lungs and block circulation to this vital organ creating a life-threatening condition – pulmonary embolism (PE) – which requires immediate medical attention.

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Up to 2 million Americans are affected each year by DVT. Approximately 300,000 Americans die each year from pulmonary embolism (PE),¹ the majority of which result from DVT.² Complications from DVT kill more Americans than breast cancer and AIDS combined.³ Almost all hospitalized patients have at least one risk factor for DVT and PE and approximately 40 percent have three or more risk factors.⁴

"According to an article published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, patients who are hospitalized are at nearly eight times greater risk of developing DVT, which is why it is so important to foster conversations about risk assessment with our patients," said Milton Louie, MD, Vice President of Medical Affairs at St. Mary's Medical Center. "St. Mary's is proud to work with the Coalition to Prevent DVT to raise awareness about the condition and encourage movement as one way to reduce risk."

Ambulation, such as limited movement and stretching is one way that hospitalized patients can reduce the risk for DVT. By increasing movement, patients encourage better blood circulation; alternatively, when a person is inactive blood can collect in the lower extremities which increase the risk of developing DVT. The *DVT Awareness In Motion* program provides instruction on simple movements that may help reduce the risk of DVT, including the *DVT Awareness In Motion* movement guide, which provides easy to do movements designed to encourage blood circulation in places that mobility is restricted, such as the hospital, at the office, in assisted living or during travel. People who attend the event will receive the movement guide as well as a risk assessment tool and DVT awareness educational brochures and will have the opportunity to talk with Dr. Lewis and DVT National Patient Spokesperson Bonnie Bernstein. St. Mary's therapists and nurse educators will also be on hand to answer questions and perform free DVT assessments.

Since its inception more than seven years ago, the Coalition to Prevent DVT has worked to establish DVT as a national health priority through grassroots campaigns and partnerships with public policy leaders. Coalition efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2005, the United States House of Representatives declared March as DVT Awareness Month. Last year, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced a resolution to declare the second Tuesday of every March as National DVT Screening Day. The Coalition has also worked closely with the Office of the Surgeon General on the Call to Action on DVT and PE to drive awareness to reduce the number of cases in the United States and to emphasize the need for the implementation of evidence-based practices.

The *DVT Awareness In Motion* campaign includes recently launched educational video demonstrations of simple movements that can help reduce the risk of DVT featuring Mary Ann Wilson, R.N., founder and host of the PBS broadcast "Sit and Be Fit." The *DVT Awareness In Motion* videos are accessible at www.preventdvt.org.

For more information about the Coalition to Prevent DVT, please visit www.preventdvt.org.

ABOUT DVT AND DVT AWARENESS MONTH:

March is DVT Awareness Month, which is championed by the Coalition to Prevent DVT to raise awareness of this serious medical condition among consumers, healthcare professionals and public health leaders.

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ABOUT ST. MARY'S MEDICAL CENTER:

St. Mary's Medical Center (SMMC), a member of Catholic Healthcare West, has cared for the people of the San Francisco Bay Area since 1857. Today, it is one of the largest not-for-profit, community-based healthcare providers in Northern California. Home to the nation's first digital cardiac catheterization laboratory, pioneering spine and total joint surgery center and a full-range of inpatient and outpatient medical services, SMMC physicians are considered experts in their field. With more than 550 physicians, 1,100 employees and 400 patient beds, St. Mary's is committed to furthering the healing ministry of Jesus, and to providing high-quality, affordable healthcare to the community we serve. For more information, please call 415-668-1000 or visit www.stmarysmedicalcenter.org

About the Coalition to Prevent DVT:

The mission of the Coalition to Prevent DVT is to reduce the immediate and long-term dangers of DVT and PE, which together make up one of the nation's leading causes of death. The Coalition will educate the public, healthcare professionals and policy-makers about risk factors, symptoms and signs associated with DVT, as well as identify evidence-based measures to reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality from DVT and PE. The Coalition is composed of more than 60 members from medical societies, patient advocacy groups and other public health organizations dedicated to raising awareness of this serious medical condition. The Coalition to Prevent Deep-Vein Thrombosis is funded by sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC. For more information, visit www.preventdvt.org

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¹ Heit et al. *Am Soc Hematol*. Presented at: 47th Annual Meeting and Exposition, American Society of Hematology; December 2005; Atlanta GA, Poster [68].

² Murin et al. *Thromb Haemost*. Comparison of the Outcomes after Hospitalization for Deep Venous Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolism. 2002; 88:407-14.

³ Gerotziapas GT, Samama MM. Prophylaxis of venous thromboembolism medical patients. *Curr Opin PulmMed*. 2004; 10:356-365.

⁴ Geerts WH, Pineo GF, Heit JA, et al. Prevention of venous thromboembolism: The Seventh ACCP Conference on Antithrombotic and Thrombolytic Therapy. *Chest*. 2004; 126 (suppl):338S-400S.