American Latex Allergy Association

National Anaphylaxis Day, March 5

March 1, 2006

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AAAAI and FAAN Bring Anaphylaxis to the Nation?s Attention with National Anaphylaxis Day, March 5

MIAMI BEACH - Hundreds of Americans die each year from anaphylaxis, a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset. The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) and the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) are bringing this health concern to the attention of the nation on National Anaphylaxis Day, on Sunday, March 5, during the 2006 AAAAI Annual Meeting in Miami Beach.

?The keys to decreasing deaths caused by anaphylaxis are: perform risk-assessments for people who have experienced previous allergic reactions; implement long-term risk-reduction strategies for these individuals; and provide anaphylaxis education,? said F. Estelle R. Simons, MD, president of the AAAAI. People who suffer from allergies to foods, insect stings, natural rubber latex or medications need to be aware of the potential for an anaphylactic reaction.

According to Anne Munoz Furlong, CEO and founder of FAAN, ?Anaphylaxis includes serious and rapid allergic reactions usually involving more than one part of the body which, if severe enough, can kill. These severe food allergy reactions account for over 30,000 emergency room visits each year with approximately 200 people - including children and young adults - dying annually from anaphylaxis to food.?

The AAAAI and FAAN emphasize the following important information about anaphylaxis:

- Anyone, especially people allergic to foods such as peanuts, tree nuts, seafood, fish, milk or egg, or to insect stings, natural rubber latex or medications, can suffer from an anaphylactic reaction. - An anaphylactic reaction can happen within minutes of an allergic person coming into contact with his or her specific trigger.

- Several symptoms occur at the same time and include: itching, hives, flushing, difficulty breathing, vomiting

diarrhea, dizziness, confusion, or shock.

- When a person develops an anaphylactic reaction, epinephrine should be injected, and 911 or emergency medical services should be called. It is important to act quickly, because it is difficult to predict whether the anaphylaxis episode will be mild, life-threatening, or fatal.

- Follow-up is needed because anaphylaxis can occur repeatedly. Risk-assessment needs to be performed, and the trigger needs to be confirmed. Risk-reduction (a long-term preventative strategy) needs to be implemented.

For more information about anaphylaxis, to interview an allergy/immunology specialist regarding anaphylaxis, or to review anaphylaxis-related abstracts presented at the 2006 AAAAI Annual Meeting, visit the AAAAI Web site at **www.aaaai.org** [3], or contact Karen Janka, Public Relations Manager, at (414) 272-6071, or **kjanka@aaaai.org** [1]. To interview patients about anaphylaxis, contact Lauren Lawson, Public Relations Manager at FAAN, at (703) 563-3052 or at **llawson@foodallergymail.org** [2].

About the AAAAI: The AAAAI is the largest professional medical specialty organization in the United States representing allergists, asthma specialists, clinical immunologists, allied health professionals and others with special interest in the research and treatment of allergic disease. Allergy/immunology specialists are pediatric or internal medicine physicians who have elected an additional two years of training to become specialized in the treatment of asthma, allergy and immunologic disease. Established in 1943, the AAAAI has more than 6,300 members in the United States, Canada and 60 other countries. The AAAAI serves as an advocate for the public by providing educational information through its Web site **www.aaaai.org** [3], and its Physician Referral and Information Line at (800) 822-2762.

About FAAN: Founded in 1991, The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) is the world leader in food allergy information. FAAN, a nonprofit organization based in Fairfax, VA, is dedicated to increasing public awareness about food allergy and anaphylaxis, to providing education, and to advancing research on behalf of all those affected by food allergies. The organization has just under 30,000 members in the United States, Canada, and 62 other countries.

FAAN provides information about food allergy and educational resources to patients, their families, schools, health professionals, pharmaceutical companies, the food industry, and government officials. Educational materials published by FAAN are reviewed for medical accuracy by the FAAN Medical Advisory Board, which is comprised of 14 of the world?s leaders in food allergy science and medicine. In addition to printed materials, FAAN also sponsors awareness programs such as Food Allergy Awareness Week, Food Allergy Conferences, and the Mariel C. Furlong Awards for Making a Difference as well as fundraising walks across the country. Educational materials and information about special programs are also available online at **www.foodallergy.org** [4], **www.fankids.org** [5], and **www.fanteen.org** [6].

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