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**New Campaign Says “*Cuide Su Corazón*” to People with Diabetes**  
*Heart Disease is Leading Killer of Hispanic and Latino Americans with Diabetes*

MIAMI, FL – Hispanic and Latino Americans with diabetes are at higher risk of heart disease, but they can reduce that risk, according to a new national health awareness campaign unveiled today by the National Diabetes Education Program during the National Council of La Raza’s annual conference. By controlling blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol, people with diabetes can live longer, healthier lives.

“The campaign ‘*Si Tiene Diabetes, Cuide Su Corazón*’ is aimed at helping Hispanic Americans better understand the need to control all aspects of their diabetes to help prevent heart disease,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson. “By controlling blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, people with diabetes can live longer, healthier lives. This important new national campaign will do exactly what its name implies – help people all over the country with diabetes take better care of their hearts.”

According to the NDEP, more than 2 million Hispanic and Latino Americans have been diagnosed with diabetes. The San Antonio Heart Study found that Latinos and Latinas with diabetes had higher death rates from heart disease than those without diabetes.

“At least 65 percent of people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke, and yet only one in four Hispanic and Latino Americans with diabetes know they are at risk for heart disease,” said Yanira Cruz, director of the Institute for Hispanic Health at the NCLR and chair of the NDEP’s Hispanic/Latino work group.

“Diabetes is an epidemic in our communities,” Cruz said. “But it doesn’t have to claim the lives of those we love. There is something we can do about it.”

“Our message is clear: good diabetes care is more than just lowering your blood sugar levels,” said Dr. Charles M. Clark Jr., NDEP chairman. “Controlling your blood pressure and cholesterol is crucial to help prevent heart disease and stroke, the leading killers of people with diabetes.”

The NDEP suggests the following target numbers for most people with diabetes to manage their blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol:

- Blood glucose levels: A1C **less than 7 percent** (the A1C test measures your average blood glucose over the last 3 months). Check at least twice a year, or more often if above target.
- Blood pressure: **below 130/80**. Check at every doctor's visit.
- Cholesterol: LDL **below 100**. Check at least once a year.

The campaign is centered around a series of materials that will help educate Hispanic and Latino Americans with diabetes and their families about their increased risk for heart disease and ways to lower their risk. A free bilingual brochure for people with diabetes will be available in September for Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month.

Being physically active for 30 minutes a day, taking medicines as prescribed and maintaining a healthy diet all contribute to controlling blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol. The NDEP offers a recipe booklet featuring new twists on traditional Hispanic and Latino recipes—meals that are flavorful but low in fat and salt. A free booklet along with additional information on diabetes in Spanish and English can be ordered by calling the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse at 1-800-438-5383.

“It’s more than just food,” Cruz said. “It’s life. These recipes are full of flavor and are one way to help people with diabetes and their families control their diabetes.”

“If people know what to do, and they take care of their hearts, they can remain the heart of their families for a long time,” added Cruz.

The NDEP is a federally funded program co-sponsored by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is a leading source for information about diabetes care and prevention. The NDEP has over 200 partner organizations, including NCLR, that form a network to reach the health care community and those affected by diabetes at the federal, state and local levels. To talk with an information specialist, call 1-800-860-8747 or visit the NDEP website at [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov).

For over 30 years, the NCLR has been the nation’s largest constituency-based Hispanic and Latino organization, annually serving over three million Hispanics of all nationality groups in all regions of the country. For more information, call 202-785-1670 or visit them at [www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org).

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