

New Certification Program to Help Fitness Trainers Work with Cancer Survivors

Focus on exercising safely during and after the disease

Atlanta 2009/01/14 -A new cancer specialty certification has been launched to train health and fitness professionals earn additional qualifications to work with people with a history of cancer, including those currently undergoing treatment. Beginning in 2009, professionals who have already achieved the "gold standard" in certification through the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) or other accredited organization can receive ACSM/ACS Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer (CET) designation by successfully completing an exam focused on exercise and cancer.

The new cancer specialty certification is available through the ACSM in collaboration with the American Cancer Society (ACS). ACSM estimates that it will take several months before CETs are widely available throughout the country, at which point they will begin to be made available to the public in a searchable database on the group's web site.

"We are very excited to be able to point cancer survivors to specially trained fitness professionals who can help them exercise safely while undergoing cancer treatment and beyond," said Colleen Doyle, M.S., R.D., nutrition and physical activity director for the American Cancer Society. A recent study conducted by the Society indicated that depending on the cancer site, only 53-70 percent of survivors met minimum physical activity recommendations. "Having a cadre of fitness professionals who can help support cancer survivors in meeting their exercise goals will be a real plus."

The certification is especially important to those suffering or recovering from cancer who may not know how to safely exercise or what exercises are best to aid in recovery. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) estimates there were nearly 11 million people with a history of cancer in the United States in 2004, the most recent year for which statistics are available.

"Until now, there has been no certification offered for professionals working in fitness clubs that focuses on the special needs of cancer survivors," said Richard Cotton, M.S., ACSM's national director of certification programs. "Exercise can lead to faster recovery from some effects of cancer treatment, as well as increased quality of life during treatment, and thus underscores the importance of this new certification."

For more information on the ACSM/ACS Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer specialty, visit www.acsm.org/certification. The certification exam will be available at more than 4,300 testing centers worldwide.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

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