

American Cancer Society Joins 'Million Moms Challenge' to Tackle Second Leading Cancer Killer Among Women in Developing Countries

The Society Joins ABC News, United Nations Foundation's 'Million Moms Challenge' to Raise Awareness of Cervical Cancer Globally

ATLANTA, Dec. 5, 2011 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Although largely preventable through early detection, cervical cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women in developing countries, where more than 85 percent of the estimated 529,800 cervical cancer cases worldwide in 2008 occurred. While cervical cancer screening rates have decreased by as much as 65 percent over the past four decades due to screening, incidence rates remain high in developing countries in Central and South America, the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southern Asia where girls and women do not have access to prevention services such as education, HPV vaccination and life-saving pre-cancer screening and early treatment.

The American Cancer Society has joined ABC News and the United Nations Foundation in the recently launched Million Moms Challenge (www.millionmomschallenge.com), an initiative aimed at connecting millions of American women with millions of moms in developing countries and raising awareness of maternal issues such as pregnancy, childbirth, children's health and moms' health worldwide. As the world's leading voluntary health organization, the American Cancer Society lends its expertise and resources to the Million Moms Challenge to raise awareness about cervical cancer, a leading cause of death among women worldwide and a disease that affects maternal health, especially in developing countries.

"There is a great need to increase access to and improve quality of cervical cancer screening programs for women in countries where resources are not available," said Otis W. Brawley, M.D., the American Cancer Society's chief medical officer. "The American Cancer Society is proud to join the Million Moms Challenge in raising global awareness of cervical cancer and providing opportunities to save lives and reduce suffering from this highly curable and preventable disease."

The American Cancer Society recommends cervical cancer screening for women 18 and over approximately three years after a woman begins having vaginal intercourse, but no later than 21 years of age. Screening should be done every year with conventional Pap tests or every two years using liquid-based Pap tests. At or after age 30, women who have had three normal test results in a row may get screened every two to three years.

The American Cancer Society is a member of Cervical Cancer Action, a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to eliminating cervical cancer deaths worldwide by raising global awareness and advancing a global call to action to address cervical cancer. For more information on the American Cancer Society's global efforts and how to join the movement, visit www.global.cancer.org

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end cancer for good. As a global grassroots force of three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping you stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early, helping you get well by being there for you during and after a diagnosis, by finding cures through groundbreaking discovery and fighting back through public policy. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.5 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

The Million Moms Challenge is part of an ABC News year-long global health series "Be the Change: Save a Life," which is sponsored in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. For more information about the Million Moms Challenge visit www.millionmomschallenge.com or facebook.com/millionmomschallenge. To get involved in the conversation about healthy moms and babies around the world, follow @AMillionMoms on Twitter and use the hash-tag #AMillionMoms. Watch for the Diane Sawyer primetime special on maternal health airing December 16th.

