

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Katie Bell (214) 706-1345

Molly Spence (312) 856-8843

Choose To Move helps women get active, live healthier

DALLAS, October 5 — The kids are back in school and the holidays aren't here yet. Why not seize this "golden moment" to build a healthy, balanced routine for the months and years ahead? You can find the help and inspiration you need in the American Heart Association's **Choose To Move** program.

In this free 12-week program, women integrate physical activity, proper diet and other healthy habits into their daily life. It doesn't take a lot of time or money.

Many women have a problem with physical activity. They don't do what they know they should do.

In an American Heart Association survey this year, 76 percent of women respondents said physical activity is important, but only 28 percent said they get what the American Heart Association recommends, at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week.

"Women know physical activity is a key component of a healthy lifestyle, but our survey findings indicate that they struggle to incorporate it into their daily lives," said Rita F. Redberg, M.D., professor of medicine in the cardiology division at the University of California – San Francisco National Center of Excellence in Women's Health.

"By increasing their level of physical activity, women can also improve their health risks, manage stress and increase their energy levels," Redberg said.

Choose To Move is an important part of the American Heart Association's **Go Red For Women** movement, which raises women's awareness that heart disease is their No. 1 killer and helps them lower their risk of heart disease and stroke.

Survey respondents also said their most common barrier to healthy eating habits is the need to plan ahead. **Choose To Move** helps eliminate barriers by providing simple nutrition tips and easy recipes. After taking these habits to heart for 12 weeks, many women have established healthy habits they can follow not only through the holiday season, but for the rest of their lives.

- more -

Developed by the renowned Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas, the program is available online or by mail, and the handbook is free. Here are some **Choose To Move** tips:

- Be aware of what you eat. Tend to grab a candy bar or use the drive-thru a lot? Carry a healthy snack with you instead. This could be a handful of roasted almonds, fruit or a homemade snack mix made with a salt-free seasoning blend.
- Exercise as early as you can, even on a lunch break. Avoid intense physical activity within three hours of bedtime. It can make restful sleep difficult.
- When you get home from the grocery store, chop your fresh produce right away and store it in airtight containers in the fridge. This eliminates prep work for the rest of the week, so you'll be much more likely to eat what you bought.

If you cut 250 calories a day, you could drop a half-pound per week. By combining physical activity and a balanced diet, you can greatly increase your chances of living a longer, healthier life.

Choose To Move is sponsored by the Almond Board of California and the Mrs. Dash® brand. To register, visit americanheart.org/choosetomove or call 1-888-MY-HEART (1-888-694-3278).

###

Since 1924 the **American Heart Association** has helped protect people of all ages and ethnicities from the ravages of heart disease and stroke. These diseases, the nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers, and other cardiovascular diseases, claim over 927,000 American lives a year. The association invested more than \$439 million in fiscal year 2003–04 for research, professional and public education, and advocacy so people across America can live stronger, longer lives.

The **Almond Board of California** is a sponsor of the American Heart Association's **Choose To Move** program. The Board administers a grower-enacted Federal Marketing Order under the supervision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Established in 1950, its charge is to promote the best quality almonds, California's largest tree nut crop. For more information on the Almond Board of California or almonds, visit www.AlmondsAreIn.com.

The **Mrs. Dash** brand is a sponsor of the American Heart Association's **Choose To Move** program. Every product from Mrs. Dash is made with a unique combination of 14 natural herbs and spices that's salt-free with no MSG. Mrs. Dash 10-Minute Marinades are the latest addition to the Mrs. Dash family of products. Visit mrsdash.com for hundreds of delicious low-salt recipes.