Billy Mays Autopsy Results Point to Sudden Cardiac Arrest;

Second High Profile Death in a Week Highlights Need for More Public Awareness About Risk Factors and Treatment

Washington, DC (June 29, 2009) – The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association (SCAA) said today that autopsy results released on the death of television spokesman Billy Mays point to sudden cardiac arrest and that the unfortunate premature deaths of Mays and singer Michael Jackson within one week of each other highlight the prevalence of sudden cardiac arrest, which is the nation's leading cause of death.

The Hillsborough, FL County Medical Examiner released autopsy results today that indicate that Mays most likely died from complications due to heart disease, and that Mays showed signs of hypertension and arteriosclerotic disease of the heart – both known risk factors for sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), responsible for more than 300,000 deaths each year in the US.

"Billy Mays was seen by millions of Americans as an energetic and seemingly healthy middle-aged man. His sudden death is a tragedy, and we at SCAA extend our deepest sympathy to his family," said Dr. Vince Mosesso, SCAA's medical director and associate professor of emergency medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. "Unfortunately and tragically, in many cases the first sign of heart disease is sudden cardiac arrest. Mr. Mays' death is a reminder that we should all make every effort to know about, avoid or modify the possible risk factors for heart disease. Those with diagnosed heart disease should be vigilant in their medical care and lifestyle habits to reduce the risk of cardiac arrest."

Dr. Mosesso said that along with high blood pressure and atherosclerosis (also known as coronary artery disease), other known risk factors for sudden cardiac arrest include a previous heart attack, heart failure, diabetes, smoking, and obesity. He urged patients to follow some basic healthy heart guidelines:

- Share with your personal physician any family history of heart disease or sudden death and symptoms you have, such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, palpitations, indigestion and abnormal sweating, especially if associated with exertion or exercise.
- Closely follow physician recommendations on prescribed drug therapies for blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and high cholesterol
- Follow a regular exercise program even a regular walking routine of 30 minutes per day can make a significant improvement in heart health
- Do not smoke
- Maintain a healthy diet low in saturated fat, high in fiber and reliant on fresh fruits, vegetables, and low-fat, high-protein seafood and meats

"Everyone should know how to do CPR and how to use an AED in order to help sudden cardiac arrest victims, but the best way to reduce your risk of sudden cardiac death is to address the risk factors for heart disease and maintain a healthy lifestyle," said Dr. Mosesso.

For more information, please visit <u>www.suddencardiacarrest.org</u> or view SCAA's educational video on sudden cardiac arrest at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXFEIoNkfQo.