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Novartis Vaccines and PTA battle flu: public health vaccination initiative urges families "Let's Fight Flu Together!"

- *Partnership aims to provide convenient access to vaccination — helping keep kids and teachers in school and parents at work*
- *"Let's Fight Flu Together!" initiative supports CDC's new vaccination recommendations which include children six months to 18 years old¹*
- *Campaign goal is to increase vaccination rates while supporting PTA with a donation for those vaccinated*

Cambridge, MA, November 10, 2008 — Novartis Vaccines announced today a national public health initiative for influenza vaccination for school-aged children, their families and teachers. In an effort to support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) broader influenza vaccination recommendations, Novartis Vaccines has partnered with PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and Flu Busters, an on-site vaccinations provider, for a nationwide influenza vaccination campaign called "Let's Fight Flu Together!"

During the 2008/2009 influenza season, "Let's Fight Flu Together!" vaccination clinics will be held for students and their families, teachers and community members at participating PTA schools and community sites across the United States. Children play a critical role in community-wide transmission of influenza, a recent study reported; and new recommendations from the CDC have increased the number of individuals advised to receive an annual influenza vaccination to include children from six months to 18 years of age.^{1,2} Whereas previous recommendations included children from six months through 59 months of age, this new recommendation aims to help protect approximately 30 million additional children.^{1,3}

"We are fully committed to supporting public health efforts to reduce the incidence of seasonal influenza and to protecting more people against this potentially deadly disease, especially our children," said Joerg Reinhardt, Chief Executive Officer of Novartis Vaccines. "Novartis Vaccines is proud to partner with PTA and Flu Busters on the "Let's Fight Flu Together!" initiative. Influenza has caused high rates of absenteeism among students and staff in our country's 119,000 schools.⁴ Providing these accessible vaccination clinics will help bring influenza vaccines to as many families as possible, which we hope will result in keeping more children and teachers in school and parents at work this influenza season."

For each influenza vaccination administered by a Flu Busters' qualified health professional at a "Let's Fight Flu Together!" clinic, a donation will be made to PTA to support local students and schools. Each vaccination will cost \$30, and Medicare Part B will be accepted from those who are eligible. Visitors to the clinics will also be able to receive tips on staying healthy during this influenza season. A comprehensive list of participating sites offering influenza vaccination clinics can be found at www.PTA.org/flushotclinics.

Many people think influenza, or “the flu,” is just a bad cold. However, influenza can be a serious and potentially deadly virus.⁵ On average each year, students miss approximately 38 million school days due to influenza and parents miss more than 10 million work days caring for these sick youngsters.^{6,7} Moreover, during the last influenza season in the US, 83 children were reported who died from influenza-related causes.⁸

“PTA was founded on taking action for the health and wellness of children, parents, school staff and community members. That’s why we’re excited about returning to our roots with the help of Novartis Vaccines and Flu Busters,” said Byron Garrett, Chief Executive Officer, National PTA. “In 2006, only 20 percent of school age children recommended to be vaccinated against seasonal influenza actually received the vaccine.⁹ We hope that offering these clinics will make receiving an influenza vaccination convenient for people while educating them on the importance of preventing this potentially serious illness.”

“People need to know that personal hygiene, such as washing your hands and good nutrition are only part of staying healthy during the influenza season,” said Richard Kanowitz, President of Families Fighting Flu. “The single best protection against this potentially deadly disease is an annual influenza vaccination.”¹⁰

Influenza vaccines are not currently approved for children under six months of age and may not prevent the disease in 100 percent of individuals receiving the vaccine.¹¹ Persons should consult their healthcare provider to determine if they have a condition that precludes them from receiving the vaccine. All vaccines have side effects. The most common side effects of influenza vaccinations include local reactions and mild general symptoms.¹¹

For more information about the “Let’s Fight Flu Together!” initiative, visit the PTA web site at www.PTA.org/flushotclinics.

Disclaimer

The foregoing release contains forward-looking statements that can be identified by terminology such as “will”, “committed”, “potentially”, “hope”, “can”, “may”, or similar expressions, or by express or implied discussions regarding potential future revenues from the “Let’s Fight Flu Together!” campaign. You should not place undue reliance on these statements. Such forward-looking statements reflect the current views of the Company regarding future events, and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause actual results to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such statements. There can be no guarantee that the “Let’s Fight Flu Together!” campaign will achieve any particular levels of revenue in the future. In particular, management’s expectations regarding the “Let’s Fight Flu Together!” campaign could be affected by, among other things, competition in general; government, industry and general public pricing pressures; unexpected manufacturing problems; unexpected regulatory actions or delays or government regulation generally; unexpected clinical trial results, including unexpected new clinical data and unexpected additional analysis of existing clinical data; the company’s ability to obtain or maintain patent or other proprietary intellectual property protection; the impact that the foregoing factors could have on the values attributed to the Group’s assets and liabilities as recorded in the Group’s consolidated balance sheet, and other risks and factors referred to in Novartis AG’s current Form 20-F on file with the US Securities and Exchange Commission. Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those anticipated, believed, estimated or expected. Novartis is providing the information in this press release as of this date and does not undertake any obligation to update any forward-looking statements contained in this press release as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

About Novartis

Novartis AG provides healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Focused solely on healthcare, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, cost-saving generic pharmaceuticals, preventive vaccines, diagnostic tools and consumer health products. Novartis is the only company with leading positions in these areas. In 2007, the Group's continuing operations (excluding divestments in 2007) achieved net sales of USD 38.1 billion and net income of USD 6.5 billion. Approximately USD 6.4 billion was invested in R&D activities throughout the Group. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 97,000 full-time associates and operate in over 140 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.com>.

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