Vitamin D Deficiency Investigation: Suggested Heart Failure Link, Per Expert Review

*Age management leader Cenegenics® Medical Institute collaborated with noted UCLA professor to assess the pro-hormone’s effects and benefits on cardiovascular disease, merging the art of natural medicine with today’s science*

Las Vegas, NV (Vocus/PRWEB)December 09, 2010 -- Cenegenics® Medical Institute, the global age management medicine leader, collaborated with Dr. Ernst R. von Schwarz—professor of medicine at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine—to investigate current evidence linking vitamin D deficiency with heart failure. Their expert scientific review recently appeared in the Journal of Cardiovascular Pharmacology and Therapeutics.

The stats show why co-authors Cenegenics and von Schwarz zeroed in on vitamin D deficiency: An estimated 1 billion people worldwide have deficient or insufficient levels of vitamin D. Even more alarming is the association of vitamin D deficiency with many types of diseases, particularly heart failure. In fact, epidemiologic studies show an 80% to 96% prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in heart failure—with some data suggesting the deficiency may be an independent predictor of mortality in heart failure patients. Classified as a vitamin, the highly hailed vitamin D actually functions as a steroid hormone. The hormone, per the Cenegenics-von Schwarz scientific review paper, is expressed in vascular smooth muscle cells and cardiac myocytes (heart muscle cells).

“Vitamin D is an iceberg. Beneath it is much more to discover about how to reduce oxidative stress through antioxidant therapy. In our investigation, we’ve put our emphasis on looking to improve not only cardiovascular disease, but also overall cardiovascular health through supplementation. The vitamin D story is now clear to most physicians who are recognizing it as an important pro-hormone that supports the concept that you can achieve a generalized effect and measurable results on health through a simple supplement,” Dr. Robert D. Willix, Jr. said.

Willix is co-author on the study, a former cardiovascular surgeon and chief medical officer of Cenegenics Las Vegas as well as chief medical officer and CEO of Cenegenics Boca Raton.

In their investigation, Cenegenics and von Schwarz conclude that it’s possible vitamin D plays a “major role in diastolic heart failure, plays a role in end-stage heart failure” or may be a “risk factor or predictor in heart failure.” The coauthors say our understanding of the vitamin D/heart failure association is definitely evolving.

“Today, everyone is talking about vitamin D. I don’t think there’s a physician in the country who isn’t measuring vitamin D levels in their patients. But that begs the question—should we be measuring vitamin K levels and what are its benefits . . . and should we be looking for cellular markers for oxidative stress? What’s really happening in today’s medicine is it is finally remembering what was intuitively used in natural medicine thousands of years ago. We’re now looking to make a science of natural medicine when in reality, it’s always been an art.”

For the near future, Willix says Cenegenics—through its nonprofit Cenegenics Education and Research Foundation (CERF)—is staying strong on its commitment to identify institutions, researchers and research organizations who are interested in investigating markers for aging and solutions to slow down the progression.
of chronic disease via a proactive approach. With cardiovascular disease topping the list as a major killer in the U.S., they’ve concentrated much of their research efforts to date in that arena.

CERF also is forging research collaborations to investigate other avenues of the aging process—including nutraceuticals that may help slow the aging process and reduce some age-related occurrences, such as oxidative stress, telomere shortening and stem cell depletion.

For more information about Cenegenics, please visit www.cenegenics.com. Register for quick access to the informative Guide to Healthy Aging, Executive Summary and media excerpts. To schedule an interview, please contact Ann Castro, Cenegenics Director of Media Relations: 702.953.1588.

About Ernst R. von Schwarz, MD, PhD, FESC, FACC, FSCAI
Dr. Ernst R. von Schwarz is board certified in internal medicine by the American Board of Internal Medicine and in cardiology/cardiovascular diseases by the American Board of Internal Medicine. His primary clinical interests are end-stage heart failure, cardiac transplantation, interventional cardiology and sexual function in cardiac disease. He is a noted professor of medicine at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine. As a clinician and scientist, Schwarz has written more than 100 articles for peer-reviewed publications and has written 10 book chapters on cardiovascular medicine.

About Robert D. Willix, Jr., MD, FACSM
Dr. Robert D. Willix is a former board-certified cardiac surgeon, who pioneered the first open heart surgery program in South Dakota. He has been a practicing physician since 1969—and also served as an associate professor of surgery at the University of South Dakota Medical School. In 1981, Dr. Willix shifted his career to preventive medicine, becoming the Director of Human Performance and Cardiac Rehabilitation for the North Broward Hospital District in Florida. He forged work in preventive and integrative healthcare, earning national recognition as a healer, teacher, speaker and author of several books. The latest—AGE Proofing—discusses his exercise, nutrition and meditation approach for reducing the effects of stress. As chief medical officer of Cenegenics Las Vegas and CEO/chief medical officer of Cenegenics Boca Raton, Dr. Willix offers a unique and powerful approach to promoting better health and extending a patient’s health span.

About Cenegenics
Cenegenics® Medical Institute—the recognized leading authority in age management medicine—offers their highly regarded approach to optimal health at centers nationwide: Las Vegas, Nevada (Cenegenics Las Vegas and Cenegenics-Life Center); Charleston, South Carolina; Boca Raton, Florida; Dallas, Texas; Fort Worth, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington, DC; New York City, New York; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Jacksonville, Florida. Additional centers are scheduled to open in other metropolitan areas in the near future. With an established presence in the medical community, Cenegenics uses a proactive approach based on solid science and comprehensive evaluation. Their established protocols have been recognized as the next generation of medical science, capturing global attention. Cenegenics offers CME-accredited physician training and certification opportunities in age management medicine via the nonprofit Cenegenics Education and Research Foundation (CERF). Headquartered in Las Vegas, Cenegenics serves more than 20,000 patients worldwide—2,000 are physicians and their families.

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