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KEEP MEMORY ALIVE BRINGS WORLD CLASS PHYSICIANS TO 3rd ANNUAL LEON THAL SYMPOSIUM

More Than 50 Scientists and Physicians are Convened to Plan a Large Multi-site Collaborative Study on Early Detection and Prevention of Alzheimer's and Other Neurodegenerative Diseases

Las Vegas – Keep Memory Alive is once again bringing more than 50 physicians from around the globe together for the 3rd annual Leon Thal Symposium in Las Vegas on October 28. Instrumental in shifting the public policy focus in favor of research funding for Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases, this year the Symposium will aim to identify best practices for early detection for those with an elevated risk for the diseases, as well as develop recommendations and formulate plans for a large multi-site clinical study to determine the usefulness of those approaches.

"Bringing so many renowned physicians and researchers to a common table to collaborate and come to a consensus on the best way to move forward is one of the most important things Keep Memory Alive can do," says Larry Ruvo, Founder of Keep Memory Alive. "It is my hope that this year's symposium will, once again, move the dial in our hunt for a cure."

A think-tank style meeting, the 2009 Leon Thal Symposium is a follow up to the recommendations in an editorial, "Prevent Alzheimer's disease by 2020: A national strategic goal," by Drs. Zaven and Ara Khachaturian and the Report from the Leon Thal Symposium in 2008. One of the challenges to finding a cure for Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases is the lack of validated biomarkers and assessment tools by which to identify those most at risk to develop these diseases. This year's Symposium will aim to identify the most effective ways to uncover those biomarkers and establish accurate assessment tools.

"Our first step needs to be identifying asymptomatic people who are at higher risk so that we can study them, find the links and connect the dots to a cure for disease such as Alzheimer's," says Dr. Khachaturian, organizer of the 2009 Leon Thal Symposium. "This meeting is designed to create clear metrics that can then be applied universally so that this community of researchers and physicians can make strides in prevention."

A powerhouse of influence in the medical and political arenas, last year's Symposium, in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Study Group, was key in influencing the Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act 2009 which is now before Congress. The bill is designed to help guide lawmakers on the best ways to effect solutions to the growing medical and social crises of Alzheimer's disease with the sense of urgency the problem deserves. Its passage may provide billions of dollars in funding for therapies and research.

“We strongly believe in the power of collaboration,” says Dr. Charles Bernick, Associate Medical Director for the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, host campus for the Leon Thal Symposium. “Last year we walked away with recommendations that made a near immediate impact. I believe this year we will deliver another significant set of recommendations that will enable us to begin coordinated clinical trials across the globe in the areas of early detection and treatment.”

The white paper resulting from the 2009 Leon Thal Symposium will be published in the journal Alzheimer’s & Dementia and be widely disseminated to promote public policy, open new directions of research and accelerate the development of therapies for the prevention of chronic diseases that affect memory. In addition, preliminary recommendations of the 2009 Leon Thal Symposium will be presented for discussion at the 2009 [Clinical Trials on Alzheimer’s Disease](#) meeting on October 30.

The 2009 Leon Thal Symposium will take place October 28 at the Encore Resort in Las Vegas and is sponsored by Keep Memory Alive.

[Keep Memory Alive](#), whose mission is to provide enhanced treatment and ultimately cures for patients and their families suffering from neurocognitive disorders, is the support organization for the [Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health](#). By supporting Keep Memory Alive and its fight against neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s, Huntington’s, Parkinson’s, ALS and memory disorders of all kinds, we can ensure progress towards better treatments and ultimately cures will occur in Las Vegas. For additional information call (702) 263-9797 or visit www.keepmemoryalive.org

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