

Stevens Johnson Syndrome Awareness Month -- August 2007
- Foundation Receives Honorary Proclamation from Colorado Governor -

Denver, COLO. --- August 1, 2007 --- The Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SJS) Foundation today announced that August 2007 has been designated SJS Awareness month. In a proclamation from Governor Ritter of Colorado, SJS is recognized as a severe adverse reaction to common drugs affecting more than two million Americans each year and resulting in more than 140,000 deaths. Thus far, the state of Colorado has been joined by Arizona, Alabama, Connecticut and Tennessee in recognizing SJS Awareness Month.

SJS is caused by almost any medication, including anti-biotics, anti-convulsants and pain killers. It is a deadly reaction causing severe burning, blistering and sloughing of skin and involved tissue. SJS frequently causes blindness and results in death in up to 30 percent of the cases. Recognizing early symptoms of SJS and providing prompt medical attention are the most valuable tools to minimizing long-term damage.

Jean McCawley of Westminster, Colo., started the SJS Foundation after her daughter Julie contracted SJS from an anti-convulsant medication when she was only 11 months old. Julie still suffers the after-effects, including blindness in one eye and little vision in the other.

To recognize SJS in its earliest stage, the SJS foundation urges patients and physicians to watch for the following symptoms when taking medications, especially sulfa-based antibiotics, anti-convulsants and over the counter ibuprofen products:

- Persistent fever
- Burning or blistering of the mucous membranes, i.e.: eyes, ears, mouth, nose, genital area.
- Rash, blisters or red splotches on skin
- Flu like symptoms
- History of a reaction to prescribed drugs or over the counter medications.

To learn more, contact the Stevens-Johnson Foundation at www.sjsupport.org or 303-635-1241.

About SJS Foundation

Founded in 1995, the Stevens Johnson Syndrome Foundation (Julie Foundation for allergic drug reactions) is a non-profit organization that provides information and support for victims, educates the medical community and encourages research in preventing adverse drug reactions. More information is available at www.sjsupport.org .

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Note to Media: Personal stories, photos and videotape are available upon request.

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