

Press Contact

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Westminster, Colo. July 25 – On Saturday Aug. 13, 2011 friends, family and survivors will gather together in support of awareness for Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SJS and other severe allergic drug reactions). Each year dozens of states across the country, including Colorado, proclaim August as SJS Awareness Month.

Adverse drug reactions, like SJS, account for hundreds of thousands of deaths each year and are one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Early detection and removal of the offending medication is key to recovering from a severe adverse reaction.

“If one life is saved as a result of this year’s awareness month we have been successful,” said Jean McCawley, president of the SJS Foundation based in Westminster, Colorado. “Before my daughter had SJS we knew about reactions, but we never understood how life changing they could be.”

The walk, to be held at Lake Arbor Park from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on August 13, will raise awareness and funds for the SJS Foundation. Participants are asked to donate \$10 to the Foundation, to be used towards research of an ocular surface device for SJS patients. T-shirts are optional and may be ordered online at Cafepress.com/sjsupport.

Julie McCawley, now 17-years-old, is a champion for raising awareness of the reaction that cost her vision in her right eye. After Julie’s diagnosis, Jean strived to connect with other families that had shared her experience. When finding no existing support system, Jean founded the SJS foundation to connect patients and families around the world.

“One of my closest friends is another SJS patient who deals with the same things I do every day,” said Julie. “She lives in New Jersey but she knows what it’s like to have limited vision and be in pain all the time, without the Foundation I would have never met her.”

Attendees may walk to support the cause or in honor of an SJS patient who is unable to attend. Placards with the name and photo of those participating virtually will be distributed the morning of the event. The registration form can be downloaded from the SJS Foundation website (www.sjsupport.org) and returned via postal mail to SJS Foundation, PO BOX 350333, Westminster, CO 80031.

Rooms are available for out-of-town attendees at the Westminster Hilton Doubletree at a discounted rate. The hotel will provide a courtesy shuttle to the walk location. Other sponsors for the event include City of Arvada, Eldorado Water Co, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts and Muttley's Maid Inc.

About Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SJS)

Stevens Johnson Syndrome is a severe adverse reaction to medication. Adverse reactions account for approximately 150,000 deaths in the U.S. alone, making drug reactions the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. For more information about SJS please visit www.sjsupport.org or call the SJS Foundation at (303)635-1241.

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