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**DATE:** 30 August 2005

To whom it may concern:

The American Heart Association collaborates with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) to evaluate peer-reviewed, published scientific evidence related to emergency cardiovascular care (ECC) in an ongoing scientific consensus process. Every five years, the ECC Committee of the American Heart Association publishes revised ECC Guidelines, in accordance with the outcome of the ILCOR consensus on science and within the context of medical practice and education in the United States. Changes to treatment recommendations are, on occasion, made through scientific statements that may be published more frequently than the full ECC Guidelines.

The recommendations in the 2005 AHA Guidelines for ECC and CPR (to be published in December 2005) will confirm the safety and effectiveness of many existing approaches, acknowledge that some may not be optimal, and introduce new treatments that have undergone intensive evaluation. These new recommendations do not imply that care involving the use of earlier guidelines is either unsafe or ineffective, including the use of AEDs that are designed to conform to those earlier guidelines. For this reason the AHA encourages implementation of (and training for) life-saving medical emergency response plans (including AED programs) to continue without interruption or consideration of the pending publication of the 2005 AHA Guidelines and the associated training materials.

Once the new guidelines are published, the American Heart Association will begin releasing revised training materials to support each of its ECC curricula. The release of those materials will not occur immediately after the guidelines nor will they occur simultaneously (Basic Life Support materials will precede Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support materials). An interim training bulletin will, however, be released in January 2006 that will provide guidance for the application of the new guidelines, especially as they relate to the use of existing AEDs.

Sincerely,

Jerry Potts, PhD  
ECC Director of Science

