ONS FOUNDATION
FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH & EDUCATION, INC.
A GREENWICH HOSPITAL ALLIANCE

NEWS RELEASE

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ONS Foundation Launches ACL Injury Prevention Program for High School Athletes

Effective injury prevention can save young athletes pain, suffering and expense

GREENWICH, CT – This year, over 250,000 people will tear their ACL (Antierior Cruciate Ligament). Many of them will be high school students. The ONS Foundation for Clinical Research and Education, a non-profit organization formed in alliance with Greenwich Hospital, has created a free instructional video program about ACL injury prevention for use in area schools. Developed through the Foundation's Injury Prevention Initiative, the video features an exercise regime based on a similar program developed by the Santa Monica ACL Injury Prevention Project that includes routines for warm up, stretching, strengthening and the development of sports specific agilities to help prevent ACL tears. The program is designed so that high school trainers and coaches may customize it for specific sports training. The ONS Foundation ACL Injury Prevention Program and video are offered for free via the web at www.ons-foundation.org/acl-injury-prevention and the ONS Foundation has begun scheduling workshops at schools in Greenwich and the surrounding area to introduce the ACL injury prevention program to student athletes, parents, and coaches. A downloadable PDF of the exercises is also available online.

The Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) is one of four major ligaments of the knee. It provides stability to the knee joint by resisting forward movement of the tibia in relation to the femur (thigh bone). An ACL tear can be a devastating injury that often results from sporting activities that involve jumping and planting movements like basketball, soccer, and football as well as skiing. However, risk for this injury in not limited to a particular level of athlete or age group. When the knee undergoes a severe twist or excessive pressure, the ACL can tear, leaving the knee wobbly and easily dislocated by sudden stopping or pivoting. Like a tightly-braided rope, when torn, the ligament is not repairable.

Recent studies indicate that approximately 175,000 ACL tears in the United States result in surgical reconstructions. Treatment for ACL injuries has been conservatively estimated to be between $17,000 and $25,000 per injury. It has been reported that female athletes experience ACL injuries two to eight times more often than their male counterparts. Several research theories have pointed to a number of factors related to the underlying causes of ACL injuries including anatomic alignment of the lower limb,

muscular strength imbalances, jump mechanics, hormonal differences, fitness level, conditioning and playing surfaces. Even though the ability to return to sports after surgical reconstruction of the ACL is between 80 and 95 percent, the long-term effects of an ACL injury can severely impact the patient's quality of life.

The Foundation's ACL Injury Prevention Program was developed in response to concern about the significant incidence of ACL tears in young athletes. "Effective injury prevention can save athletes from pain and suffering that can have a major physical, emotional as well as financial impact," says Dr. Paul Sethi, Founder and President of the ONS Foundation for Clinical Research and Education. "When we launched the ONS Foundation last year, we made ACL injury prevention our first priority. This program, which aims to prevent injury by improving an athlete's balance and muscle endurance, is based on validated studies from the Santa Monica ACL Injury Prevention Project and the research of Dr. Timothy Hewitt, Director of Sports Medicine Biodynamics Center at the Children's Hospital Research Foundation in Cincinnati. If we can reduce the incidence of ACL injuries, we will have a measurable impact on youth athletes in this community, one that has a potential ripple effect for athletes in every community."

Production of this program was a community effort, according to Dr. Sethi. Although the content was guided by Dr. Sethi, who is a sports medicine specialist and shoulder surgeon who has worked with many professional football and baseball athletes, the Foundation reached out to area schools for help with the video production. Appearing on camera and demonstrating the 30 exercises in the program are Katie DeAndrea, a senior at Darien High School and Jake Longo, a senior at Greenwich High School. Both suffered ACL injuries that resulted in reconstruction surgery. Diana Snyder of Greenwich, Greenwich Academy 2008 graduate and current student at the NYU School of Film, shot the 17 minute long video. Angela Tammaro, Athletic Director at Greenwich High School hosted production of the video at Greenwich High School.

For further information about the **ONS Foundation ACL Injury Prevention Program** or the ONS Foundation, visit www.ons-foundation.org or call (203) 869-3131.

The ONS Foundation for Clinical Research and Education, Inc. is a registered not-for-profit, 501(c)3 organization devoted to understanding the causes and optimal treatments of orthopaedic injuries and musculoskeletal conditions. The ONS Foundation, in alliance with Greenwich Hospital, strives to improve standards of excellence for the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders through clinical research, physician and patient education, and community outreach programs. The Foundation is located at 6 Greenwich Office Park, 10 Valley Drive, Greenwich, CT.

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