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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Celebrated Canadians Support Colon Cancer Awareness Month**

**March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, Toronto, ON...** March is **Colon Cancer Awareness Month** and Colon Cancer Canada, with the support of celebrated Canadians, are launching the Month with a hard hitting Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign that promotes the message that people need to "talk about it."

Canadian Celebrities involved in the campaign are Olympic medalist Adam van Koeverden, singing legend Anne Murray, hockey legend Darryl Sittler, actress Emmanuelle Chriqui, actor Neil Crone and colon cancer survivor Pamela Wallin. "They all have a personal story that brought them to Colon Cancer Canada - we just couldn't be more proud of them," explains Amy Elmaleh, Co-Founder of Colon Cancer Canada.

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of both male and female cancer-related deaths in Canada. In 2010 over 22,000 Canadians were diagnosed with colon cancer. Although this is a startling statistic, more startling is the fact that almost half of those diagnosed died. Surprisingly, colon cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. If caught early, over 95% of these cases could and should result in a full recovery.

"One of the issues surrounding colon cancer and the reason so many people don't get the help they need is the fear of talking about it," says Amy Elmaleh, "There seems to be a stigma attached to the disease that we need to dispel and quickly. We are hoping our PSA campaign will get the word out that knowing the signs of colon cancer and talking about it with your family and your doctor will result in prevention and an effective cure."

There are a number of activities taking place in 2011 to help raise awareness of colon cancer;

**The Annual Anne Murray Charity Golf Classic Presented by PENTAX** - The 2011 Anne Murray Charity Golf Classic will be held on Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Angus Glen Golf Course, in Markham, Ontario, with all proceeds going to Colon Cancer Canada. Celebrities joining the field this year will be announced on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

**Colon Cancer Canada's Push for your Tush** – The 15<sup>th</sup> annual walk/run will take place across the country in Toronto, Burlington, Durham Region, London, Tri-Cities - Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, Vancouver, Grande Prairie, and Aurora/Newmarket. Dates can be found at [www.coloncancercanada.ca/walk](http://www.coloncancercanada.ca/walk). This popular and successful fundraising event is an excellent opportunity to bring together patients, family members and friends and help make a difference for this important cause. To date the Walk has raised over \$2,500,000 for Colon Cancer Canada.

### **Background**

Colon Cancer Canada was started in 1996 with a mission to raise public awareness of this deadly disease. To date, with the help of hundreds of committed volunteers across the country, Colon Cancer Canada has raised more than \$6.6 million. Colon Cancer Canada is making a significant impact on this disease by financially assisting research efforts to find a cure and by offering a network of support for patients and families.

For more information about colon cancer and how you can help visit [www.coloncancercanada.ca](http://www.coloncancercanada.ca).

**For information on Colon Cancer Canada, Events or to request an interview with Colon Cancer Canada celebrity supporters, please contact:**

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# FAST FACTS on Colon Cancer:

## Colon Cancer by the Numbers:

- It is the second leading cause of male and female cancer-related deaths in Canada.
- Colon cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. If screened and caught early – the chances of survival increase by 95%. Unfortunately as it stands today, nearly half of those diagnosed find out too late.
- Colon cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer.
- In 2010, 22,500 Canadians were diagnosed with colon cancer – 9,500 died.
- Anyone 50 and up should be screened regardless of family history and earlier if you are at higher risk.

## Risk Factors:

There is no “*single cause*” for developing this disease, but there are several risk factors that include:

- A family history of colorectal colon cancer
- Increasing age (risk increases from the age of 50)
- Polyps present in the colon or rectum
- A diet high in fat
- An inactive lifestyle
- Obesity
- Inflammatory bowel disease

## Signs and Symptoms:

- Change in bowel movements
- Blood in or on the stool
- Abdominal discomfort
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- Feeling that the bowel is not emptying completely
- Narrower than usual stools
- Feelings of weakness or feeling more tired than normal

