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Obesity Prevention is Focus of Global Nutrition Transition Conference

ORLANDO, Fla.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Physicians and nutrition scientists from around the world gathered today in Orlando for the opening of the Global Nutrition Transition Conference in order to discuss emerging trends and grass roots solutions to the global obesity epidemic employing balanced nutrition and teaching healthy active lifestyles.

The conference is addressing what is termed the Nutrition Transition - the effect of the globalization of the Western diet which is changing dietary patterns and the incidence of overweight and obesity throughout the world. Conference presenters focused on the dramatic increases in the incidence of overweight and obesity in countries where, until recently, obesity was virtually unknown.

Today's speakers included Dr. Adam Drewnowski, director of the Center for Public Health Nutrition at the University of Washington, Seattle; Dr. Anoop Misra, director of the Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases department of the Fortis Group of Hospitals in New Delhi, India; Dr. Nataniel Viuniski of Unimed Hospital, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; Dr. Linong Ji of Peking University in China; and Dr. Marion Flechtner-Mors of the University of Ulm, Germany.

As developing countries become more prosperous, they begin to share some of the health problems of the industrialized world - including huge increases in the number of adults and children who are carrying excess weight. In countries such as India and China, the recent migration to cities from rural areas and the increase in personal incomes has been accompanied by an increased incidence of overweight and obesity.

"While America and Mexico currently have the highest rates of overweight and obesity worldwide, rates are skyrocketing in Asia, particularly in India and China," said Ji.

Current trends in the global diet have led to rising consumption of high fat, high sugar foods, which can displace local eating habits. As the food supply shifts, calorie intake goes up, but nutrient quality suffers. And activity levels are dropping, too. "As a result, China has seen its obesity rates nearly double since 1989, and 20% of India's citizens are overweight or obese," notes Ji.

At the same time, the incidence of obesity-related diseases is also on the rise. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations predicts that between 1998 and 2025, the number of people with type 2 diabetes worldwide will double - to 300 million - and that the majority of the increase will be in the developing world. Moreover, 80 percent of all heart disease in the world in the next 10 years will be due to diabetes type 2 associated with overweight and obesity.

The benefits of a total nutrition solution - one which encompasses the inclusion of a range of plant foods, and an emphasis on low fat proteins and healthy fats - is a cornerstone in

building new dietary patterns. But the challenge will be to improve the nutritional quality and diversity of the world's diet, while meeting demands for taste, convenience and value.

"One consequence of globalization is that the world's people are consuming more foods that are energy rich, but nutrient poor," notes Drewnowski. "And while convenience foods save time and money, restoring the nutrient balance of the global diet should be top priority. As long as there is limited access to healthy, affordable foods, nutrient supplements will be needed to help fill nutrient gaps," he adds.

The Global Nutrition Transition Conference aims to explore the impact of this dramatic shift in diet and exercise patterns on world health, and to present insights into combating what is now a universal concern.

The two-day Conference is being sponsored by Herbalife. Drs. Flechtner-Mors, Ji, Misra, and Viuniski are members of Herbalife's global Nutrition Advisory Board.

About Herbalife Ltd.

Herbalife Ltd. (NYSE:HLF) is a global network marketing company that sells weight-management, nutrition, and personal care products intended to support a healthy lifestyle . Herbalife products are sold in 72 countries through a network of approximately two million independent distributors. The company supports the [Herbalife Family Foundation](#) and its Casa Herbalife program to help bring good nutrition to children. Herbalife's Web site contains a significant amount of information about Herbalife, including financial and other information for investors at <http://ir.herbalife.com>. The company encourages investors to visit its Web site from time to time, as information is updated and new information is posted.

Source: Herbalife Ltd.