

**Contact:** Dr. Paul Kurlansky  
**Email:** pak@floridaheart.org  
**Direct Line:** (305) 674-3154

## For Immediate Release

### Florida Heart Research Institute Takes the Lead in Hispanic Cardiovascular Health

**Miami, Florida, November 19, 2007**—The Florida Heart Research Institute has entered the critical analytic phase of a long-standing major initiative to study and promote the heart health of Miami-Dade County's Hispanic population. "Although there is a wealth of knowledge regarding the risks of cardiovascular disease in the non-Hispanic population", comments Dr. Maria Canossa-Terris, the Florida Heart Research Institute's Medical Director, "little is known about the Hispanic population. Virtually all studies have been in Mexican Americans, which may not reflect the complex ethnic mix of our Hispanic population here in Miami."

This important initiative culminates over a decade of work with Miami's Hispanic population during which the Florida Heart Research Institute has performed free cardiovascular risk factor screenings for thousands of Miami-Dade residents. "This group reflects the Hispanic population of Miami and forms a rich resource to better understand the cardiovascular risk profile of South Florida Hispanics and how they compare to the population at large," comments Dr. Paul Kurlansky, Director of Research at Florida Heart Research Institute. This information is critical both for clinicians and for health policy stakeholders, so that they can focus their efforts within this population in the most critical and productive fashion. "The results of these studies will have major implications for medical care and health policy, both here in Miami and nationally," notes Kathleen DuCasse, the Research Institute's Chief Executive Officer.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death and disability in the U.S. In 2003, an estimated 65,000 Floridians died of heart related illness (nearly 40% of all deaths), and hospitalization costs to care for Floridians with heart disease exceeded \$4.4 billion.

FHRI was founded more than 60 years ago as Miami Heart Research Institute, an international leader with a mission to **Stop Heart Disease** through cardiovascular research, education, and prevention programs. For more information regarding these and other exciting projects at Florida Heart Research Institute, please contact Dr. Paul Kurlansky at (305) 674-3154, or visit us at [www.floridaheartresearch.org](http://www.floridaheartresearch.org)

# # #

