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**LA CLINICA DE LA RAZA INTRODUCES “¡INFÓRMATE! GET INFORMED!” A CAMPAIGN TO HELP INCREASE LATINOS’ AWARENESS ABOUT HPV**

*Each day, about five Latinas/Hispanic women in the U.S. are diagnosed with cervical cancer, a disease that can be caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV).*

**Oakland, CA – August 26, 2009** – La Clínica initiated the “¡Infórmate! Get Informed!” campaign to raise awareness about human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus that can cause cervical cancer and other diseases. Latinas/Hispanic women are the group with the highest rate of new cervical cancer cases. La Clínica is one of three communities organizations nationwide chosen by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (Alliance), with support from Merck & Co., Inc., to participate in this pilot program to help increase awareness of HPV and cervical cancer prevention.

Many women are not aware of HPV, even though approximately 80 percent of women will get infected with the virus in their lifetime. For most, the infection will clear on its own. But, for others, abnormal changes can develop in their cervix that can potentially develop into cervical cancer. There is no way to predict who will or won't clear the virus, so it's important that all women get informed about HPV.

Both women and men can get HPV through any type of genital contact – not just sexual intercourse. Because the virus often has no signs or symptoms, people can pass it on without even knowing it. “Our hope is that through knowledge, people will take the proper actions to help protect themselves and their families,” said Dr. Patricia Zayas, La Clínica’s Medical Director.

La Clínica is offering a number of FREE “¡Infórmate! Get Informed!” resources to everyone in the community, including:

- Support and information about HPV and cervical cancer through the Alliance’s *Su Familia* National Hispanic Family Health Helpline at 1-866-783-2645.
- A Web site for tools and information in English and Spanish – [www.informatehpv.org](http://www.informatehpv.org).
- Culturally relevant educational materials for parents, young adults and health care providers.

The “*¡Infórmate!* Get Informed!” Program is a joint effort by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (Alliance), with support from Merck & Co. Inc., to provide key information for health care providers, parents and young women through culturally relevant educational materials to help raise awareness about HPV within our community. The materials include: a brochure, postcards, a poster, a HPV Discussion Guide, and a factsheet for health care providers. For more information about the *¡Infórmate!* Get Informed! Program, visit <http://www.informatehpv.org> or call the Alliance’s *Su Familia* National Hispanic Family Health Helpline at 1-866-783-2645.

**About La Clínica de La Raza:** The mission of La Clínica is to improve the quality of life of the diverse communities we serve by providing culturally appropriate, high quality and accessible health care for all. Our 26 clinical sites are located in Alameda County, Solano County and Contra Costa County. For more information about La Clínica please visit us at [www.laclinica.org](http://www.laclinica.org).

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