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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The MAGIC Foundation Responds to Disclosure of Professional Athletes' Abuse of Growth Hormone

Non-Profit Speaks Out Against Growth Hormone Abuse

OAK PARK, IL—December 2007—The abuse of growth hormone by athletes and high profile celebrities has long-reaching consequences for children who need growth hormone therapy. An estimated 2 million children in this country are affected by short stature and many more have a problem that may radically affect the quality of their lives. For decades, families of children with a medical need for growth hormone therapy have faced discrimination from insurance companies and other parties regarding their child's need for this vital hormone therapy. Today, children face challenges as a result of abuse by those who are seen as public role models for children.

When professional athletes abuse this hormone, it lends way for insurance companies to justify ways to deny growth hormone coverage to these needy children. Growth hormone is erroneously perceived as a drug used exclusively for physical gain. Yet, growth hormone deficient children truly need growth hormone to maintain a healthy heart, immune system, and much more other than physical growth.

The MAGIC Foundation, a national non-profit organization dedicated to serving families and individuals affected with growth disorders, intends to increase awareness of growth-related disorders and growth awareness programs that help numerous children with unidentified growth symptoms get early detection and correct diagnoses. If a child is not growing a minimum of 2 ½ inches each year, many things can cause the growth failure. Medical care can effectively treat underlying growth problems, but if treatment is delayed, it is harder for a child to catch up. Therefore, it's crucial for children to easily receive therapy when needed.

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“MAGIC’s motto is ‘Children have a short time to grow and a lifetime to live with those results,’” says Mary Andrews, CEO and Co-Founder of MAGIC. “People who abuse growth hormone are making it more difficult for parents to obtain the therapy needed to help their children grow.”

Parents of children in need of growth hormone are not only concerned about their child’s height when faced with the decision to utilize growth hormone therapy; they are also concerned about the non-physical factors that affect the long-term quality, possibly even the length of life that a child may have if they do not have the hormone.

A child’s height is nature’s way of communicating that something internal is wrong in a simple, visual way. If a child’s body visually communicated that they were developing a brain tumor by a lack of growth, that child would not be denied medicine needed to treat the tumor because it also fixed his lack of physical growth.

To the athletes and others who play roulette with their health, please remember: What you do has long-term consequences for which children are paying the price.

About The MAGIC Foundation

The MAGIC Foundation is a national nonprofit organization providing support services to the families of children afflicted with chronic and critical disorders, syndromes, and diseases that affect their growth. The MAGIC Foundation was founded by a small group of mothers with children who had growth disorders. It now has more than 17,000 members worldwide with divisions providing support for ten primary growth disorders, as well as networking for additional disorders. The MAGIC foundation is supported by membership fees, corporate sponsorship, private donations, and fundraising activities, and is committed to reducing the emotional and physical trauma caused by growth disorders so that healthier, happier children will grow up to become healthier, happier adults. For more information, contact 708-383-0808, or visit www.magicfoundation.org.

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