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Media Alert

For Immediate Release

Transcendental Meditation Lowers Blood Pressure

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Dr James W. Anderson, University of Kentucky

“Transcendental Meditation is about equivalent to an antihypertension agent ... only safer and less troublesome.”

The most rigorous analysis of the scientific findings to date, published in the March issue of *American Journal of Hypertension*¹, confirms that Transcendental Meditation helps lower high blood pressure as effectively as antihypertensive medication.

Dr James Anderson of the University of Kentucky applied the highest standards of statistical analysis to data combined from the nine randomised controlled trials on Transcendental Meditation and blood pressure that meet the strictest scientific criteria (conducted between 1983 and 2006). His findings confirm that Transcendental Meditation does significantly lower blood pressure – on average of 4.7 points, systolic (the top number), and 3.2 points, diastolic (the lower number) – as indicated by separate trials.

Anderson’s findings were similar when only the very highest quality studies among the nine were analysed, and when only studies of clinically hypertensive patients were included. This meta-analysis thus helps eliminate sources of potential scientific criticism based upon the standard of research, population sampling, or bias of the investigator.

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¹ March 2008 , vol. 21 (3), pp 310-316. See http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18311126?ordinalpos=2&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum

The size of the effect that Transcendental Meditation has on blood pressure could significantly reduce the chances of heart disease. Long-term changes in blood pressure of this magnitude are associated with at least a 15% reduction in rates of heart attack and stroke. This is relevant to everyone. One out of three British adults has high blood pressure and this increases one's chances not only of cardiovascular disease – the number one cause of death in the UK and worldwide – but also kidney disease.

The effects of Transcendental Meditation on blood pressure are at least as great as the changes found with major changes in diet or exercise that doctors often recommend. Yet Transcendental Meditation does not require such changes in lifestyle. Thus many patients with mild hypertension or pre-hypertension may be able to avoid the need to take blood pressure medications – all of which have adverse side effects. Individuals with more severe forms of hypertension may be able to reduce the number or dosages of their blood pressure medications under the guidance of their doctor.

An analysis of 107 studies published last December in *Current Hypertension Reports*² evaluated the comparative effects on high blood pressure of all stress reduction and relaxation methods. Transcendental Meditation was found to produce a statistically significant reduction in high blood pressure not found with relaxation, biofeedback, or stress management training.

Note for editors:

Transcendental Meditation™, founded by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi®, is a programme for the Development of Consciousness which, in the UK, is available only from Maharishi Foundation®, registered educational charity number 270157 (in Northern Ireland, Global Country of World Peace, charity number X0610/9, an affiliate of Maharishi Foundation). Please note that no other organisation in the UK offers courses in Transcendental Meditation, as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

² Rainforth MV, et al. December 2007, vol. 9, pp 520–528

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Other health benefits associated with Transcendental Meditation

Transcendental Meditation is the form of meditation most thoroughly **validated** by scientific research. In addition to its effects on blood pressure and related conditions, there is a wide range of other benefits associated with Transcendental Meditation, which are comprehensively documented in the scientific literature. These include reduced stress, increased longevity, improved mental health, less addictive and antisocial behaviour, and greater productivity. Comparative studies indicate that these benefits are not produced to the same extent by other forms of meditation and relaxation.

Research findings on Transcendental Meditation include:

- **Reduced ill health:** Practitioners of Transcendental Meditation require *less than half the medical care* than matched controls. Applied to the NHS, these figures suggest potential annual savings of over £9 billion, or £500 per family.
- Transcendental Meditation **improves all three major risk factors for heart disease:** high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and cigarette smoking. It also enhances protective factors such as job satisfaction.
- Transcendental Meditation has been shown to **reduce use of alcohol and drugs**
- Transcendental Meditation **decreases the degenerative effects of ageing.**
- Elderly Transcendental Meditation practitioners enjoy significant **improvements in age-related measures** and greatly reduced all-cause and cardiovascular mortality rates.
- Transcendental Meditation is **twice as effective as other meditation and relaxation techniques in reducing anxiety.**

The health of society as a whole

It is noteworthy that an extensive body of rigorous statistical research exists that documents benefits for the health or well-being of society as a whole, resulting from significant numbers of people practising Transcendental Meditation and its Advanced Techniques, including Yogic Flying. The very wide range of benefits of Transcendental Meditation suggest that the effects are generated at a level deeper than that currently understood by modern psychophysiology.

Sophisticated techniques of mathematical time series analysis have revealed that when large groups of people practise these technologies together there are reductions in crime rate, conflict, and other indicators of disorder, and increases in quality of life indicators. The statistical significance of these studies, singly and especially when taken together, is quite unprecedented in sociological research. A causal relationship is clearly indicated, with the sociological indicators lagging very slightly behind changes in the number of practitioners of Transcendental Meditation.

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The theoretical explanation for such findings is that the effect of accessing the underlying field of consciousness, which is a source of order, spontaneously renders society less agitated and more coherent. This effect is created when even a small, but critical, percentage of the population practises these techniques (see www.permanentpeace.org).

Background information on Transcendental Meditation

Transcendental Meditation is practised by people of all ages, religions, professions, and cultural backgrounds: business people, educators, athletes, housewives, students, medical doctors, retired people, etc. This is because Transcendental Meditation is a universal technique that is enriching to everyone: it is not a religion, a philosophy, a lifestyle, or a set of beliefs.

The technique is easy to learn and practise. The course of instruction consists of four one-and-a-half hour sessions held on consecutive days, and six months of follow-up. There are teaching centres throughout Great Britain.

Transcendental Meditation™ was founded in 1957 by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi®, and since that time over 200,000 people have learned in Great Britain and over 5 million worldwide. In the UK, it is taught only under the auspices of Maharishi Foundation®, registered educational charity number 270157, and the standards of teaching are maintained by the Maharishi Vedic Institute® (www.mvi.org.uk). No other organisation in the UK offers courses in Transcendental Meditation, as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Further Information

Full information on the range of health benefits of Transcendental Meditation, and a comprehensive list of references, is available at: www.t-m.org.uk/research.shtml

A range of medical specialists answer common questions about Transcendental Meditation on the website www.DoctorsonTM.org and describe research findings and clinical results relating to a wide spectrum of medical conditions.

For all enquiries about the scientific research, to obtain a summary of the research, or for more information about how Transcendental Meditation can be learnt in the UK, contact info@maharishifoundation.org.uk