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Celebrities vie for “Who Wears Purple Best?” title to raise awareness of new global prevalence on World Alzheimer’s Day

September 21, 2009 - Today, on World Alzheimer’s Day, new data released estimates 35 million people worldwide – a 10% increase over 2005 – are living with Alzheimer’s and dementia, highlighting the urgent need for action and response.

 [2009 World Alzheimer Report Summary](#)

 [Full Report \(96 pages\)](#)

Celebrities committed to the cause – Vote for “Who Wears Purple Best?”

Doing their part, eight Alzheimer’s Association celebrity Champions are having a friendly “Who Wears Purple Best?” competition. Bradley Cooper (“The Hangover”), Seth Rogen (“Knocked-Up”), Soleil Moon Frye (“Punky Brewster”/Entrepreneur), Natalie Morales (“TODAY”), Terrell Owens (Buffalo Bills), Melina Kanakaredes (“CSI New York”), Elisabeth Hasselbeck (“The View”) and David Hyde Pierce (“Frasier,” “Curtains”) are all vying for the title of “Who Wears Purple Best?” Fans can cast their vote here when polls open today through Wednesday, September 30.

By voting, fans also become Alzheimer’s Association Champions and can take action by learning more about Alzheimer’s disease, becoming advocates, making donations. They can also share the purple competition Web site with family and friends via e-mail, Facebook and Twitter to campaign for their favorite Alzheimer’s Association celebrity Champion.

“While I hope to be a favorite in the World Alzheimer’s Day ‘Who Wears Purple Best?’ competition, my goal is for people to learn more about Alzheimer’s and take action,” said Melina Kanakaredes, actress and Alzheimer’s Association Champion. “People do not realize that Alzheimer’s is not old age. It is a progressive and fatal disease and staggering amounts of people develop Alzheimer’s every day.”

Global devastation of Alzheimer's disease – We must act now

With 77 million American baby boomers reaching the age of greatest risk, it is clear that the crisis of dementia and Alzheimer’s cannot be ignored. Left unchecked, dementia and Alzheimer’s will impose enormous burdens on individuals, families, health care infrastructures and the worldwide economy.

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According to the 2009 World Alzheimer Report, newly released today from Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), a London-based nonprofit, international federation of 71 national Alzheimer organizations including the Alzheimer's Association, the number of people with Alzheimer's or another dementia, currently 35 million, is expected to nearly double every 20 years, to 65.7 million in 2030 and 115.4 million in 2050.

"Today on World Alzheimer's Day, with 35 million people worldwide and as many as 5.3 Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, we should commit to focusing on Alzheimer's throughout the year," said David Hyde Pierce, actor and Honorary Alzheimer Association National Board Member. "Our government should commit to making this a health care priority, and the next step is to pass the Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act."

Worldwide, the economic cost of dementia has been estimated as \$315 billion annually. The total annual costs per person with dementia have been estimated as \$1,521 in a low income country, rising to \$4,588 in middle income countries, and \$17,964 in high income countries. (Anders Wimo, et al. "An Estimate of the Total Worldwide Societal Costs of Dementia in 2005." Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association. Volume 3, Issue 2, April 2007.)

"The number of people affected by Alzheimer's is growing at a rapid rate, and the increasing personal costs will have significant impact on the world's economies and health care systems. We must make the fight against Alzheimer's a priority here in the United States and worldwide," said Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association. "Just like our celebrity Champions, we must take action against Alzheimer's now."

In addition to new prevalence estimates, the report outlines eight global recommendations. More than 60 celebrities from entertainment, sports and media are committed to being Alzheimer's Association Champions and encouraging people to help raise awareness and funds. The extensive roster of celebrities includes Bradley Cooper, Soleil Moon Frye, Melina Kanakaredes, Seth Rogen, Peter Gallagher, Elisabeth Hasselbeck, Bryant Gumbel, Olympia Dukakis, Terrell Owens, Kyle Chandler, David Hyde Pierce, Victor Garber, Kyle Chandler and more.

What you can do to help end Alzheimer's

On World Alzheimer's Day and throughout the year, you can take action in the fight against this devastating disease:

- Sign up and be counted as an Alzheimer Champion
- Advocate on behalf of individuals and their families
- Write Congress and tell lawmakers to increase Alzheimer research funding
- Donate today
- **Participate in Memory Walk by joining or forming a team – Twin Cities Memory Walk**

THOUSANDS of **Twin Cities** residents will be *Champions* for Alzheimer's. They are on the MOVE to end Alzheimer's disease at the annual Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk. **Congressman Jim Ramstad** is the Honorary Chairperson of the 2009 Twin Cities

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Memory Walk, one of the area's largest outdoor walk events. **FM107's Colleen Kruse and G.R. Anderson** from *Colleen and the Boys* will emcee the event. The event raises public awareness and critically needed funds for the fight against Alzheimer's. In 2008 the **Twin Cities Memory Walk** raised **more than \$450,000** contributing to more than \$38 million raised by *Champions* nationwide, for care and support of those impacted and research to advance the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's.

Saturday, September 26, 2009

Registration: anytime between **8:30-10:30 a.m.**

Walk: anytime between **8:30-10:30 a.m.**

Post-Walk Program: **11:00 a.m.**

Three Rivers Park District-Hyland Lake Park Reserve, Bloomington

About the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit www.alz.org/mnnd or call our 24/7 Information Helpline at 1-800-272-3900.

Alzheimer's Disease Facts

- Alzheimer's disease is currently the sixth-leading cause of death.
- An estimated 5.3 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, including over 100,000 Minnesotans.
- Someone develops the disease every 70 seconds.
- 10 million baby boomers will develop Alzheimer's.

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