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NEWS RELEASE



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**AMERICANS TAKING THE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
DRUG CARDIZEM® CD MAY BENEFIT FROM MAJOR
CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT**

*Consumers Purchasing Cardizem® CD or Generic Equivalents
Between 1998-2003 Have Six Weeks Left To Act On Their Legal Rights*

(Juneau, AK) - Hypertension patients and others who took the medication Cardizem® CD or its generic equivalents between 1998-2003 may be entitled to money from a \$21 million fund created as part of a proposed settlement of a nationwide antitrust lawsuit brought by the Attorneys General of all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The case alleges that the drug makers violated antitrust laws and overcharged consumers purchasing Cardizem® CD or its generic equivalents. Defendants have denied any wrongdoing or liability. A nationwide effort to contact consumers who bought these drugs was launched on June 23rd, and to participate in the settlement consumers must act before September 23, 2003.

"Drug companies are now making amends for alleged illegal actions involving Cardizem® CD," said Attorney General Gregg D. Renkes. "It is in the best interests of Cardizem® CD consumers to call the 800 number or go to the website to see how their rights may be affected by the settlement. There are only six weeks left to enroll."

The rights of over a million consumers could be affected by this case. The \$80 million settlement provides approximately \$21 million to reimburse consumers some portion of what they paid for these drugs. Consumer claims must be filed by September 23, 2003. Claim registrations and complete information can be obtained at www.cardizemsettlement.com or by calling 1-800-372-2406.

These drugs are used to treat patients with hypertension and angina. Hypertension, or high blood pressure, affects as many as 50 million adult Americans, according to the American Heart Association. It killed nearly 45,000 Americans last year and contributed to another 118,000 deaths. The condition is highly treatable with drugs such as Cardizem® CD, which belongs to a group of medications called calcium channel blockers (CCBs) that are widely used for the treatment of hypertension. A recent report in the Journal of the American Medical Association warned that even hypertension

levels once considered mild can cause long-term damage, increasing the importance of treatment.

Consumers who purchased Cardizem® CD or any of its AB3-rated generic equivalents from January 1, 1998 through January 29, 2003, can file a claim for recovery. The proposed settlement is subject to court review. Affected consumers who do not wish to participate in the proposed settlement must exclude themselves in writing by September 22, 2003, or they will be bound by the rulings of the court in this case. The proposed settlement also provides money for third party payers, governmental purchases, the costs of publicizing and administering the settlement, and litigation costs and fees. More information can be found at www.cardizemsettlement.com or by calling 1-800-372-2406.

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