



# HEART HEALTH

## High Blood Pressure Treatment Can Now Help Heart Attack Survivors

(NAPSA)—Each year, 1.2 million Americans suffer a heart attack, putting them at greater risk of repeat attacks or death. Within six years, nearly one-third of heart attack survivors will be disabled with heart failure, a condition in which the heart's muscle weakens after injury from other types of heart disease such as a heart attack or high blood pressure.

A heart attack can be a wake-up call for many people. That's what Phyllis Rosenzweig Gertzis discovered when she had her first attack at the age of 74.

Now she considers herself lucky to be alive. The grandmother of seventeen has been following doctors' orders by taking blood pressure medication as well as exercising and watching her diet. Phyllis is not alone.

"Every day, more than 3,000 patients suffer a heart attack in the United States. While we've made significant advances in recent years, death following a heart attack remains unacceptably high," said Marc Pfeffer, MD, PhD, professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and Interim chair of medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts.

Now patients and physicians have a new treatment. The FDA has recently approved a new use for Diovan®—also known as valsartan—to help reduce death in people who have suffered a heart attack and who remain at high risk. Diovan has also been approved by the FDA to treat those patients who suffer from heart failure.

Diovan is already a popular high blood pressure medication and has helped millions of people manage their high blood pressure.

High blood pressure is a leading contributor to heart attacks, heart failure and other types of heart dis-



**Phyllis Rosenzweig Gertzis changed her lifestyle after a heart attack, including managing her high blood pressure.**

ease. More than 65 million Americans—one in three adults—suffer from the condition. Although high blood pressure can be successfully treated, nearly 70 percent of people who have this condition do not have it under control.

Many patients will need to change their lifestyle and take medication to help manage their high blood pressure. Some tips to help keep your heart and your blood pressure healthy include:

- Manage stress
- Lose weight
- Reduce salt in your diet
- Stop smoking
- Increase physical activity

It is important for patients with high blood pressure to work with their doctor to set a blood pressure goal, develop a treatment plan and work together to reach that goal and stay there. A new educational initiative called the *BP Success Zone* can help them do this.

To learn more about this new educational program, visit [www.BPSuccessZone.com](http://www.BPSuccessZone.com) or call 1-888-277-9095. For more information about Diovan, visit [www.diovan.com](http://www.diovan.com) or [www.pharma.us.novartis.com](http://www.pharma.us.novartis.com).



**Note to Editor:** *Patients who are pregnant should stop taking Diovan as it can harm an unborn baby causing injury and even death. Patients allergic to any of the ingredients of the product should not take Diovan. The most common side effects of Diovan used to treat people with high blood pressure are headache and dizziness. Low blood pressure (hypotension) may happen if you also take water pills (diuretics) or are on a low salt diet. The most common side effects of Diovan used to treat people with heart failure include dizziness, low blood pressure, and diarrhea. The most common side effects of Diovan used to treat heart attack survivors that caused them to stop taking the drug include low blood pressure, cough, rash and high blood creatinine (decreased kidney function). Because of the risk of low blood pressure, care should be taken when starting treatment for heart failure or post-heart attack patients. Kidney function should be checked before prescribing Diovan in patients with heart failure or those who have had a heart attack.*