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**NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER PROMOTES MATERNAL HEALTH
WITH COMPLIMENTARY PERINATAL FITNESS PROGRAM**

Vicki Vertich, Maternal Family Health Manager and Certified Perinatal Fitness Instructor, offers expectant and new moms a safe, fun and healthy way to stay fit

MIAMI- March, 21, 2011- While expectant moms are busy preparing for their new bundles of joy, it may be a challenge for them to manage their own fitness routines. They may want to exercise, but have concerns such as: “Is exercising safe for me and the baby,” or “How much is too much?” Staying active during pregnancy is healthy and safe for most women as long as certain precautions are taken, and that’s why North Shore Medical Center implemented a perinatal fitness program. The hospital offers a variety of complimentary classes designed for women before, during and after pregnancy. The classes are led by Vicki Vertich, Maternal Family Health Manager at North Shore and Certified Perinatal Fitness Instructor.

“North Shore Medical Center is committed to supporting women throughout the continuum of maternity care, and this includes providing accessible resources to promote maternal fitness and wellness,” said Manny Linares, CEO of North Shore Medical Center. “The perinatal fitness classes are a fun and innovative way to potentially improve health outcomes of both mothers and their babies.”

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that healthy pregnant women get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most, if not all, days per week. A routine fitness program during pregnancy benefits mothers by helping to reduce pregnancy-related discomforts, including backaches, constipation, sleep disturbances, bloating and swelling. Physical activity can also help increase energy levels and improve mood, as well as reduce the risk for gestational diabetes and high blood pressure. In addition, exercise can increase muscle tone, strength and endurance, which may help women cope better during labor and recover faster after birth. Postpartum, a physical activity program can help new mothers lose pregnancy weight and bounce back into shape.

“In my experience, many pregnant women and new moms want to exercise, but they need a little emotional and social support,” said Vertich. “Our program gets moms up and moving so they can build up their strength, energy and confidence throughout the transitions of pregnancy and motherhood.”

Vertich is an experienced Certified Perinatal Fitness Instructor. At North Shore Medical Center, Vertich offers a range of free classes to help women prepare for the physiological changes that occur during pregnancy and postpartum:

- *Prenatal Exercise* is for women before and during pregnancy. This class offers a combination of cardio, fitness ball and resistance training to increase strength and endurance.
- *PowerStroll* is for women postpartum. It’s a high intensity workout that takes place in the great outdoors and utilizes the baby stroller for balance and resistance building.
- *Moms, Babes, & Balls* is for women postpartum. The class engages mom and baby, using a fitness ball to help mothers gain strength and flexibility.

Prior to beginning any fitness class at North Shore Medical Center, women undergo a health history and fitness evaluation to ensure that the exercise program is appropriate for their individual needs. For more information about the perinatal fitness class dates, times and locations, contact Vicki Vertich at 305-694-4827.

ABOUT NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER

North Shore Medical Center, part of Tenet Healthcare, is a 357-bed general acute care community hospital located at 1100 NW 95 Street in Miami. The hospital has been serving the medical and health care needs of its community for more than 53 years. North Shore Medical Center offers a broad range of services, including 24-hour emergency care with Fast Track service, maternity, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and psychiatric services. The hospital also offers specialized centers, including the C. Gordon Griffith Comprehensive Cancer Center with IMRT and X-Knife Radiosurgery, Intensive Care Unit, Wound Healing Center, Sleep Disorders Center, and Pain Care Center. The hospital was honored with the prestigious Tenet *Circle of Excellence* award for outstanding performance in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008, and received the 2006 CIGNA Centers of Excellence designation for caesarean section, stroke and syncope.

From 2006-2010 North Shore Medical Center has consistently won achievement awards with the American Heart Association’s *Get With The Guidelines* program. Most recently, North Shore Medical Center was featured in a special advertisement in the 2010 “America’s Best Hospitals” issue of *US News & World Report* to commemorate their receipt of *Get With The Guidelines* Gold Performance Achievement Award in Coronary Artery Disease treatment. In 2008/2009/2010, North Shore Medical Center also received a five-star rating of clinical excellence for maternity care from HealthGrades®.

North Shore Medical Center is Accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission On Cancer Commendation, 2005-2008; and has received the FMQAI’s Performance Achievement Award for Hospital Quality improvement. The hospital is also fully accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the nation’s oldest and largest hospital accreditation agency. To learn more about North Shore Medical Center, visit www.northshoremical.com.