



**For Immediate Release**

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## **FIRST CURVES<sup>®</sup> LOCATED IN A HOSPITAL OPENS IN HOUSTON**

Houston Northwest Medical Center Hosts First Curves in a Hospital

**WACO, TX – August 15, 2006** – Curves International Inc., the world’s largest franchisor of fitness clubs, announced today it has opened its first location inside of a hospital—Houston Northwest Medical Center, located at 710 FM 1960 in Houston. Both organizations are committed to the health of the community, and numerous studies have shown that maintaining a healthy weight is one of the single most important factors in disease prevention. Strength training has also been proven to protect lean muscle tissue, burn more calories, and prevent debilitating illnesses like osteoporosis.

The Curves program is based on solid science. A team of Baylor researchers, led by Dr. Richard Kreider, Ph.D., FACSM, professor and chair of Baylor’s Exercise and Sport Nutrition Lab, has had the Curves program under close scientific scrutiny since the fall of 2002. Initial studies confirmed that the Curves program is effective at helping women lose weight, gain muscle strength and aerobic capacity, increase bone density, and raise metabolism. Ongoing studies will ensure that the program utilizes cutting edge data in its weight management and disease prevention efforts.

A recent study released by the CDC confirms that the efforts of American women—including almost 4 million of them who belong to Curves—are paying off. The results of its latest four-year obesity study showed that while the obesity rates for men and children had continued to climb, for the first time in decades, the rate among women had remained stable.

“We’ve always been committed to providing women with the most scientifically solid and efficient methods to lose weight and prevent disease,” said Curves founder and CEO Gary Heavin. “That’s why we’re so excited that Houston Northwest Medical Center is taking a lead in wellness by making the Curves fitness program available to the women in the community.”

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“Houston Northwest Medical Center is pleased to be the first hospital to host a Curves location,” said Houston Northwest Medical Center CEO Drew Kahn. “Houston Northwest is dedicated to wellness and preventive medicine, and this important partnership helps us keep our community active and healthy.”

Independent Curves franchise owner Julie McDonald said, “We are proud to be part of this precedent-setting event, linking the medical community to an exercise program that is an essential part of women’s health.”

The hospital-based Curves franchise opened its doors August 1, and will hold ribbon-cutting ceremonies on Wednesday, August 30, at noon. Gary Heavin, a Houston native, will attend.

*Curves offers a 30-minute workout that combines strength training and sustained cardiovascular activity through safe and effective hydraulic resistance. Curves also offers a weight management program featuring a groundbreaking, scientifically proven method to raise metabolic rate and end the need for perpetual dieting. Founders Gary and Diane Heavin are considered the innovators of the express fitness phenomenon that has made exercise available to over 4 million women, many of whom are in the gym for the first time. Gary is the author of numerous books including The New York Times bestseller Curves, which is revolutionizing America's approach to dieting. With almost 10,000 locations in 42 countries, Curves is the world's largest fitness franchise and the tenth largest of all franchise companies in the world. For more information, please visit: [www.curves.com](http://www.curves.com).*

*Houston Northwest Medical Center, part of Tenet Texas, is a 508-bed acute care facility located at 710 FM 1960 in Houston. Houston Northwest Medical Center has been serving the North Houston community for more than 30 years. The hospital provides a broad spectrum of medical and surgical services, including cardiovascular services, women’s health in the Women’s Atrium, orthopedics, neurosciences and neurosurgery, oncology, 24-hour emergency department, cardiology, outpatient surgery and pediatrics. Houston Northwest has been designated a UnitedHealth Premium<sup>sm</sup> Cardiac Specialty Center for quality and efficiency. Houston Northwest Medical Center is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the nation’s oldest and largest hospital accreditation agency, and has earned the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval<sup>TM</sup>. To learn more about Houston Northwest Medical Center, visit [www.hnmc.com](http://www.hnmc.com).*

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