For Immediate Release
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Orthopaedic Surgeons Launch National Campaign to Stop Distracted Driving
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons-Harris Interactive Survey on Distracted Driving Reveals Key Insights into Driver Behaviors and Risks

Washington D.C. – The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and the Orthopaedic Trauma Association (OTA) today announce their members’ commitment to end the distracted driving problem in America. This national initiative, made possible, in part, with support from the Auto Alliance, encourages drivers to “decide to drive” and includes a new multimedia public service advertising (PSA) campaign, interactive Web site, school curriculum, print public service poster contest and materials to help surgeons talk to all their patients about distracted driving.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, distracted driving, which includes distractions of all kinds, injures more than a half of a million people each year. Orthopaedic surgeons are the medical doctors who put bones and limbs back together after traumatic injuries, including road crashes. That’s why the membership and leaders of these organizations have come together to launch this initiative and urge people to decide to drive each and every time they get behind the wheel.


THE AAOS-HARRIS INTERACTIVE SURVEY RESULTS
Survey results reveal how American drivers feel about multitasking, their own behavior behind the wheel as well as the choices of other drivers.

- Of the more than 1,500 driving-age adults surveyed, NONE of them reported their own driving as unsafe. In fact, 83 percent claim to drive safely. And, yet they believe only 10 percent of other drivers drive “safely.”
- Although drivers are aware that distracted driving compromises the ability of others to drive safely, one in five (20%) agree that they are a good enough driver that they can do other things while driving without compromising [their driving ability].
- Among those who self-reported distracted driving behaviors overall, 30-44 year olds seem to be the worst offenders having more likely admitted to eating or drinking, talking on a cell phone or reaching in the back seat of the car while driving.
- Many drivers that have experienced a near-accident due to their own distracted driving behavior say they will continue the behavior that caused them to swerve or slam on the breaks to avoid an accident.
- The results showed that 94 percent of drivers in America believe that distracted driving is a problem in the U.S. and 89 percent believe it is a problem within their own communities.

QUOTES
- “Anecdotally, we’ve known distracted driving has been a problem for some time, but the survey results confirm it. Convincing people to heed the message of this campaign is essential if we are
going to cut down on the number of deaths and injuries caused by distracted drivers. Orthopaedic surgeons have a simple message – driving is one of the most important things you do all day – so decide to drive – and give it your full attention,” said AAOS President Daniel J. Berry, MD.

- “Drivers need to think about their own choices behind the wheel because the injuries we see and treat are life-changing. Our goal is to get all drivers who are used to ‘getting away with it’ to learn now – not later the hard way – that it isn’t worth it,” said Andrew N. Pollak, MD, president of the OTA.

THE “DECIDE TO DRIVE” CAMPAIGN
The campaign aims to help drivers stay whole and healthy by “deciding to drive” each time they get behind the wheel and includes:

- An interactive Web site, DecidetoDrive.org, where drivers across the country can share their stories of distracted driving incidents, and learn more about this problem and how to help stop it;
- Crash survivor, former Olympian and legendary World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Smokin’ Joe Frazier who offers drivers some tough advice saying, “It is important in the ring and on the road to pick your opponents wisely.” Currently, Frazier is feeling strong, and ready to tell other drivers how important it is to make driving their number one priority when behind the wheel.
- Three print public service ads that have been produced as posters, postcards and table top easel backs for members of the public and orthopaedic surgeons to share in their offices;
- A dramatic, nationally distributed TV PSA showing, in reverse, a crash caused when a mother reaches into the back seat of her car to grab a toy;
- A “Spoken Word” radio PSA reminding people of their mission behind the wheel;
- A national school curriculum designed for 5th and 6th grade classrooms to be distributed in the fall of 2011;
- A PSA contest for middle-school aged kids to create a print advertisement warning drivers to remain focused on driving; and
- Many other public education elements including a social media conversation and more.

FIRST, DECIDE TO DRIVE
Follow the “Wreck-less” checklist and consciously make a decision to drive each time:

- Adjust seats, head rests, vehicle controls and mirrors, and fasten your seat belt before you drive;
- Enter the destination address into your GPS system OR review maps and written directions before you drive.
- Do not eat or drink while driving, and move all potential distractions such as reading materials, cell phones, etc., away from easy reach—the point is to keep your eyes on the road;
- If there is a distraction that needs your immediate attention, we encourage you to first stop your vehicle in a safe area.

For the complete list, visit DecidetoDrive.org.

GUEST SPEAKERS
The “Decide to Drive” press conference guest speakers include:

- AAOS President Dan Berry, MD and OTA President Andy Pollak, MD to announce this campaign
- U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, Administrator David L. Strickland
- U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Administrator Anne S. Ferro
• Aaron Brookens, a 20-year old driver who broke both of his legs and suffered serious injuries resulting from a highway crash into a semi truck because he was driving distracted
• Marc Zussman, MD, the orthopaedic trauma surgeon who treated Brookens for his injuries
• Crash survivor, former Olympian, and legendary World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Smokin’ Joe Frazier

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LINKS
• About the AAOS
• More information about the AAOS
• About the OTA
• AAOS on Facebook and Twitter
• “Decide to Drive” on Facebook and Twitter
• DecidetoDrive.org Web site
• “Froggy” TV PSA
• “Spoken Word” Radio PSA
• Print Public Service Ads