

To:
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Premature Birth Poses National Health Crisis

**Prematurity Awareness Month Brings Growing Problem to Light;
Campaign Seeks to Lower Premature Birth Rate**

**Superstar Recording Artist Thalia Speaks Out In Support of New March of Dimes
Educational Campaign, "I Want My 9 Months"**

News Hooks:

- A new report shows that nearly 500,000 babies are born prematurely every year in the United States. The nation's prematurity rate has risen more than 30 percent since 1981.
-March of Dimes; National Center for Health Statistics

Story Description:

A new report shows premature birth has reached an all-time high in the United States, with nearly 500,000 babies born prematurely each year. While nearly half of all premature births have no known cause, experts have identified certain factors that put women at increased risk, including pregnancy with twins, triplets or more; previous preterm birth; and certain uterine or cervical abnormalities. Recent disasters that make access to prenatal care difficult, such as Hurricane Katrina, will no doubt add to these numbers, according to the March of Dimes.

In response, the March of Dimes is launching a new educational campaign called "I Want My 9 Months," starring superstar recording artist, Thalia. "I Want My 9 Months" alerts women to things they can do before pregnancy to help prevent prematurity, including 9 things to ask their doctors. These include checking for diabetes, high blood pressure and what medications can affect pregnancy. It's part of the organization's larger effort to reduce the premature birth rate. For more information on premature birth and Prematurity Awareness Month, go to www.marchofdimes.com.

In this news package plus b-roll, viewers will learn about what they can do to fight prematurity and hear from parents of a premature baby and a medical expert.

Station Note: Funding for this story is provided by March of Dimes.

This News Package, Plus B-roll, Includes:

- Interview with Jessica and Josue Ostoleza, parents of a premature baby
- Interview with Dr. Jennifer Howse, President of March of Dimes
- Interview with Thalia, superstar recording artist and March of Dimes spokesperson
- Footage of premature babies in hospital and with parents
- File footage of pink & blue landmark lightings from Prematurity Awareness Month 2004
- Spanish soundbites with Thalia and Josue Ostoleza

This story is available on the Pathfire DMG

On the **News/Video News Feeds Provider B Section**

Tab: Medical **Story Slug:** Help Lower Premature Birth **Story Number:** MOD6



This story will be available 11/1 on the CNN VNR feed slugged as Help Lower Premature Birth

This story will be available 11/2 on the CBS VNR feed slugged as Help Lower Premature Birth

To view this video, obtain a copy of the alert or script, or request a hard copy tape, please go to:
www.media.dssimon.com/taperequest/mod6.php (This link will go live at 4pm Eastern on November 1st)

Satellite Feed Information:

Date: Tuesday, November 1st, 2005

Times: 3:30 PM – 4:00 PM Eastern

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM Central

1:30 PM – 2:00 PM Mountain

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM Pacific

C-Band Satellite: INTELSAT A-5 Transponder: 07

Downlink: 3840 (V) Audio: 6.2 & 6.8

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