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NASH KNOWledge Introduces Thanksgiving In June to Raise Awareness of the Importance of a Healthy Lifestyle for a Healthy Liver; Receives Proclamation from Allegheny County

PITTSBURGH, PA – JUNE 24, 2021 – NASH KNOWledge introduces Thanksgiving in June to increase awareness and education around Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD), a liver disease that affects 100 million American who do not abuse alcohol but have a fatty liver primarily from an unhealthy diet and lack of exercise. Thanksgiving in June is a new healthy tradition and the kick-off to a year-long family health initiative led by Pittsburgh-based nonprofit, NASH KNOWledge.

The COVID pandemic brought the importance of health front-and-center but elevated some of the biggest existing epidemics we face as a nation, including the rise in obesity. Studies show that many Americans gained more than 20 pounds during year one of COVID-19. Obesity and diabetes are key risk factors for NAFLD but just like its silent symptoms, NAFLD continues to be the silent disease in the obesity story.

NAFLD is a growing problem among children. It is estimated that six million children ages 14 and under have a fatty liver. The growth of NAFLD among children is usually attributed to obesity, but it is also linked to excessive sugar consumption. The average child consumes five times the recommended daily

amount of sugar. Sugar affects the liver like alcohol which is why NAFLD has become the leading cause of childhood chronic liver disease.

“It’s time that we get back on track with all aspects of our health and do it as a family because lifestyle starts with the family,” says Gina Villiotti Madison, Executive Director, NASH kNOWledge. “As a parent myself it scares me to know how many of us could be slowly killing our children by what we allow them to put in their bodies. Something as simple as replacing sugary drinks with water can have huge positive impacts on a child’s liver health, because the majority of sugar is consumed through liquids. Thanksgiving in June is about getting back on track with our health but also spending more time with family and friends and giving back as well.”

During Thanksgiving in June week NASH kNOWledge, in collaboration with Case Specific Meal Prep, will be donating 100 healthy meals to HEARTH Transitional Housing facility, delivered by a local Girl Scout Troop. Thank you cards and packages will be delivered to local medical heroes as well. A mostly online campaign, the NASH kNOWledge team has provided healthy Thanksgiving in June recipes, activity challenges, and ideas to give back as a family unit.

“We are trying to make it fun and easy for people to get involved and commit to a healthier lifestyle to improve their liver health,” says Madison. “We will be sharing fun videos and pictures on social media all week to showcase how we are leading by example – cooking together as a family, having a healthy Thanksgiving in June picnic in the park, getting active as a family, and of course giving back. Leading up to this week we even had a video get nearly twenty-five thousand views on TikTok which is a promising sign that liver awareness is growing.”

NAFLD is a growing public health crisis that affects 100 million Americans and ten percent of children. Improving one’s overall health with a healthier diet and increased physical activity improves liver health at the same time. Processed foods and added sugar are detrimental to our health and we need to start eating fresh again.

“I am passionate about raising awareness and providing education to help prevent and reverse fatty liver disease,” says Anthony Villiotti, President and Founder, NASH kNOWledge. “My fatty liver diagnosis eventually resulted in my need for a transplant. If I would have known then what I know now about the

impact of my diet on my liver health, I never would have needed a transplant because I would have made the dietary changes that we now know are so critical to liver health.”

Learn more about Thanksgiving in June at www.ThanksgivingInJune.com. NASH kNOWledge has also developed animated videos about liver health geared towards elementary-aged children which can be found at www.love-your-liver.org.

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About NASH kNOWledge

[NASH kNOWledge](#) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation that was established to increase public awareness of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) and Non-Alcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH), which is quickly becoming a public health crisis. Based in Pittsburgh-PA, NASH kNOWledge is a leading voice in the NAFLD and NASH patient advocacy field.

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