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**Afferent Corporation Announces Research Results**

*Company's Neurotechnology Improves Foot Sensation in People With Diabetes*

**Providence, RI, December 16, 2003**—Afferent Corporation today announced publication of research results pertaining to use of the Company's technology in treating nerve dysfunction stemming from diabetes. Performed in collaboration with Aristidis Veves, M.D., D.Sc., Director of the Joslin-Beth Israel Deaconess Foot Center, Boston, MA, the study showed that prototypes of the Company's non-invasive neural stimulation devices improved sensitivity to touch on the feet of diabetic subjects with reduced nerve function. Appearing in the December issue of the leading clinical journal *Diabetes Care*, the findings have implications in lowering the incidence of dangerous foot ulcers in these individuals.

For millions of diabetic patients with peripheral neuropathy, the sense of touch in the extremities can deteriorate over time. This loss of sensitivity, combined with reduced blood circulation in the skin, contributes to the development of foot ulcers. These debilitating skin wounds can be extremely difficult to heal, and lead to more than 80,000 lower extremity amputations each year in the U.S. Costs to treat diabetes-related foot problems exceed \$4 billion annually.

In this pilot clinical study, supported by a research grant from the National Institutes of Health, 20 subjects with moderate-to-severe peripheral neuropathy received subsensory vibratory mechanical stimulation delivered to the sole of the foot in a series of trials. Changes in touch sensitivity were measured using standard neurological exams: Semmes-Weinstein monofilaments and a vibration perception threshold test. The presence of the stimulation significantly improved subjects' ability to detect small pressures and vibrations, on average by 20% for the group.

Commenting on these findings, Dr. Veves stated, "Peripheral neuropathy and the health problems that stem directly from it represent some of the most dangerous aspects of diabetes. Although further clinical testing is required, this result is a significant advance toward what may prove to be an important new therapy for reducing the occurrence of foot ulceration in these patients."

Jason Harry, Ph.D., President and CEO of Afferent Corporation, said, "We believe this is an important milestone in validating the potential of this technology to treat those suffering from diabetic neuropathy. As our development efforts continue in this and other clinical areas, we will create new therapeutic options for patients with sensory dysfunction." Afferent's neurotechnology originated in landmark research performed at Boston University's Center for Biodynamics.

## **About Afferent Corporation**

Afferent Corporation is pioneering the development of a new class of medical devices to treat chronic neurological dysfunction. Its lead technology enhances the function of mechanoreceptor cells involved in sensory perception as a means of restoring brain function following stroke, addressing complications resulting from diabetic neuropathy, and improving elderly balance. Afferent's development efforts are being pursued in collaboration with leading biomedical and clinical researchers throughout the United States and Canada. Building on this technology platform, Afferent aims to establish a leadership position in the emerging field of neurotherapeutic devices.

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