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**Statement by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala
on the Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene**

“Over the past six years, we have made tremendous progress towards our goal of eradicating breast cancer, and we have made significant advances in research, early detection, access to treatment, and quality of care for women with this devastating disease.

“Today, we are taking another important step towards achieving that goal. The National Cancer Institute, through the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project, begins recruiting postmenopausal women at increased risk of breast cancer to participate in one of the largest breast cancer prevention trials ever undertaken — the Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene (STAR). This important trial builds on the success of the recent Breast Cancer Prevention Trial, which demonstrated the effectiveness of the drug tamoxifen in reducing the incidence of breast cancer in high-risk women. Women who are at high risk of developing breast cancer need more and better prevention options, and only through clinical trials such as STAR will we find those options.

“Breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer death for all American women. Until we can completely prevent this tragic disease, early detection remains our most powerful weapon in the war against breast cancer. Regularly scheduled mammograms can decrease a woman’s chance of dying from breast cancer. For some women, early detection may prevent the need to remove the entire breast or receive chemotherapy. We need to get the message out that more than 90 percent of breast cancer cases are successfully treated when detected early — early detection is what makes the difference between a breast cancer survivor and a statistic.”

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