



COALITION CONTRE  
l'obésité morbide

**Press release  
For immediate distribution**

**Coalition against Morbid Obesity  
Launches “Combat Morbid Obesity” campaign  
Two videos communicate hope to break the isolation of the morbidly obese**

**Montreal, November 9, 2011** – The Coalition against Morbid Obesity launched today a social media campaign to combat morbid obesity. The campaign includes two touching video testimonies that viewers are invited to watch and share, in which two people affected by morbid obesity recount their stories.

By launching these videos today, the Coalition hopes to break the isolation of people who are morbidly obese, raise their awareness of the dangerous effects of their disease on their health and quality of life, and inform them about the existence of an effective treatment.

In the first video, Marie-Claude, 29, shares a message of hope with the hundreds of thousands of people who, like her, are living with morbid obesity. She talks about becoming aware of the fact that she could not fight this disease alone and about the help she sought out. In the second video, Jennifer talks about her decision to undergo bariatric surgery in 2004, a choice she made to improve her quality of life. The two videos are broadcast on *YouTube* and available on the Coalition's Website ([www.lepoidsquitue.com](http://www.lepoidsquitue.com)) and Facebook page.

“By launching this campaign, the Coalition is using a new platform to directly contact and deliver a message to over 400,000 Quebecers suffering from morbid obesity, people who also often suffer from isolation. Many people know someone who is suffering from this disease. Using the Internet – the preferred source of information for morbidly obese people – will help the Coalition reach these people directly and inform them about the consequences of morbid obesity,” explained Coalition cofounder Jennifer Schultz.

**A campaign with viral ambitions**

In the campaign's second stage, people with morbid obesity will be invited to create their own video message. “We feel that now, more than ever, morbidly obese people are ready to talk publically and step out of their isolation to ask for help. They want to make their voices heard to share what they are experiencing and find the strength and courage to take control of their lives and get the care they need. The campaign will only be worthwhile if as many people as possible create and share videos about their own experiences,” Schultz added.

The Coalition hopes that this campaign will go viral to encourage people with morbid obesity to learn more about the disease, about the dangers it presents to their health and quality of life, and about bariatric surgery, the most effective treatment for combating it.

Banking on strength in numbers, the Coalition will call on its 1,250 members and their many Facebook fans to pass on the video testimonies. The Coalition hopes to send out the message widely and encourage as many people as possible to contribute their own videos to make the campaign a success.

### **Morbid obesity**

Morbid obesity is the starting point for different types of diseases that are often fatal, such as arterial hypertension, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. An individual's obesity level can be evaluated by means of the body mass index (BMI), which is calculated by dividing the person's weight by his or her height squared ( $\text{Kg/m}^2$ ). Morbid obesity corresponds to a BMI of 40 or more, or 35 or more if accompanied by comorbidities.

### **Bariatric surgery**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), bariatric surgery is considered to be the only effective treatment for morbid obesity. Bariatric surgery includes a series of techniques that are based on two intervention principles: gastric bypass (reduced volume) and intestinal malabsorption (derivation). In Quebec in 2005, the Agence d'évaluation des technologies et des modes d'intervention en santé (AETMIS) tabled a report entitled "Surgical Treatment of Morbid Obesity – Update," which reviews all bariatric surgery techniques. The AETMIS recommended establishing an action plan in Quebec to define the need for bariatric surgery and devise ways to respond to it.

### **About the Coalition against Morbid Obesity**

*Created in February 2007, the Coalition against Morbid Obesity is a non-profit, Quebec-based organization that draws on the strength of association to increase awareness of the issue of morbid obesity and to foster better access to bariatric surgery in Québec. Its signature "Weight that kills" expresses the dramatic situation that is experienced by people who are suffering from morbid obesity. As its name indicates, this disease leads to a faster death for those who are afflicted. For more information, visit ([www.lepoidsquitue.com](http://www.lepoidsquitue.com)).*

-30-

To access the two videos, please click on: <http://www.enigma.ca/fr/zone-medias.html>.

### **Information:**

Brigitte Filiatrault  
514-521-8216 | 514-702-2744 (cell.)  
[b.filiatrault@enigma.ca](mailto:b.filiatrault@enigma.ca)