

Special Report 3

FUN with Weight Loss

Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital Weight Loss Movement

By Hsiao-Jun Huang, Pei-Ju Chiang, Joni Yu

In 1997, the World Health Organization defines obesity a disease. Obesity has surpassed smoking and becomes the most dangerous health problem.

Among the top ten reasons of death, seven are related to obesity. According to a survey by the Bureau of Health (Taiwan) on obesity:

*One in every two adult men; one in every three adult women,
One in every four children is either overweight or obese.
To increase a healthy population, the National Bureau of Health is promoting a program - "Healthy 100 Taiwan" to manage weight.*

The Tzu Chi Medical Mission is supporting this movement: the personnel had achieved weight reduction of forty-five kilograms in all six hospitals combined.

Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital has pledged to lead by example: combining its nutrition department, cardiology department, metabolism department, traditional Chinese medicine, rehabilitation department, health management center, people are encouraged to loose weight and to be healthy.

Dr. Yu-Chieh Su, a grey-haired overweighed oncologist, once took his son and daughter to school and was called “grandpa” by their teachers and classmates. He was only just over forty, so he felt embarrassed and wished to “find a hole to hide.”

Overweight Doctor Back in Shape

Dr. Su is overweight and has high blood pressure. His colleagues laughed at him, “Being an internist yourself, your systolic blood pressure is 190 and you don’t even know how to control it. How could you convince your patients?”

Although he has been using medicine to control his blood pressure, it is still up and down. Dr. Su is determined to lose weight and he laughed that because of his high self-esteem, he does

not want to be beaten by other doctors who are also in the process of losing weight. Since he joined the program, he uses the cell phone to calculate calories of food consumption and record the data to monitor his eating habit. He has lost eighteen kilograms. Not only does he look younger, he is also healthier.

Dr. Su said, “I used to feel really tired when I come home, the more I rested, the more I ate. It became a vicious cycle. But now I control my eating habit with oatmeal for breakfast, soba for lunch, and I ride the bicycle two or three days a week.”



Before



After

Dr. Yu-Chieh Su lost 18 kilograms, not only he is healthier and looks younger.

His waist was 42 inches before the program. Whenever the oncology department needed a Santa Clause for Christmas party, his colleagues would recommend him because of his big stomach.

Now his waist is only 36 inches and he is aiming for 34 inches. He also can wear the clothes he wore in college and does not have to buy new clothes. He is so happy that it saves money and is good for the environment.

Vegetarian Meals Can Be Tasty

One of the doctors in Dalin Tzu Chi’s hospital is also overweight, Dr. Cheng-Yung Lee - an ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist. His height is 182 centimeters

and his weight was 102 kilograms. His BMI (body-mass index) was 30.8 high. After six months of diet and exercise, he successfully reduced his weight to 83 kilograms. He laughed and said it is lighter now when he walks.

“I got tired easily, and I would fall asleep easily in the chair,” said Dr. Lee. “Now since I lost weight, the energy is increased. I also eat lighter food now. Therefore, my taste bud is much more sensitive. I can really taste the real flavor of the food.”

“I used to eat anything and never reject any food”, said Dr. Lee. Snacks, drinks, and desserts after every meal are normal. Even though the body did not sound an alarm, his weight kept on rising.

After becoming a vegetarian, Dr. Lee



Before



After

Dr. Cheng-Yung Lee reduced weight by eating only vegetarian food. He not only lost 20 kilograms, he looks more energetic.

prepared his only meals. He does not eat any processed food. He eats fruits for breakfast, boiled vegetables for lunch, brown rice, and eats dinner at home. His diet gradually becomes light. With a straight vegetarian diet and regular exercise, it is not difficult to him after all.

Lee appreciates his family's support and collaboration, and appreciates Superintendent Sou-Hsin Chien promoting the healthy cause. "Good deed results good rewards". After participating in the program, Lee learned a lot about sincerity and perseverance that one can accomplish any task no matter how difficult it is.

Obesity Is a Disease, Top Enemy of Health

According to a study, one in every two men, one in every three women, and one in every four children is overweight or obese.

Obesity has a big influence on health. Other than causing the decline of health, it also can cause diabetes, metabolic syndrome, blood lipid abnormalities, hypertension, stroke, gout, degenerative arthritis, and coronary heart disease. Among the top ten causes of death, seven are associated with obesity. Obesity also increases the chance of getting at least nine different types of



Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital Superintendent Dr. Sou-Hsin Chien (as Superintendent of Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital started 2012) leads the medical personnel to pledge losing weight.

cancer: breast cancer, colon cancer, kidney cancer, endometrial cancer, esophageal cancer, pancreatic cancer, prostate cancer, and ovarian cancer. In Europe, about fifteen to forty-five percent of cancers are associated with obesity.

Dr. Ming-Nan Lin, department head of Family Medicine in Dalin Tzu Chi General Hospital, said the most dangerous factor on health used to be smoking, but now it is obesity. The World Health Organization defines obesity a disease that "obesity is going to be the number one health problem in the world." Lin states the first step to reduce weight is to tackle obesity, maintain a BMI below 27 and work hard to archive normal weight. One should not be depressed

if the goal cannot be achieved quickly. As long as one can reduce five to ten percent, then it would have positive influence on metabolic syndrome. For example, if a person weighs one hundred kilograms, after losing ten kilograms, the change on blood sugar, blood lipids will be apparent.

Eat, Exercise and Sleep Well

Lin said, "one kilogram body weight is equivalent to seven thousand and seven hundred calories, which is about twenty-eight bowls of rice. If one eats one less bowl of rice a day, then it would be two hundred and eighty less calories, the equivalent of losing about one kilogram

Ideal Weight = height² (m²)x22 (body mass index)
Body Mass Index (BMI) = weight (kg)/Height (m²)
Normal BMI is about 18.5 < 24
Under weight if BMI < 18.5, Over weight if BMI > 24. Obesity if BMI > 27



Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital Dr. Ming-Nan Lin (third right on the front row) is the head counselor of the weight loss program.



The only proper course to take to lose weight is to eat less and exercise more. Exercises will turn fat into muscle and increase the metabolism.

a month. Less high calories food such as deep fried food, or sugary drinks, can assist in reaching that goal. Doctors also remind everyone that twelve hundred calories is the minimum so eating is a necessity.

Lin also provided some tips such as eating slowly because the signal from the stomach to the brain takes twenty minutes. Thus eating slowly can reduce unnecessary food intake.

Besides, the body's metabolism is slower and harder to digest food in the evening. Therefore, Lin suggests avoiding food during late night by sleeping early to keep obesity in check.

Love Yourself and the Earth

The staffs in the hospital do not always have time to take care of their own health. To encourage the staffs to exercise together, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital held an activity called "Healthy weight! Love yourself! Love the earth!" A weight loss contest was held as a way to encourage personnel to monitor and control their weight. The goal of a healthy hospital is enhance the health of the body and the mind.

There are two categories in the contest: individuals and teams. Over one hundred and twenty six people registered for the individual contest, and

twelve groups for the team contest. Dr. Chien, Superintendent of the hospital, led the staff to pledge for the weight loss program. Chien indicated that according to hospital's measurements, three hundred and fifty nine people are obese and have BMI over 24, among the hospital population of one thousand. He hopes personnel will encourage each other to reduce weight to enhance health. The change of diet is the most important part of a weight loss program. Chien hopes his staff members will realize that healthy weight by eating more vegetables is the correct way. He also wishes everyone to succeed, that "Next year this time, slim will not be a dream."

Group Exercise is Healthy and Fun

With the hospital promoting health, group exercises have already become a common practice. The organizations include bicycling, boxing aerobic, volley ball, slow speed softball, badminton, etc. The colleagues use the break time to exercise which is a great way to communicate with each other, and to reduce weight and achieve the health result.

The energetic group of boxing aerobic hired a professional aerobic teacher to teach the students step by step, so the new members can also catch up gradually. In the classroom,

with rhythm of music, teacher would lead the members work hard to make dance movement. It fills with energy. Dr. Huang, from ear-nose-throat (ENT) department joined the groups for more than a year. His energy is improving. Dr. Huang said he either sits or stands during working hours and rarely have chance to exercise. He used to ride bicycle, but felt the need of more intense exercise, so he joined boxing aerobic. On his first class, he could only finish the first two sessions out of four sessions in an hour. But since the second class, he could finish the whole four sessions and he felt much better in spirit.



In order to let people maintain the good habit of diet, the nutritionist of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital demonstrates the vegetarian cooking.

Let Health Become a Habit

To assist people in the community on weight loss, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital combines nutrition therapy department, social work group, cardiology, endocrine and metabolic department, traditional Chinese medicine department, health management center, rehabilitation department together as a strong group for controlling the weight. With nutritional education, diet control, body fitness, aerobic exercises, and acupunctures to help the weight loss project. In eight weeks, twenty members in the weight control group have lost 3.7 kilogram in average. Among them, Mr. Lee who is a truck driver has diabetic before he was thirty years old. Now under the balanced diet and continuing exercises, he lost 12 kilograms in sixty days.

Other than employees and local community members, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital also extended the scope of weight caring to patients and their families. Since 2006, Health Management Center of Dalin holds annual weight control session for patients with chronic diseases. The head Nurse Ms. Hsin-Hung Chiang said, at the beginning, the weight control session only accept coronary heart disease and diabetic patients. Now they have expanded to other diseases associated with obesity such as kidney

disease, stroke, osteoarthritis of the knee, and fatty liver. Thus any patients or common people can register the session. The whole process and every class are free.

Ms. Chiang indicates weight control class includes nutritional consultation, chronic diseases, Chinese medicine acupuncture point massages, rehabilitation exercises, and health education seminars. They also hired aerobic teacher leads all participants to



All Tzu Chi's hospitals also promote weight reduction to enhance health.



move muscles in exercise, nutritionist to share different methods to control the nutrition. It truly benefits the participants.

During the course, the participants are required to write their dairy about their diets, and truly record their intake food. Then they will discover they really have eaten a lot. The nutritionist also introduce the calories of food, differentiate the food and the information when eat out. To make the deep impression, the participants actually went to supermarket to shop. When they return to the classroom, the nutritionist would explain the good and bad on the food they shopped. Then the participants would need to cook for themselves. The whole process is with good motivation. This year has thirty participants. In less than two months, the average weight loss is 2.4 kilograms. The total weight loss is 73.5 kilograms. The result is sounding. Actually the causes of obesity can be from work, mental stress, unhealthy life style or diet habit. During the process of weight reduction, one can learn more on the mental or health problems that causes obesity. With willpower, it is not hard to reduce weight. Not only one would feel lighter, and also would welcome a brand new self. Please join us for the weight reduction for health, enjoy happy and lighter life.