

It's never too late.....to take charge of your health! The Coronary Health Improvement Project ("CHIP") is designed to substantially lower high levels of blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, heartburn, angina and to lessen depression. It facilitates the reversal of narrowed arteries.

To learn more about the CHIP program or sign up for our upcoming session, please contact the Center for Continuing Studies at St. Cloud State University at 320.308.3044 or visit our website: www.stcloudstate.edu/continuingstudies/ceo/chip.asp

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Healthy by Choice Not by Chance



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CHIP

(Coronary Health Improvement Project)

This is not a fad and this is not a diet. There are no pills to take, no "miracle" shakes to choke down, no special equipment to buy and no endorsements from celebrity spokespersons.

This is science, plain and simple. It's time-tested, research-driven solutions to surviving life in a world of conflicting and often confusing food and lifestyle information. And the results speak for themselves.

Physically, I lost weight. I was six foot and weighed 190 pounds at the beginning of the program. At the end of eight weeks I had lost 13 pounds," says David Thomsen, Instructor in Marketing at St. Cloud State University. "But I didn't stop at the end of the program. Another eight weeks later, I had lost 30 pounds. So I went from 190 (pounds) to 160 (pounds) in about 15 or 16 weeks time."

The program, in this case, is the Coronary Health Improvement Project (CHIP) facilitated by The Center for Continuing Studies at St. Cloud State University. Designed to prevent and reverse the risk factors for heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and obesity, the CHIP program is an eight-week, 40-hour course designed to guide participants in re-evaluating their approach at personal health.

"It's really about a lot more than just coronary health. It's truly about overall health," says CHIP Director Kay Sebastian. "So it's not a diet. It's not a 'do this for a few weeks then go back to the way you were.' It's about understanding the impact of our lifestyle on our overall health and making choices."

The CHIP program, which is conducted worldwide and lays claim to more than 40,000 graduates, came to St. Cloud in the spring of 2007 after Sebastian discovered it through family members in Illinois.

"One of the largest locations in the United States is in Rockford, Ill. and I have family in Rockford," Sebastian says. "I have siblings and in-laws that have gone through the program and had such tremendous results that I thought, 'gee, this would be wonderful for St. Cloud.'"

A Multitude of Health Benefits

As most area CHIP graduates will attest, weight loss is only one of many beneficial results of the program. According to Sebastian, there is a reason for this.

"It's really based on science and good, sound research," she states. "It's not somebody saying, 'eat grapefruit for 30 days and you'll be healthy.' It covers research in a lot of different fields. And it's intensive, we have about 40 hours of program time so it's a long enough time and enough information to help people make changes. There's also a lot of motivation and support that the group gives each other."

Thomsen, who participated in the spring 2007 program, says he experienced an improvement in both his emotional and cardiovascular health in addition to weight loss.

"I have better all-around feelings, higher energy levels, full nights of sleep, a lack of stress and all those emotional benefits," he states. "My cholesterol was a little on the high side and had been for



Previous page: The CHIP program encourages hearty, healthy meals featuring fruits, vegetables, whole grains and great flavor. Above: The CHIP menu plan helps provide well-balanced nutritious meals.

a few years and my doctor kept saying, 'you have to get that down or I'm going to put you on medication.' At the beginning of the program they tested me and my (cholesterol) level was at 226. At the end of eight weeks it had gone down to 154. I subsequently had a physical this past summer and it had gone down to 147."

St. Cloud State employee Judy Dingmann, who participated in the spring 2007 program, says both she and her husband, Eldred, who also participated in the spring 2007 program, experienced similar results.

"It's been life-changing for us. For both of us, it was getting that cholesterol down, and the weight loss was inevitable," Dingmann says of the couple's combined loss of more than 40 pounds in their eight-week programs. "And we continue to drop weight ... we're still dropping a half pound per week. Both my husband and I have had to buy new wardrobes."

Thomsen, Dingmann and her husband are not unique. According to a study published in the American Journal of Cardiology, the average participant in the CHIP program experiences results over the course of eight weeks that are nothing less than astounding. Highlights outlined in the study of CHIP participants included:

- An average serum cholesterol reduction of between 15 and 20 percent
- An average weight loss of six pounds
- Blood pressure reductions to the point where titration of blood pressure medication was often advisable
- Fifty percent of participants with Type II diabetes had their need for diabetic medication reduced or eliminated
- An average reduction in angina to the point that physicians often reduced or eliminated certain medications

"People really do see remarkable results," Sebastian says. "We're not (specifically) a weight loss program, but people do lose weight. They see their cholesterol come down, oftentimes dramatically. They see their blood pressure come down. If they have high triglycerides, those numbers come down. Glucose levels come down. If people follow the program, it can make remarkable differences ... it just makes so much sense to people."

From Beginning to End

Sebastian says the CHIP program begins with a general health screen to give participants a sense of where they're at and where they need to go.

"Everybody goes to a lab where we contract (the test) and they test heart rates, blood pressure and do a complete blood panel," she explains. "So cholesterol ratios, glucose, triglycerides, all those kinds of things are tested."

Following the general health screen, participants are guided through eight weeks of twice-weekly class sessions.

"The sessions themselves have two parts," says Sebastian. "One is a lecture series from the founder of the program, Dr. (Hans) Diehl, that we have on DVD. And then we do local activities that go along with that. We might do a label-reading activity, for example. Or we'll bring in a trainer when we're talking about exercise. So it's very hands on."

CHIP program activities, while hands on, are not designed to be strenuous or uncomfortable.

"We talk about exercise and tell people how they can tailor certain exercises to fit their lives, but we don't make them go through a workout session," Sebastian states. "This is really about educating people to make their own choices."

Throughout the eight weeks, participants also have the option of going on guided shopping

tours with program facilitators in local supermarkets. And, when the program concludes, participants are treated to a second health screen.

"It's so we have clinical information when they start and clinical information when they stop," Sebastian says. "So it's not just a 'gee I feel better' result. It's so they can see the actual drop in cholesterol, blood pressure and all those other things."

Past, Present and Future

Key to the long-term success of past participants is the CHIP alumni program. CHIP graduates have the opportunity to meet with fellow alumni on a monthly basis, which not only serves to keep motivation high but gives past participants the opportunity to share fresh ideas.

"You have to have some reinforcement," Thomsen says. "To know that other people are out there and that they're still sticking with it."

Although the current number of Central Minnesota-area graduates is relatively small, Sebastian says she hopes to see alumni numbers increase as word about the program spreads.

"We're still growing. Our first session we had five, then we had 11 and now (spring 2008) we have 14," she states. "Most of the people we have now are people who knew participants that took it before and they said, 'I have to go find out more because look at the results this (past participant) had.'"

St. Cloud's CHIP program currently runs twice



Above: Judy and Eldred Dingmann share a laugh over dinner. Being on the CHIP program has changed their lives and say they would never go back to their old lifestyle.

per year with one eight-week course offered in the spring and another eight-week course offered in the fall. The program, says Sebastian, is open to individuals of all ages and ability levels and she encourages both singles and couples to join. Prior knowledge of health and/or fitness is not required. In fact, Dingmann says the best way for new par-

ticipants to approach the course is with a completely open mind.

"I really didn't know what to expect going in," Dingmann states. "Now I ask my husband, 'would you back to the way we were living?' And he says he would never go back to that lifestyle, ever."

Recipes to reverse and prevent :

• Obesity • High Blood Pressure • High Cholesterol • Diabetes • Heart Disease

These recipes were taken from the official CHIP Cookbook - The Optimal Diet by Darlene Blaney, M.Sc, N.C.P. and Hans Diehl, DR.H.Sc., M.P.H., F.A.C.N.

BOK CHOY SALAD

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Complexity: Easy

Serves: 8

1 bok choy, large (8 cups)
2 cups mung bean sprouts
1/2 cup sunflower seeds
1 cup pea pods, fresh

Dressing:

1/4 cup olive oil
2 Tbsp. water
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
2 Tbsp. maple syrup
1/2 tsp. garlic powder

Wash and chop bok choy, including the green leaves and the white stock. Place chopped bok choy in a large salad bowl. Wash mung beans using a colander. Place in salad bowl. Add sunflower seeds. Wash pea pods, and cut into halves or thirds. Add to salad. Mix together ingredients for dressing in a separate small bowl. Mix well. Pour dressing over salad and toss well just prior to serving.

CHEF'S TIP: Salad is nicest when chopped small or shredded style.

ZUCCHINI SAUTÉ

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Complexity: Easy

Serves: 6

4 cups zucchini, sliced 1/4 inch thick
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp. basil crushed
1 28 oz. can tomatoes, peeled, whole sliced in thirds

Sauté sliced zucchini, minced garlic, and basil in a little water or Pam spray using a nonstick frying pan. Sauté until zucchini begins to soften. Add sliced, peeled tomatoes. Sauté 5 more minutes or until zucchini is crisp-tender.

CHEF'S TIP: Serve as a side dish or as a topping for rice, pasta, or couscous.

APPLE CRISP

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Complexity: Easy

Serves: 9

6 apples, medium
1/2 cup raisins
2 tsp. cinnamon
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 cup oats, quick-cooking
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/2 cup whole-wheat pastry flour

Peel and core apples. Slice apples 1/4-inch thick into a 9"x9" pan. 2. Sprinkle raisins and cinnamon over apples. Mix together oil, oats, maple syrup, and flour. Crumble over top of apples. Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes, or until topping is golden brown.

CHEF'S TIP: Serve warm or cold. Nice served for dessert or for a light supper.

The Fall 2008 CHIP sessions will begin on September 30th. For more information go to www.stcloudstate.edu/continuingstudies or call Kay Sebastian at 320-308-5758.