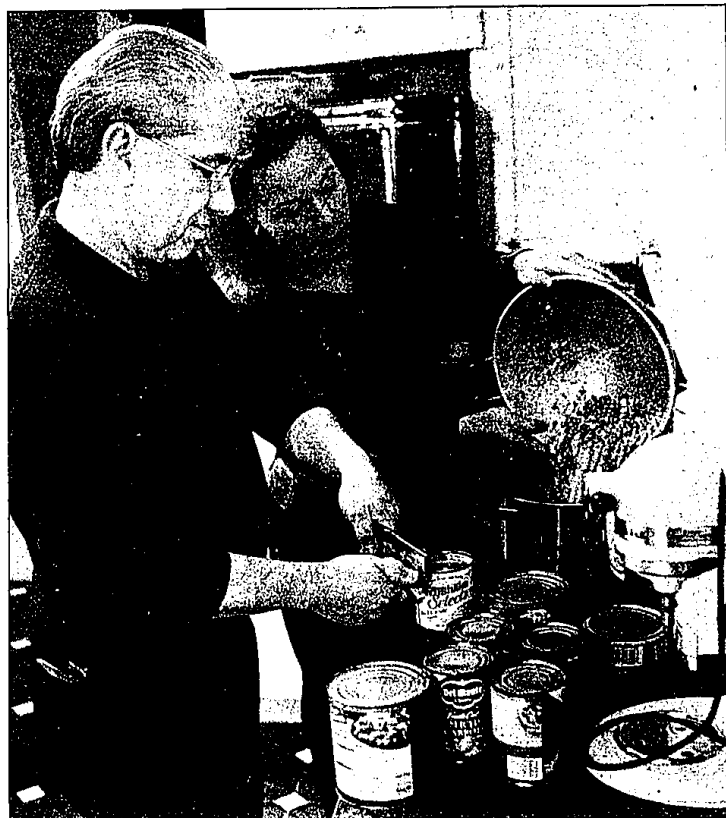


## WEIGHT LOSS

# SUCCESES



Jim and Patti O'Connor of Livonia prepare a healthy vegetable stew as part of their evening meal.

## There are many roads to Fitness Forever!

BY SANDRA DAIKA-PRYSBY  
CORRESPONDENT

There's really only one way to lose weight. You have to take in less calories than your body needs to maintain its present weight. Basically, if you eat 500 less calories a day—or 3,500 less a week—you'll lose at least a pound a week. This can add up to about 50 pounds a year!

While there's only one way to lose the extra pounds, there are a number of weight-loss programs designed to accomplish this. And Jim and Patti O'Connor of Livonia have found one that works, really works, for them. Jim, 50, has lost 100 pounds and Patti, 47, is 64 pounds lighter thanks to the Health Management Resources (HMR) program at St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia.

According to Diane Gale, a health educator for HMR, this 13-year-old national program, which was implemented at St. Mary's two years ago, has proved to be successful for motivated participants. HMR is aimed at changing and modifying behavior through a 13-week program that consists of weekly classes, support and medical super-

vision. Topics covered in the classes include how to determine when and why you eat, the importance of keeping a food journal (writing down what you eat), the need for regular physical activity and proper portion sizes of food.

Meal replacements (primary shakes and frozen entrees) are used. "The goal of the program is to eventually have participants make good choices from all the food groups to maintain a healthy weight. For example, we stress the need for five fruits and vegetables a day," Gale says.

After participants complete the 13-week basic program, they can sign up in four-week increments until they reach their desired goal weight. "Then we offer a maintenance program to assure that the weight doesn't come back," Gale adds. The O'Connors, who began the program in January, are now in the maintenance stage.

"Jim was the first to decide to do the HMR program. When I saw how determined he was, I decided to do it with him," says Patti. "This has been one of the best decisions we've made, especially since, surprisingly, it's been easy for both of us."

Sandra Daike-Prsby has been chronicling the efforts of various area residents to lose weight and the different methods they use to achieve their goals.

## Weight-loss programs

■ **Overeaters Anonymous** is a support group for overeaters. A group meets 7 p.m. every Friday at Providence Park in Novi. Call (248) 474-9455.

■ **Weight Control Program** is a medically supervised weight-loss program offered by Beaumont Weight Control Center in Birmingham. Call (248) 723-6300 or (888) 899-4600 for information and/or to register one of the weekly informational seminars.

■ **The Criffenton Weight Management Center**, Rochester, provides a variety of programs designed to achieve a realistic, attainable and more healthy weight with the support of a professional staff of doctors, behavioral therapists, psychologists, registered dietitians and exercise specialists. Call (248) 652-5626 for information or to schedule a free introductory consultation.

■ **Weight-Loss Programs and Weight**

**Management Classes** are offered at various locations by St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Ann Arbor. The classes include "Triggers and Cravings," "Finding Fats That Fit," and "Fabulous Fiber." Weight-loss programs include "Healthy Solutions" and "Nutricare Weight Loss Series," which offers personal attention and nutrition presentations. Call (734) 827-3777. The hospital's "Take Charge" program offers a lifestyle management system that teaches participants how to relate control of their life. Call (734) 712-2222.

■ **Shapedown** is a 10-week weight management program offered by St. Joseph Mercy Hospital for children and teens with their parents to learn how healthy eating, an active lifestyle and effective exercise can promote weight loss and family unity. This program is held at locations in Canton and Ann Arbor. Call (734) 712-5694.

even with the meal replacements."

She explains that both she and Jim felt satisfied on the shakes and, because of the low calories they were placed on, they lost weight quickly. "Losing the weight fast—Jim lost 45 and a half pounds in the 13 weeks alone—was a great motivator."

(The O'Connors have been able to go on very low-calories individualized plans because they have been under medical supervision. Normal guidelines for healthy dieting calls for a minimum of 1,200 calories a day.)

Jim, who had been overweight ("heavy," he says) for more than 10 years, wanted to lose weight primarily for

health reasons. "I had sleep apnea and high cholesterol. In addition, I was having difficulty, because of the extra weight, participating in softball—I wasn't a great runner—and coaching basketball," he says.

Because of his weight loss, his sleep apnea, including the snoring, is no longer a problem. Also, he has lowered his cholesterol by 20 points. Patti's success is reflected in her wardrobe. She now wears a size 10 compared to her former size 16.

"The best thing about our weight loss is that we did it together. We had each other for support to keep one another on

PLEASE SEE WEIGHT LOSS, C7

## Hospital weight management program wins award

Losing weight is not easy. Keeping it off is even more difficult. St. Mary Mercy Hospital's Weight Management Program has helped 256 men and women lose a total of more than 8,000 pounds since the program began in November 2000. This program was recently designated as a recipient of the HMR Gold Standard Certificate of Achievement. The award distinguishes the program from hundreds of clinics nationwide using the Health

Management Resources (HMR) standard. HMR recognized St. Mary Mercy's weight program for excellence in performance and superior patient care. The program offers a comprehensive approach to weight loss, including in-depth lifestyle education, personal coaching and medically supervised treatment.

"It is because of your hard work and dedication that patients are more successful at achieving and maintaining their weight-

loss goals," said Lawrence Stuffer, president, HMR, in a congratulatory letter to the staff.

Increased body weight has been known to be a factor in the onset and severity of many diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease and some cancers. Most likely, overweight individuals have high cholesterol and high blood pressure, which are risk factors for heart attack or stroke and should be monitored by health professionals. Weight loss and the prevention of weight

regain are an essential part of treatment.

"Our Weight Management Program is not just about losing weight," said Mary Lou Anolik. "It's about health management. Being overweight creates other health risks, and our program educates participants about those risks, as well as the importance of exercise and proper nutrition."

For more information or to pre-register for a free, one-hour orientation, call the hospital at (734) 655-1783.