



The Ticker Talker Mended Hearts Diablo Chapter 254

Dedicated to inspiring hope in heart disease patients and their families

www.MendedHearts254.org

July 2008

General Meeting

Saturday, July 26, 1:30 P.M.

Kaiser Medical Office Building, Walnut Creek,
Third Floor Conference Room

July's topic: "Tai Chi: Improved Stress
Reduction, Balance, Agility for All."

Tai Chi is a system of movements rooted in Chinese martial arts and is a graceful form of exercise that has existed for some 2,000 years. Like yoga, Tai Chi enhances mental and physical health through graceful slow motions and breath control. Tai Chi can also help reduce falls and improve balance in the elderly. The ancient art of Tai Chi uses gentle flowing movements to reduce the stress of today's busy lifestyles and improve health.

Dennis Iverson is a retired manager from Applied Materials, a high-tech Silicon Valley Company. He first studied Tai Chi ten years ago but the demands of business forced him to suspend his studies. Following his retirement, he began his study of Tai Chi again.

Tai Chi is a continuation of the study of martial arts Dennis began in his youth and embodies the essence of Japanese and Chinese martial arts. Dennis holds a black belt in Aikido and taught Aikido for several years. Dennis also studied Hayashi-ha-Shito-Ryu Karate.

Practiced regularly, Tai Chi can help you reduce stress, increase flexibility, improve muscle strength and definition, increase energy, stamina and agility, and increase feelings of well-being. This month's presentation will be on the ancient art of Tai Chi and a demonstration of some of its gentle flowing movements.



Bj Boone with speaker Christine Lunde, RD

Members Learn How to Read Labels and Eat More Healthfully

Christine Lunde, Registered Dietitian at Kaiser Walnut Creek, speaker at the June meeting, explained the desired levels of Total Cholesterol, HDL Cholesterol, LDL Cholesterol, and Triglycerides and gave suggestions on reaching and maintaining these levels through our daily diets. She talked about the various food groups (vegetables, fruits, grains, milk, protein) and the amounts of each we should be eating each day. She stressed the need to read and understand food labels.

On the subject of lowering the amount of sodium in our diets, she stressed that we should try to have less than 2400 milligrams per day. Her handout on low sodium diets contained these suggestions:

1. Take the salt shaker off the table. Do not add salt to your foods.

(Continued page 2)

2. Use only half the amount of salt called for in recipes when cooking (or leave it out altogether).
3. Eat fresh, unprocessed foods. (If it comes in a can or a box, it usually has a lot of salt added to it).
4. Check the labels of prepared foods to see what is the sodium content. Be aware that even labels that say "reduced salt" may still have a lot of sodium in them. For example, canned soups that claim to have reduced salt still have about 500 milligrams of sodium per serving
5. Cook with herbs and spices.

Some information about reading and understanding food labels:

Sodium Free — Only a trivial amount of sodium per serving

Very Low Sodium — 35 mg. or less per serving

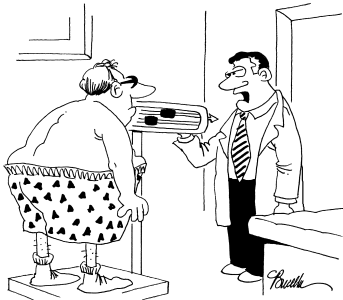
Low Sodium — 140 mg. or less per serving

Reduced Sodium — Usual level of sodium is reduced by 25%

Light or Lite Sodium — Usual level of sodium is reduced by 50%

Christine handed out information sheets on "How to Read the Food Label, " High Cholesterol? Here is What you Can Do," "Low Sodium Diets," and at the end of her talk had us take a Nutrition Quiz based on the information she had given in her talk.

(Reported by BJ Boone, who also chaired the meeting.)



"No, it's not water. You seem to be retaining food."

Lowering Blood Pressure Through the DASH Diet

If you are concerned about hypertension, perhaps you should try the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. Johns Hopkins specialists explored the benefits of a DASH diet in three trials. Here are the results.

The DASH diet is an eating plan that can have a significant and positive effect on your blood pressure. The diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products and low in saturated fat and cholesterol. The diet also includes whole-grain products, fish, poultry, and nuts. Red meat, sweets, and sugar-containing beverages are kept to a minimum.

Two major clinical trials have evaluated the DASH diet, and a third tested a modified version of the diet:

IN THE FIRST TRIAL, people who followed the DASH diet for eight weeks reduced their blood pressure by an average of 5.5/3 mm Hg, compared with people who ate a typical American diet (low in fruits and vegetables and high in fat).

The benefits of the DASH diet were greatest in people with hypertension. In these people, the DASH diet lowered systolic blood pressure by 11 mm Hg, which is similar to the amount that a single blood pressure drug can lower blood pressure.

IN THE SECOND TRIAL, people who combined the DASH diet with a low sodium intake (1,500 mg a day) for four weeks had an average blood pressure reduction of 9/5 mm Hg, compared with people who followed a typical American diet with a high sodium intake (3,300 mg a day). As in the first trial, the benefits were greater

in people with hypertension their systolic blood pressure dropped by an average of 12 mm Hg.

IN THE THIRD TRIAL, called OmniHeart, a DASH-style diet that replaced some of the carbohydrates in the DASH diet with protein (mostly

from plants) or fat mostly monounsaturated fat from olive oil) lowered blood pressure even further.

President's Message—Al Johnson



The other day, I was reflecting on some of the workshop topics that were covered at the Mended Hearts 56th National Annual Convention in Hartford, Connecticut which Kim and I attended in May. One topic in particular came to mind which I would like to share with you:

“PALS for a Healthier America—Through Prevention-Intervention-Innovation.”

But first, let me provide some personal thoughts about this year's Annual Convention:

“Every member should attend the Annual Convention at least once.” This was our second Convention and we were again impressed with the warmth, dedication and commitment displayed by everyone present. You really don't see the “BIG” picture of Mended Hearts until you attend a Convention. If you've never attended, you are really missing out on a lot—the camaraderie, workshops and guest speakers (e.g., Dr. Sotile). Also, you miss hearing Margaret's Closing Program inspirational tidbits of wisdom. This year, it was “I Love Life.”

“The Convention embodies the spirit of what Mended Hearts is really all about—helping and educating each other to help others. You leave the Convention inspired and energized wanting to pass on these feelings to your Chapter members at home.”

PALS

Now, back to “PALS for a Healthier America.” Did you know that many of us in the USA have one or more chronic diseases? 85% are elderly; 45% middle aged; 23% young adult; and 45% are the uninsured. What is the impact of chronic diseases in America? \$5,300 per person is spent on chronic disease—a staggering \$1.6 trillion overall!

What is the impact of chronic disease on people? Missing work or school; loss of independence; added care giving; much greater risk for depression; challenge of managing multiple conditions; health disparities increase the burden on some such as minorities, low income, the uninsured. They are disproportionately affected by illness, less likely to receive preventive care, and later diagnosis and higher death rates.

Chronic diseases drive healthcare costs. E.g., Mental Illness—\$113 billion; Arthritis & other rheumatic conditions—\$86 billion; Heart Disease & Stroke—\$403 billion; Diabetes—\$132 billion; Alzheimer's—\$100 billion; Chronic Lung Diseases—\$86 billion; HIV/AIDS—\$36 billion; and Cancer—\$206 billion. In total, chronic diseases affect almost one in two people in the US and contribute to seven out of ten deaths.

The problem is growing: Obesity in America; diagnosed diabetes among adults; and people with chronic conditions. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, "All is not well with our Nation's health. Obesity is rising among adults and children. Chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, have become quiet killers. . . Those diseases, many of which are preventable and manageable, account for an increasing amount of America's growing health care costs." "Creating a culture of wellness would not only reduce suffering, it would increase our Nation's economic vitality."

The three-step remedy to rising costs. **Prevention, Intervention and Innovation.** The challenges to effective prevention are the more than 66% of US adults who are either overweight or obese.

PREVENTION.

■ Screening for colorectal cancer could cut the number of colon cancer deaths by almost a third.

■ Vaccinating kids has lowered death rates by more than 90% for many

diseases.

■ Having a mammogram every one to two years for women 40 and older lowers the risk of death from breast cancer by 16%

■ Being active which helps control weight and reduces the risk of heart attack, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure. If 1 in 10 American adults started a regular walking program, the nation would save \$5.6 billion in heart disease costs each year.

■ Quitting smoking cuts the excess risk of a heart attack in half in a year.

INTERVENTION. Empowering and motivating patients improved health and lowered costs. Medical advances have helped to increase survival rates of cancer patients.

INNOVATION. Medical advances help patients. Public and private commitment to research — the pursuit of new treatments and cures. Promise of research: Medicines in development.

Sound solutions to rising costs: Prevention-Intervention-Innovation. Ultimately, the power is within you! Become involved! Get Personal! Get Professional! Get Political!

June Meeting Helped Members

On another note, 22 members are now better informed shoppers having attended June's General meeting. Guest speaker Christine Lunde, RD spoke on "How to Read, Interpret and Understand Nutritional Food Labels."

Until next month, It's great to be alive and to help others!



Recent heart surgery patients and others who are considering membership in Mended Hearts Diablo Chapter 254:

We hope you enjoy reading our Chapter's The Ticker Talker newsletter. In it, you will find interesting articles about our members, heart related articles as well information about our monthly General meetings. Visitors are welcome to attend our meetings.

For those of you who have undergone a heart condition or procedure or know of a relative who has, we hope you seriously consider joining our organization, Mended Hearts, Inc. Mended Hearts, Inc. is affiliated with the American Heart Association.

VISITING HEART PATIENTS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK MENDEd HEARTS DOES. Visiting heart patients gives them hope, and holds out a helping hand. It is interesting and rewarding work. New visitors receive training, and visit with an experienced visitor to begin with. To find out more about becoming a visitor contact President Al Johnson.

Patients visited in June:

Total visits in the hospital - 26

New patients visited - 19

Second visits - 5

Family only - 2

Hospital visitors for June were Nancy Baker, Beverly Bortin, Tim Correia, Randy Finn, Al and Kim Johnson

Telephone visits in June - 16

Telephone visitors were Tim Correia, B.J. Boone, Wayne King

Johns Hopkins Health Alerts: Nutrition and Weight Control

FINDING YOUR BEST DIET

The limited research on popular weight-loss plans drives home two messages: (1) weight loss is hard, and (2) finding the optimal diet for you as an individual is the only way to succeed.



Here is some common-sense advice on how to choose a diet that suits you.

Long-term weight control is based on changing your eating patterns (and your physical activity habits) for a lifetime. Anyone can go on a diet for a couple of weeks, or even a couple of

months, but those who lose weight and keep it off adopt a diet plan they can sustain (with some calorie adjustments) for years. Here, then, are some tips on how to choose a diet that suits you:

■Diet Tip 1 -- Do a self-assessment.

Most overweight people eat out of habit and in response to emotions rather than because they're hungry. To learn what leads you to overeat, observe your usual diet for a week: Keep track of what you eat, when and where you eat, who you're with when you eat, and how you're feeling when you eat. Also make note of your portion

sizes (many overweight people eat larger portions and more calories than they think).

This process will give you an idea of your trouble spots and help you decide what diet plan will work best for you. For example, if your portion sizes are too large, you might find that a diet program that provides prepackaged or prepared meals, because you won't need to make decisions about portion size.

If you are an emotional eater, a diet plan that offers counseling or support groups might be best for helping you cope with the emotional issues that are driving you to overeat.

■Diet Tip 2 – Find a diet that fits your personality and lifestyle.

You might be the type of person who is most comfortable with a diet that provides daily menus and recipes -- or you might prefer a plan that offers lists of foods from which you can pick and

choose (or even provides prepackaged foods). You might require a diet plan that addresses some of your health concerns -- the need to lower your sodium, cholesterol, or fat intake -- or allows you to eat meals away from home because you travel a lot.

■Diet Tip 3 -- Choose a diet that is well balanced.

Trendy diets such as the Atkins plan may produce quick weight loss, but they don't offer the full complement of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients your body needs to stay healthy -- and they typically lead to weight regain when you go off the diet. These diets are also hard to stay on for the long term because they strictly limit the types of foods you can eat. The best strategy is to go on a calorie-controlled diet plan that includes all of the food groups and doesn't deprive you of your favorite foods.

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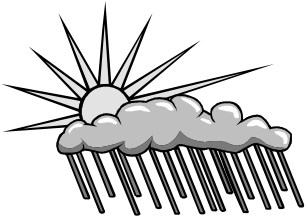
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■ The General Meeting of the Chapter usually takes place 10 times a year, on the 4th Saturday of the month, at 1:30 P.M., subject to change.

■ The Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 1:00 P.M. in the Lilac Building, on Main Street in Walnut Creek, one block south of Kaiser Hospital.

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE.



There are so many vacations coming up in August, the Board decided to give everyone a month off, so there will be **NO GENERAL MEETING IN AUGUST.**

Watch for the announcement of our outdoor social event in September to start the fall programs. Last year instead of a picnic, we had a very successful barbeque.

Sunshine

by Nancy Baker, Sunshine chair

Beverly Schulack was in the hospital for a few days, but she is home now. She says Herman is doing just fine.

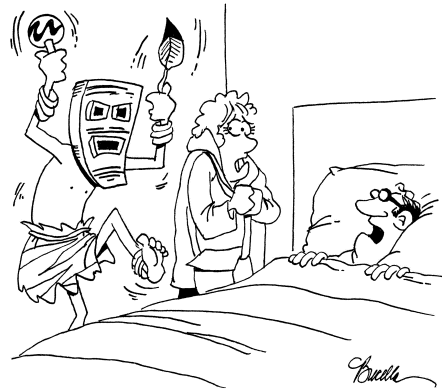
Marjorie Kerry still is still unable to attend the General meetings. We miss seeing her at our meetings. I said I would go visit and challenge her to a game of double solitaire. Is there anyone who wants to make it triple solitaire? She would love to have visitors.

Bob Tharratt. Bob and his wife, Jean, were scheduled for a Mended Hearts training session with me so they can start visiting heart patients. Bob became ill and had to go to the hospital. However, he is back home and doing better.

No Sunshine Report in August, I am taking a month off. - Nancy

VACATIONS

BJ Boone did a great job chairing the June meeting, while Prexy **Al Johnson and Kim** were off on a cruise to Alaska. Newsletter editor **Beverly Bortin** was also cruising on the Dnieper River and the Black Sea. **Marv Weaver** has also been vacationing, but we don't know where he went.



"The jury's still out on it's effectiveness, but it is covered by insurance."