

SWEDISHAMERICAN CENTER
FOR COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am writing to share my enthusiasm for the Coronary Health Improvement Project (CHIP), a program that teaches people to make simple lifestyle changes to prevent and reverse common medical problems. As founder and medical director of the SwedishAmerican Center for Complementary Medicine, I have worked to bring to our community the CHIP, the Ornish Program for Reversing Heart Disease, and Complementary Alternative/Integrative Medicine.

During 25 years in gastroenterology practice, I have heard, read and said that the patient with GERD or Hyperlipidemia should *begin therapy with lifestyle changes* and when that was not enough, add medical treatment with Prilosec or Lipitor. However, for most people that recommendation from doctors, medical books, journals, and the PDR gets translated into “*watch your diet, lose weight, and get more exercise*” without providing an effective plan to help them really learn and practice lifestyle changes. Years of interest in prevention and health promotion have left me searching for effective programs to precede and supplement medical treatments.

Some seven years ago, I represented SwedishAmerican Health System as a member of the founding board of directors that established the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO). As chairman of the medical advisory committee of HERO, I have shared the board’s growing interest in the relationship between health and productivity. We are searching for effective methods and programs to demonstrate to workers, providers and payers how to lower health risk, reverse disease, and achieve optimum health at lower cost. I now believe CHIP is such a program.

Since the opening of the Center for Complementary Medicine four years ago, we have had over 12,400 people participate in one of our programs. The CHIP program alone has attendance exceeding 4,000 with individuals, corporations, and insurance companies recognizing the benefits of this lifestyle medicine education. CHIP graduates are helping change restaurant menus, grocery store shelves, and worksite lunches. People are learning the power of selfcare and finding their path to health. We are all learning that good health is good business.

Roger J. Greenlaw MD

Roger L. Greenlaw, MD, Medical Director
SwedishAmerican Center for Complementary Medicine
President, Rockford Gastroenterology Associates
Clinical Professor of Medicine
University of Illinois College of Medicine-Rockford

4230 Newburg Road, Rockford, Illinois 61108 • Phone (815) 484-8710 • Fax 484-8719
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