

Good
Solid
Journalism!

HEARTWATCH
needs new 1st
page

WAKE UP, DuPAGE! WAKE UP, AMERICA!

Better
headline?

good
engaging
intro.

Nancy Rogers, RN, studied the woman sitting in front of her carefully—not just the personal and medical history gathered during her visit, but the skin, eyes, voice and manner of the patient. Rogers, who lives in Lombard, is one of the counselors for Heart Watch, a national study designed to find and help people who are at risk for heart attacks. The woman, the first patient of the morning, was a likely and unsuspecting candidate for a stroke. Rogers' job was to keep it from happening.

Heart Watch is locally sponsored by Central DuPage Hospital, one of 70 medical facilities around the country participating in a 5-year study. It is the largest such study ever undertaken and was designed by William Roberts, M.D., editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Cardiology.

"The program centers on prevention," says Rogers. "We're homing in on the heart, but in doing that, we're helping the whole body. Some people already know their risks and can't seem to change. We help motivate them."

At the first session, Rogers gets her patient's numbers: weight and blood pressure, a laboratory technician does a finger stick to calculate glucose and cholesterol levels, then lifestyle is analyzed.

Medical science has established that the 10 major heart attack risk factors are: smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, being

overweight, being sedentary, family history, stress, age, being male, and having diabetes.

While age, sex and heredity can't be modified, the more important factors can be.

"We all know we should exercise and eat less fat," says Rogers. "But some people are still not listening. Heart disease remains the number one cause of death in the United States. Women think that's only true for men. They're wrong. Heart disease has been compared to three jumbo jets crashing every day with no survivors."

*Great
quote.*

Public outcry resulting from such disasters would be overwhelming. Yet many people are unconvinced or apathetic about their personal crash. "If they don't care about that, it's time to think about what it costs to be sick," says Rogers. "How long can individuals or the nation afford it?"

Study stations rotate between the Danada Wellness Center in Wheaton, Sherman Oaks in Naperville and Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield. Depending on the number of appointments, the team may consist of 5 to 12 personnel, including nurses, counselors and lab technicians. They may stay up to 6 hours and serve from 20 to 125 people.

In the course of gathering patient data, Rogers has had some dramatic episodes take place: "One man's blood pressure was 170 over 110. I had him rest fifteen minutes. Then he registered 180 over 120. We couldn't allow him to drive to a doctor. He was sent to a hospital immediately where a probable stroke or heart attack was headed off.

Now he has his numbers under control. He's doing very well."

In another case, Rogers discovered a woman with severe diabetes who did not realize what her problem was. Rogers' pleasure is obvious as she says, "She's mastering her illness and in control of her life."

Recently the teams have begun accomodating organizations on location--such as all the athletes of the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, and businesses such as Spraying Systems Co. of Wheaton, including their night shift.

Medical findings indicate that as you become an active participant in reducing, and in some cases, eliminating your risk of heart disease, you will become more productive and far more contented. If you already have some heart and vascular damage, it is possible to reverse its progress. You'll be given a card for recording your numbers and your personal gains and goals. You'll also be connected with educational and outreach programs to help you stop smoking and/or change your eating and exercise habits.

As an added incentive, the initial screening is free. Six month follow-ups are \$10 for the lab work.

If Nancy Rogers had her way, she'd blow reveille on a bugle to waken people to the facts.

Nia!

Once she's got your numbers, she's dedicated to improving them if they're out of line.

Said one enthusiastic client: "Getting my cholesterol and blood pressure down is a major accomplishment. Seeing Ms. Roger's smile at the results is a bonus."

To make an appointment or inquiries about Heart Watch call
260-2685.