

What is Heartbeats for Life?

Heartbeats for Life is a wellness support group in Rochester, New York. Each year, thousands suffer from heart-related incidents including heart attack and stroke. HFL is dedicated to reversing, reducing and preventing heart disease, related cardiovascular diseases, and risk factors for serious lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes and obesity.

HFL was founded in 1995 as the Ornish Support Group of Greater Rochester by heart patients looking for non-invasive approaches to their treatment.

The four key lifestyle factors are...

- ❖ **Healthy Diet** The Ornish Reversal Diet is plant-based with 10% of daily calories as fat. *The Spectrum* diet allows more choices depending on one's risk factors and goals.
- ❖ **Regular Exercise** Thirty minutes of moderate intensity exercise every day or one hour every other day is recommended. Walking, biking, yard work, or housework qualifies.
- ❖ **Stress Reduction** Daily practice of mind-body techniques such as: conscious breathing, yoga, meditation or visualization.
- ❖ **Opening Your Heart** This is the process of engaging in relationships and activities that promote intimacy, support and commitment that leads to joy.

Who are the members?

Members are predominantly heart patients, their families and friends. Several members are interested in *preventing* disease by changing to a healthy lifestyle.

I do not have heart disease, but I'm overweight and prediabetic.

Research shows that healthy behaviors may prevent or reverse diseases such as **hypertension, obesity, cancer** and **diabetes**, and may reduce the possibility of **dementia**.

Members report the following reasons for belonging to the group:

- Positive reinforcement
- Group support
- I'm alive today because of it
- Learn what to do and how to do it!
- Weight loss
- Lower cholesterol!
- No more surgery!
- Support my spouse

What does Heartbeats do?

HFL encourages you to start and helps you to stay motivated on your journey of healthy living. Activities promote a low-fat and vegetarian diet, combined with the key lifestyle habits of the heart disease reversal program designed by Dr. Dean Ornish.

Potluck dinners and presentations 2nd Monday of month, Sept–Jul. Free to members; \$4.00, for non-members.

No reservations required. Location: Monroe County Cornell Cooperative Extension, 249 Highland Avenue, Rochester, NY, near Highland Park.
6:30–7:30 p.m. - Potluck
7:30–8:45 p.m. - Presentation
Bring a low-fat, vegetarian dish to pass, place setting and beverage.

“Dinners out” are in December and April at restaurants that prepare meals using Ornish guidelines. Reservations and prepay required.

Small support groups

One-time, **one-on-one free consultation** with Dr. Robert F. Klein, HFL chair, to help you get the most out of HFL participation and resources.

E-mails with HFL program updates and links to related information.

What if I don't know how to cook this way? Can I still attend?

Yes! Many have been introduced to vegetarian, low fat cooking at our potlucks! Just bring fruit or a loaf of whole grain bread. Or just show up! **You are always welcome!**

I heard you use meditation in the program. Isn't that religious?

Our members come from diverse backgrounds and this is not a religious group. In the Ornish program, meditation is used for stress reduction. It's a way to focus your mind away from the stress of everyday life. Sit quietly; listen to a relaxation tape of waves on the beach, gentle music or other

delightful sounds. That's all it is, and it's very relaxing!

I also heard this program was too hard! Can I do it?

Any change in lifestyle can be hard to begin, but it's not too hard once you learn how. That's why we're here – to help you “get with the program!”

Surgery and heart disease are hard! Eating delicious food, listening to relaxation tapes, taking enjoyable walks, and meeting some nice new people – that's enjoyable!

Members report these benefits from the program:

- Meet new people
- See familiar folks!
- Share recipes
- Good food!
- Find others learning to follow the program
- Nice time!
- How to curb my eating
- How to order in restaurants
- How to prepare unfamiliar foods
- Medical information

How do I join?

It's easy! **Call our 24-hour voice mail at 585-234-7076** for program dates and locations. Leave a message if you'd like. For a brochure, leave your name, address and zip. A member of the *Heartbeats* steering committee will call back to answer any questions. Or check our website at:

www.heartbeats4life.org

Then come to a potluck dinner and program with no obligation to join! Really! Just come to see for yourself *Heartbeats for Life!* is about.

Dues are collected in September. \$25. Individual - \$35. Family. If you join mid-year, dues are prorated.

Our speakers have included:

Dr. Dean Ornish
Preventive Medicine Research Institute
www.ornishspectrum.com

Dr. T. Colin Campbell
Cornell University, *The China Study*
www.tcolincampbell.org

Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn
Cleveland Clinic Foundation
www.heartattackproof.com

Dr. Neal Barnard
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine www.pcrm.org
The Cancer Project
www.cancerproject.org
Download cookbook and watch videos

Dr. Geoffrey Williams
U of R Healthy Living Center
www.URMC.rochester.edu/CCH

Additional Resources
Dr. Mc Dougall's Health & Medical Center www.drmcDougall.com

Dr. Robert F. Klein, MD.
Co-founder ~ Chair
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for your health...

Since 1995...A wellness support group based on the work of Dr. Dean Ornish

- ♥ **Healthy Diet**
- ♥ **Regular Exercise**
- ♥ **Stress Reduction**
- ♥ **Opening Your Heart**

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