

**Title of Intervention:** Worcester Area Trial for Counseling in Hyperlipidemia (WATCH)

**Intervention Strategies:** Supportive Relationships, Group Education, Individual Education

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To decrease total and saturated fat intake, serum low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, and body weight

**Population:** Patients with hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol)

**Setting:** 12 health care facilities; health care facility-based

**Partners:** Health care providers, registered dietitians

**Intervention Description:**

- Supportive Relationships: Individuals were referred to registered dietitians for group and individual nutrition counseling. Spouses were encouraged to attend all sessions.
- Group Education: Two 2-hour group sessions occurred during the intervention. The sessions used the American Heart Association diet and were designed to 1) increase patients' awareness of the risk factors associated with coronary heart disease, 2) provide patients with nutrition knowledge to promote the lowering of blood cholesterol levels, 3) increase patients' confidence in their ability to make dietary changes, and 4) enhance patient's skills needed for long-term changes in eating patterns.
- Individual Education: Individuals were asked to attend one 45-minute individual session at the beginning of the intervention and one at the end. Individual sessions focused on nutrition education, practical skills for reducing intakes of total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol and dietary behavior change goals.

**Theory:** Health Behavior Theory, Social Learning Theory, Transtheoretical Model

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Health care providers, dietitians
- Training: Physician training for proper use of dietary assessment and counseling techniques
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Office space
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Chart resources, follow-up letters, education materials
- Evaluation: Dietary assessment, biological measures, scale

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
  - Dietary assessment of total and saturated fat levels
  - Serum low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels
  - Body weight

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: After one year, there were significant reductions in cholesterol, fat and body weight for participants attending 3 or 4 nutrition sessions compared to participants attending fewer than 3 sessions or those never referred to a nutrition session.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** Although the orientation of most dietitians is toward individual patient encounters, results indicate a potentially powerful role for group nutrition sessions in motivating and maintaining dietary changes.

**Citation(s):**

Hebert, J. R., C. B. Ebbeling, et al. (1999). "A dietitian-delivered group nutrition program leads to reductions in dietary fat, serum cholesterol, and body weight: the Worcester Area Trial for Counseling in Hyperlipidemia (WATCH)."