

# WEIGHT LOSS ADVICE

## DIETS:

- 1) **The DASH Diet:** The *Diet Approach to Stopping Hypertension*. It was written with reducing hypertension, and lowering cholesterol, in mind. It has recently been re-styled to help with weight loss. In some very large studies, it was found to lower high blood pressure, and lower cholesterol values, better than other diets.
- 2) **South Beach diet plan.** It was written by a cardiologist. A lot of the information is available on the Internet. The books can be easily understood by lay people.
- 3) **Weight Watchers.** You can either join a group, or do it over the Internet. It is very affordable. You eat your own food. You learn to shop, and prepare healthy foods.
- 4) **Nutrisystem.** It costs a little more than \$300 per month. It is very healthy, and very smart. I recommend joining Weight Watchers at the end of your use of Nutrisystems.
- 4) **Meal replacement plans.** Examples would be "**Smart for Life**", and others.
- 5) In our area, the ultimate meal replacement program is "**Solutions for Life**". Run by the medical school. Involves a lot of your time, and money.

## Weight loss medications:

- 1) **Xenical.** It causes steatorrhea (a foul-smelling, fat-filled diarrhea) if you eat fat while taking it.
- 2) **Precose.** It causes watery diarrhea if you eat carbohydrates while taking it.
- 3) **Meridia.** It has more black box warnings than just about any other drug I can remember. I do not use it.
- 4) **Fenfluramine.** It was pulled by the manufacturer. It was very effective when used with phentermine.
- 5) **Phentermine.** It was very effective when used with fenfluramine. It is much less effective when used by itself. I see no advantage to using it beyond 3 months. It may have some limited usefulness, if used together with an excellent diet program, for no more than 3 months. There is a recent **new drug combination**, which includes **phentermine and topiramate** (a drug most commonly used to prevent migraine headaches). It is so new, that I am not using it at this time. I remain curious about how effective, and how safe, it will be.