

## DOLLARS FOR DIETING

# Virginia doctor finds weight loss success for patients *he pays to lose weight*

**Hampton, VA** – Frustrated by his patients widening waistlines and the associated health risks a Virginia doctor has devised a new weight loss plan called "Dollar for Pound" with measurable success. Cardiovascular Endocrinologist, Joseph Chemplavil, M.D., pays his patients \$1 out of his own pocket for every pound they lose.

Dr. Chemplavil started the voluntary program in 2002 with 191 patients and was amazed to see 80 percent of those still participating after one year. On average participants lost 8.8 pounds, 10 lost at least 20 pounds and one 35 pounds. As if a cash incentive weren't enough, the winner also received a paid vacation for three days to Las Vegas. Keep in mind that the money again came out of Chemplavil's own pocket.

Currently, 130 patients are enrolled in Dr. Chemplavil's second one-year program. All that's required is a \$10 enrollment fee and their agreement to the following contract:

*"I, (Patient's name), hereby promise to myself and to Dr. Chemplavil, that I will make every effort to lose my weight and I will pay \$1 to Dr. Chemplavil's Dollar for Pound Fund, for every pound of weight that I gain, on each visit to the office, by cash. I also understand that I will receive \$1 from the same fund for each pound of weight that I lose. I will not hold Dr. Chemplavil responsible for any harm whatsoever arising out of this program."*

As an incentive, Dr. Chemplavil has added an additional offer of a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate to each patient who loses 10% of his or her body weight--in addition to the Las Vegas trip for the biggest loser. So far the results are encouraging, just halfway through the year, the second round of patients are already showing signs of surpassing the first group's results with 70 percent with an 8 pound average weight loss.

There doesn't seem to be one reason that explains why the program works. But Dr. Chemplavil says his rewards based plan proves that money, even token amounts, can inspire patients who have difficulty motivating themselves. It can be easily adapted with some creativity by any health care provider and without any significant financial burden.

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### **Media Coverage:**

Dr. Chemplavil's concept has gained national interest with recent coverage by NBC TV affiliate WAVY, CBS TV affiliate WTKR, AP News and articles in the American Medical News, Shape Magazine and USA Weekend Magazine.

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