



## Monarch Medical opens Albany weight loss center

*By Alex Paul  
Albany Democrat-Herald  
Dec. 10, 2007*

**F**or two decades, Dr. Richard Lindquist saw the effects of obesity on patients who arrived at hospital emergency rooms — heart attacks, high blood pressure and diabetes among them.

A year ago, Lindquist and six other emergency room physicians at McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center, decided it was time to take action. They formed the Medical Weight Loss Centers of Oregon, later renamed Monarch Medical Weight Loss Center.

An Albany office opened two months ago at 1970 14th Ave. There are now eight locations, from Eugene to Portland.

“Obesity is not just a problem in the United States, it is a worldwide problem,” Lindquist said. “It is an epidemic. There are one billion people worldwide who are overweight or obese. There are 800 million who are malnourished.”

A person who is less than 30 percent over medically accepted weight standards is considered overweight. They are obese if they weigh more than 30 percent more than standards. One in three American adults is considered obese — that’s 60 million people.

The founding doctors quickly realized they knew a lot about medicine and not much about business, so they brought in Bill Service and Bruce Davis, former executives with the Elmer’s Restaurant chain to guide them with their business and expansion plans.

The goal is to expand throughout the Pacific Northwest and then nationally, Lindquist said.

The doctors, Lindquist said, have studied bariatric medicine, which is the science of obesity. Weight loss, he added, is more than merely cutting calories and increasing exercise, although that process works for the short-term.

“People know how to lose weight, they just won’t do it on their own,” Lindquist said. “Our culture is telling us we’ve got a problem. We’ve been using the wrong tools. Medical science has a lot to offer today. There has been so much new knowledge about obesity in the last five years.”

Lindquist said Monarch’s program differs from others in that it is science-based.

Clients undergo an extensive physical and body mass index reading. The exam lasts about one hour. Then, the medical staff works out a calorie reduction program based on the individual’s needs. There is also an extensive educational program that teaches patients about the science of fat cell storage and use. Clients check back every week for a weigh-in and consultation.

Clients may utilize a variety of programs including:

- The Very Low Calorie Diet, which restricts calorie intake to less than 800 calories per day. This is for obese clients who need rapid weight loss.
- The JumpStart program which utilizes protein-fortified foods supplemented with grocery store foods. Clients eat several small meals per day, which balances out the body’s fat storage and usage cycles.
- New Beginnings which utilizes healthy grocery store food items along with protein-fortified foods.
- Monarch Maintenance which is for clients who have met their weight loss goals and now want a customized nutrition prescription for weight maintenance. This focuses on education, nutrition, behavior modification and exercise.

“Women typically will lose 1 to 3 pounds per week and men 2 to 4 pounds per week on our programs,” Lindquist said. “Our typical patient is a woman in her 40s who has gained weight gradually over the years and is now 25 to 40 pounds overweight. About 85 percent of our patients are women and 15 percent are men.”

The initial physical and body mass exam costs \$175. There is a \$99 monthly fee and the cost of food is about \$10 to \$15 per day, Lindquist said. Most insurance companies will not pay for the service, which confuses Lindquist, who said weight loss is a major preventive step since obesity leads to numerous health disorders.

For office hours, call 397-6393 or visit [www.monarchmedical.net](http://www.monarchmedical.net).