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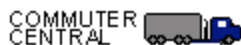
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Front Page

Practice Grows in Healthy Weighs

By: Scott Benjamin , Staff Reporter

02/23/2001



Registered dietitian Julie Conner

Julie Conner's nutritional practice and food store has blossomed.

Mrs. Conner, a registered dietitian, moved into a former real estate office three years ago. Her business now occupies all of the 1,000-square-foot storefront.

She sees more patients - 100 a week - at the former Marie White Real Estate office at 366 Federal Road and no longer has time for consulting or seeing patients at the offices she used to have in New York state.

"The complexity of my patient base also has been more acute," she explained. "I'm get many more referrals from

physicians.

"Plus this office has a homey atmosphere," Mrs. Conner said. "I think the patients don't feel threatened."

When Mrs. Conner opened, part of the space was occupied by a psychologist and personal trainer.

She said she needed the space for her own practice as it continued to grow. "I do behavior management, behavior modification," said Mrs. Conner, who was previously located at the Towne Center shopping plaza at 777 Federal Road. "I try to help patients alter their lifestyles."

Audrey Petshek of Newtown said she has gone from 267 to 195 pounds since her first visit with Mrs. Conner last March.

"I had considered having my stomach stapled before I happened to pass her storefront," she said. "I had done every diet in the book."

Mrs. Conner, she said, "reads every patient perfectly."

Another patient, Olive Freeman of New Milford, said Mrs. Conner helped her with her overeating.

"I was inclined to be tense, and I wasn't sleeping well," she said. "Julie changed my behavior."

Ms. Freeman has lost 30 pounds since her first visit a year ago this month.

Mrs. Conner, who lives in Brookfield, said some patients are angry or frustrated over their failure to gain wait and believe they have no control over the problem.

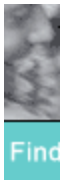
"I try to become a support system," she said.

Mrs. Conner and her husband, William, have three children - Billy, 14; Brian, 12; and Kristi, 9 - all of whom attend St. Joseph School in Brookfield.

She said she tries to give one public talk a month on nutrition at schools or civic organizations.

Mrs. Conner, who has office hours six days a week, sells a wide variety of nutritional foods in the store that is also located at her office.

"It used to be that I went to ShopRite or Stew Leonard's to help patients pick out




the foods that they need," she said. "Now we have the sodium- and fat-restricted foods right here at our site."

Charlsie Tirri, a Brookfield High School (BHS) graduate now majoring in biology at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, and Stephanie Rascona, a junior at BHS, work as dietitian assistants.

Michelle Vane, a former Brookfield resident who now lives in New Milford, is the office manager.

Mrs. Conner said, "I learn a lot from them. I like having people in the office who can add their insights."

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