



## **10th Conference on Health Care of the Chinese in North America**

### **Heart Disease Self Management and Exercise Program in Chinese**

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In San Francisco, Asians comprise 30% of the population most of whom are of Chinese ancestry. Among this population, heart disease is the leading cause of illness and death. Heart disease can cause people to lose physical condition and can cause emotional distress such as frustration and helplessness. There is available to the English speaking community many resources and self help information to assist in one's coping and healing process. Language and cultural barriers prevent monolingual Chinese people from accessing these resources.

In 1998, a Heart Disease Self-Management Program and in 1999, an Exercise for a Healthy Life Program were piloted in the Chinese community. The self-management program enabled Chinese speaking people with heart disease to learn self-management skills and to take active role in the daily care of their disease. People in the six weeks program demonstrated increased healthful behavior, improved health status and felt more control over their lives in spite of their disease. The Exercise for a Healthy Life Program was very well attended also. Eastern and western flexibility and strengthening exercises were taught in the program. In response to the needs and requests from the community, these programs are being offered again in year 2000 for Chinese speaking people with chronic illnesses.

In the presentation, we will discuss the development, the outcomes and the benefits of these two culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate programs.