

Carol T. is a recovered woman. The 250 pound stay-at-home mom scoops out a mound of lettuce and veggies for herself and a guest while reporting her recent weight loss. A compulsive eater and unsuccessful dieter for over 10 years, Carol credits being 35 pounds lighter to her participation in a radical eating disorder program last fall.

Compulsive eaters, bulemics, and anorexics alike are getting a grip on their obsession with food in a most unconventional way: with meditation, "therapeutic" meals, group therapy with drug and alcohol recovery patients, and sexual survivor groups. Where do you go for such a mixed-bag of therapies? A trendy spa in southern California or an exclusive Manhattan clinic? Nope, it's in conservative Rochester, New York, at Strong Memorial Hospital.

Participation in the nine week program amounts to a part time job for patients who attend five hours a day, five days a week. Clinical nurse specialist Linda Barnett, who is a psycho-therapist in the program, says "we're one of the first [in the area] to be run this way." Once they've passed the screening process, employed patients will qualify for a medical leave and may have the cost of the \$200. a day program covered by their health insurance. Medicaid picks up the tab for eligible patients without means.

Before being admitted to the program, the patient has a general physical and a battery of tests performed, ranging from an electrocardiogram to a complete blood count, to insure their medical stability. Prospective patients also have to fill out a detailed four page "intake" form that covers every aspect of their eating problem.

For *restricters* (anorexics) just reporting their weight is especially revealing.