

Children's Health

A Fun Way To Thwart Childhood Obesity

(NAPSA)—The latest research suggests that overweight children need more than one or two doctor's visits to lose weight.

"What they really require are family-based behavioral lifestyle intervention programs," says Teresa Quattrin, M.D., of the Women's and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, New York.

Quattrin and colleagues studied the medical histories of obese children and reported their findings in the February 2005 edition of *Pediatrics*. They found that less than one in 100 lost enough weight to no longer be considered obese.

For both short- and long-term success, the scientists concluded it is essential to teach the entire family good eating and exercise habits. Asking children to change their eating habits without asking their parents is very hard on kids—and doomed to fail.

Family lifestyle retraining programs have yielded remarkable results. For example, at the annual American Heart Association conference on cardiovascular disease, UCLA scientists reported that children in the Pritikin Family program received the following results based on a two week evaluation:

- LDL "bad" cholesterol levels fell by 34 percent
- Triglycerides (blood fats) fell 42 percent
- Weight loss averaged 10 pounds
- Insulin levels decreased 32 percent
- Systolic blood pressure fell from an average 122 to 114, reducing prehypertension to normal levels.

"It shows that programs like Pritikin could help protect chil-



A science-based solution to childhood obesity laced with fun at the Pritikin Longevity Center.

dren from diseases like type 2 diabetes, which kids nationwide are now suffering from in record numbers," said Dr. James Barnard, a UCLA researcher.

And, says Barnard, children don't need to lose a lot of weight before reaping remarkable rewards for their hearts.

At the Pritikin summer program, a fun-filled camp-like atmosphere engages children, ages 9 to 15, in lively, noncompetitive fitness games; shows them how to cook tasty meals and snacks; and offers kid-friendly workshops. This year's program at the wellness resort will welcome actor/comedian Jeff Garlin and his nine-year-old son as guests. Garlin produces "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

Parents attend workshops to learn how to motivate kids to make healthy choices—including meal planning with kids, handling picky eaters, fitting fitness fun into everyday family life and being a good role model.

For more information, visit www.pritikin.com or call (800) 327-4914.