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P R E S S R E L E A S E

For Immediate Release

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Dinner-Lecture for Medical & Science Community

The Development of Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN): From Bench to Bedside, a fascinating and frequently unheard story about one of the revolutions in medicine and surgery that has saved hundreds of thousands of lives, was the topic of the presentation made at the Foundation for Community Health's Medical Education Event on May 6th at the Wake Robin Inn in Lakeville, CT.

In the 1960's, we were in the midst of major changes in surgical techniques, the development of new procedures and anesthetic improvements. Advances were remarkable and medicine began doing things we never dreamed possible. We also had the recent development and use of antibiotics to treat infectious complications. But there was still one big problem...malnutrition. Nutrition for the medical and surgical patient that was seriously ill was a critical issue.

For surgical patients who were already borderline malnourished and who might have a prolonged post op recovery period and be unable to eat, this could be a very serious and sometimes life threatening problem. Contrary to popular belief, IV sugar water does not provide adequate nutrition. It was also a problem for the healthy person who had to go long periods without nutrition. For infants who were born with major intestinal problems or who required early abdominal surgery, it was frequently fatal.

A Connecticut physician, Dr. Stanley J. Dudrick, was one of the pioneers who recognized the significance of this issue and who struggled looking for possible solutions. He and his colleagues developed the beginning of what we now know as TPN or Total Parenteral Nutrition. TPN is so commonly accepted today that it almost goes unnoticed. TPN is now used not only for surgical patients, but also for medical patients with severe chronic conditions and in cancer treatment. Today, a doctor can order IV nutrition from a pharmacy that will adequately nourish patients for weeks and months.

Dr. Dudrick himself, now Chairman Emeritus & Program Director Emeritus at the Department of Surgery at St. Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, CT and Professor of Surgery at Yale University School of Medicine, told the story about the development of TPN to a roomful of medical, science and academic professionals at the May 6th presentation for the Foundation.

Events such as this are presented by the Foundation for Community Health in an effort to provide access to current and relevant information to its community. Previous medical education presentations included topics such as tick borne diseases, an evidence-based approach to obesity, and the new frontier of immunologic based medical therapeutics. The Foundation is dedicated to improving the health of the people living in its service area through funding, advocacy, outreach and collaboration.