

About Adventist Health System – A Legacy of Healing

THE CREATION HEALTH MODEL is the core of the Seventh-Day Adventist understanding of health and healing. It is also the foundation of the Adventist Health System. These eight principles have been practiced by hundreds of thousands of people over the last century and have resulted in national studies concluding that following these principles brings about a significant reduction in the risk of lifestyle diseases such as cancer, stroke, and heart disease. By following the CREATION Health principles, Adventists have become known as the healthiest people in the world.

The story behind this remarkable journey begins in 1863 when James White, then president of the young Seventh-Day Adventist church, suffered a series of mini-strokes that made it impossible for him to serve in his leadership role. Rather than accept the normal treatments of the day, James and his wife, Ellen, chose to search Scripture for a biblical model of health. They found it in the Genesis story of creation. As they examined God's original design for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, James and Ellen discovered God's principles of whole person health.

After eighteen short months of carefully following the CREATION Health model, James White was back to good health and, along with his wife, was sharing these principles at every opportunity. In 1866 several key members of the church's executive committee were so ill that they could not meet. The members who could attend the meeting, chose to make health the number one item on their agenda. That day the church leaders made a commitment to build "sanitariums" that would combine the best of science with the best of faith, and treat patients with the compassion that Christ showed during his healing ministry. This combination of science and faith wrapped in compassion is the foundation for the healing ministry of the Adventist System.

Six months later, the church opened the Western Health Reform Institute (later renamed Battle Creek Sanitarium) in Battle Creek, Michigan. It proved to be a remarkably successful enterprise. At the height of its popularity, the Battle Creek Sanitarium was the health destination for America. It accommodated 1,500 patients and attracted the best-known people of the day. Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, J.C. Penney, Clara Barton, George Bernard Shaw, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Dale Carnegie and Amelia Earhart are all listed on the patient rosters. They, and hundreds of others, came to Battle Creek to recuperate from the stress and intemperance of their busy lives.

One of the sanitarium's biggest attractions was its charismatic medical director, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. Dr. Kellogg was a skillful physician, an advocate of a healthy vegetarian diet, and a proponent of God's principles of Whole Person Health. It was at Battle Creek that Kellogg and his brother, W.K. Kellogg, developed corn flakes as an alternative to a high-fat biscuit-gravy-bacon-and-egg breakfasts that most Americans were eating. Dr. Kellogg traveled the world speaking on the benefits of healthful living, and searching for better approaches to healing. Dr. Kellogg studied surgery under some of the world's leading physicians, and as anesthesia was perfected for use in surgery, he brought this new science to Battle Creek.

The success of the healthcare at Battle Creek led the Seventh-day Adventist leaders to develop additional medical facilities. In the next 20 years the church opened 40 facilities, including hospitals and medical schools, around the world. The success of those facilities and health focus of thousands of physicians, dentists, nurses, and other caregivers can easily be attributed to Dr. Kellogg's fundamental commitment to the CREATION Health model of health and healing.

Today, with more than 500 hospitals, clinics, and healthcare centers around the world, the healthcare ministry of the Seventh-Day Adventist church continues to infuse the CREATION health concepts with the best of science and medical technology. For us, Jesus Christ is the *master physician* who guides all that we do. In the tradition of Dr. Kellogg, we believe that whole person healing requires a combination of science and faith wrapped in compassion.

Adventist Health System is one portion of the Seventh-Day Adventist healthcare system around the world. To learn more about our hospitals, rehab centers, assisted living centers, nursing homes, and community health programs, all operated within the life-transforming message of CREATION Health, please visit the website www.CreationHealth.com.