

## Eyes called window to health

### Woman says exam is able to reveal maladies

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Staff writer

(September 7, 2007) — The notion of examining people's eyes to determine their health might sound a bit far-fetched.

But Carla Buscaglia said the alternative medicine technique saved her life eight years ago. She has since built a Rochester business called Global Nutrition around the practice of iridology and nutrition.

Iridology, the technique of examining eyes, is based on the belief that the pattern, color and other characteristics of the iris can reveal physical weaknesses in the body. Iridologists follow an eye chart that details which sections of the eye correlate to various parts of the body.

"I know it sounds hocus-pocus, but it works," said Buscaglia, who suffered from fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue and ulcers.

The doctors she went to prescribed a regimen of medications that Buscaglia said she didn't want to deal with.

"When I was sick, I didn't have options like this (iridology)," she said.

Her search eventually led her to a practitioner in Pennsylvania whose treatment was based on iridology and natural and herbal supplement remedies.

Within six months, Buscaglia said, she felt noticeably better, which prompted her to go back to school to get training and certification in iridology and nutrition. The negative effects caused by her condition had nearly reversed after two years of treatment, she said.

"I'm 43 years old, and I'm in better shape than what I was in my 20s," said Buscaglia.

Iridology is predominantly studied at private institutions and is not taught in conventional or naturopathic medical schools. The practice is not regulated by the state of New York.

Buscaglia identifies herself as an iridologist and nutritionist but does not claim to be certified by the state.

"Only a person who meets the certification requirements laid out in state law may use the title 'certified dietician' or 'certified nutritionist,'" said Jonathan Burman, a spokesman for the state Education Department.

Certification is not required to perform nutritional counseling in New York, but only individuals certified by the Education Department can use the full title.

There are fewer than 15 nutritionists and dieticians listed in the telephone book for Rochester and none for the practice of iridology, which has received a fair amount of criticism from mainstream medical practitioners.



enlarge 

SHAWN DOWD staff photographer  
Carla Buscaglia, owner of Global Nutrition, left, meets with client Mary Testa of Hamlin. Based on what she sees in a patient's eyes, Buscaglia develops a diet she believes will help the patient manage an illness.

[Day in Photos](#)

Buscaglia isn't allowed to give a formal diagnosis, but based on what she sees in a patient's eyes through her retinoscope, she comes up with a diet she believes will help the patient cope with the ailment.

Mary Testa, 47, of Hamlin said she can better manage her health because of the custom diet that Buscaglia prescribed for her fatigue and digestive issues.

"If you feel sick enough and you feel like you're not being empowered enough to take your health into your own hands, Carla is the perfect person to go to," Testa said.

"Based on the food I eat, I know how I'm going to feel the next day, and I never knew that before."

Carol Bowman, 52, of Chili said she became a believer after Buscaglia treated her daughter for digestive problems that Bowman said doctors could not resolve without prescribing multiple medications.

"She's right on. I can go to Carla and then go to my physician, and they'll tell me the same thing, and that's the scary part," said Bowman, who goes to Global Nutrition for weight-loss treatment and diabetes problems.

"A lot of people think you leave mainstream medicine and you have to go to alternative medication, but sometimes you need both," said Buscaglia, whose specialty is weight loss, hormone imbalances and digestive disturbances.

She markets her services as a complement to mainstream medicine. In the seven years her business has been operating, Buscaglia said her client base has grown to more than 1,000 clients. Her services cost \$110 for the first visit and \$55 for subsequent visits.

Some clients are able to save money by applying her services to their flexible spending accounts, although her services are not covered by conventional insurance.

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