

Look At Me Now:

MOVE![®] HELPS VETERAN BILLY WILLIAMS ADD YEARS TO HIS LIFE BY LOSING 90 POUNDS

When Billy Williams failed a physical about 4 years ago because of uncontrolled hypertension and was warned about the possibility of an early death from obesity, his motivation to lose weight became very simple: *staying alive*. At the suggestion of his VA provider, he started the MOVE![®]



Program at the Amarillo (Texas) VAMC in October 2011. Now, weighing over 90 pounds less, Billy says that he could write a book on the benefits of making small lifestyle changes.

He attributes much of his successful weight loss to learning how to count calories, especially liquid calories. “Before each MOVE![®] class, I used to drink a gallon of sweet tea, and I’d also have one or two sodas throughout the day,” Billy says. “I estimated that I was consuming about 700 liquid calories per day...and I knew it had to stop.” It was just one of several lifestyle and eating habits he had to address and change. “When I learned about the caloric values of some of my favorite snack foods, I knew I had to limit those, too, as well as the fried foods I was used to eating,” he explains.

Billy attended twelve weekly classes of MOVE![®] and now continues to attend a monthly class. That, along with a 30-minute daily walk and the support of his family, has resulted in big benefits for him. “I’ve lost 90 pounds over the past 8 months, and my pants size has decreased from a 48 to 38,” he says. “My weight loss graph shows a consistent loss during that time...and I’m still losing weight!”

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At his last medical appointment, Billy’s doctor congratulated him on his new-found health. “My triglycerides have decreased and I’ve been able to stop taking one of my blood pressure medications. My doctor said that I’ve added about 5 years to my life,” he says, sporting an ear-to-ear smile that shows his pride in achieving his goals. “I want everyone to look at me now,” he explains, “because I feel and look good!”

Looking back, Billy did not realize that he would end up as the “poster boy” for the Amarillo VAMC’s MOVE![®] Program. Now, 8 months later, he has a simple message for all Veterans who want to lose weight and get healthier: “You can do it, too!”