



Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

“A Totally Different Way of Losing Weight”

NAVY VETERAN RAYMOND RYS EXPLAINS HOW MOVE!® HELPED HIM DEVELOP THE FOOD AWARENESS AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE TO LOSE 100 POUNDS

Although frustrated by his up-and-down weight since leaving the military in 1960, Raymond Rys didn't do MOVE! at first because he thought it was just an “exercise program.” But suffering and dying from diabetes—as he'd seen a close friend and family member do—just wasn't for him. He joined the program, and 3 years later, is nearing his healthy weight goal with a new mindset on food and exercise.



How long did you struggle with your weight, and what motivated you to change?

“I struggled since leaving the U.S. Navy in 1960. I had a good experience losing weight in the 1990s with a VA nutritionist, but I later gained it all back in no time. After that, my weight continued to yo-yo until 2011.

I saw the effects of diabetes firsthand. A close personal friend went blind and died from the disease, and my aunt lost her legs and laid in a nursing home for 5 years before passing away. When I'd bring my mother to see my aunt every weekday, I'd think to myself, “that's not for me.”

How did you find out about the program?

“Dr. Cutler at VA Central Western Massachusetts HCS told me about it. At first, I didn't go because I thought it was an ‘exercise program.’”

What about MOVE! has worked for you?

“It's been a totally different way of losing weight. It worked well because it's not a diet, but rather, a change in lifestyle that combines food awareness and physical activity. The frequent handouts and discussions about the good and bad of everything really helped, too.”

Who helped you reach your health and weight loss goals?

“All of the MOVE! team at the Springfield (MA) CBOC helped me, mainly through periodic reminders of how well I was doing.”

How is your life different after MOVE!?

“I feel much better than ever now, and I'm more active than ever before. I've stopped taking diabetes medication, and halved my heart medications several times. I don't use a CPAP machine for sleeping anymore.

Now, I walk, swim, and pump iron. I've modified my eating so that I don't have my favorites as often and eat much less of them. I really don't have to think about being active now—it's just in my system. If I have time on my hands, I just go for a walk or swim.”

“**Now, I walk, swim, and pump iron... I feel much better than ever...**”

– **Raymond Rys**

How much weight did you lose with the program?

“I started MOVE! in November 2012, weighing over 291 pounds. I've been participating for 3 years, and I've lost 100 pounds. I've not yet reached my goal of 180 pounds—I still may lower it to 170.

My shirts have gone from 4- or 5-XL down to XL or L. My waist has gone from 58 inches down to 42. I'm now shopping for clothes at the local mall instead of on the Internet, with great results.”

What would you like other Veterans to know about MOVE!?

“The program works! My best advice is to set a goal, write it down, start walking, and keep a daily food log that your nutritionist can review with you. If you really want to reach the weight goal you set, you will attain it!”

