



Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

A longer life, a healthier me, an accomplishment I will always be proud of...

AFTER YEARS OF STRUGGLING WITH HIS WEIGHT, RALPH GOCHENOUR MADE UP HIS MIND AND MADE A COMMITMENT TO HIMSELF AND HIS WIFE THAT HE WAS DETERMINED TO KEEP.

Ralph demonstrates that even in the face of significant challenges and obstacles, hard work, commitment and consistent support can lead to success and improved health!



Why did you choose to do MOVE!?

“My wife Helen and I talked it over, because we talk everything over, and decided that this was the one way that we could have a long and healthier life together. So, I started the MOVE! Program and began to learn how to be a healthier me. I brought my wife to all the groups with me for support and would not have been able to succeed without her.”

Have you always struggled with your weight?

“My challenges with weight started when I was a little boy. At high school graduation, I weighed 242 pounds. Before entering the service I lost 27 pounds to meet the weight requirement. By age 70, I was tired of being fat. My legs were swollen, my diabetes was getting harder to control and I was taking over 84 units of insulin and 3 shots a day. I had to retire from my work as a contractor at the age of 62 due to my poor health and not being able to get up and down ladders. My legs would swell so much that my wife had to wrap them. It was time to do something. I had promised my bride when we got married that I would lose weight and I wanted to keep that promise.”

“**If you have the mental attitude to do it, you just should do it! Making the changes will help you to live longer and enjoy life even more. It’s an accomplishment that you will always be proud of!**”

– Ralph Gochenour

What happened when you started MOVE!?

“In March of 2012, having reached a weight of almost 335 pounds, I talked to my VA healthcare team and started MOVE!. My first MOVE! group helped me lose the first 40 pounds by understanding the importance of portion control, but I struggled to keep the weight off, so I asked to be considered for bariatric surgery.”

Who helped you reach your goals?

“I couldn’t have done this without the MOVE! Program and my wife! It helps when friends notice the changes, they kept me going. Because I had bariatric surgery, the surgery center was also very supportive. MOVE! has given me more motivation. I exercise about 1 ½ hours every day. Even with my neuropathy, I walk 20-25 minutes twice a day. I have a recumbent bike which helps my back and is a good cardio workout.”

What have you accomplished through MOVE!?

“As of today, 4 ½ years after starting MOVE!, I weigh 187 pounds. My waist size went from 54” to 38” and my jacket size decreased from 54 to 48. I no longer take any medication for my diabetes and my HgbA1c remains in non-diabetic range. We continue to cut back on all of my medications including my CPAP. My wife and I are looking forward to many healthy years ahead of us full of traveling and enjoying each other!”