

## Picture Of Health:

### VETERAN DON HEDLUND FINDS THE TIME TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF WITH MOVE!<sup>®</sup>

“I had just retired and in December 2011, I went in for a physical at the Iowa City VAMC. I was already pre-diabetic, but found that my A1c had jumped from 6.4 to 7.5. My doctor put me on something to control it, but I didn’t want to take more medications because I was already on metformin and a drug for high blood pressure. However, I also didn’t want to ignore my diabetes like two of my friends had—one was now on dialysis and other had lost a leg.

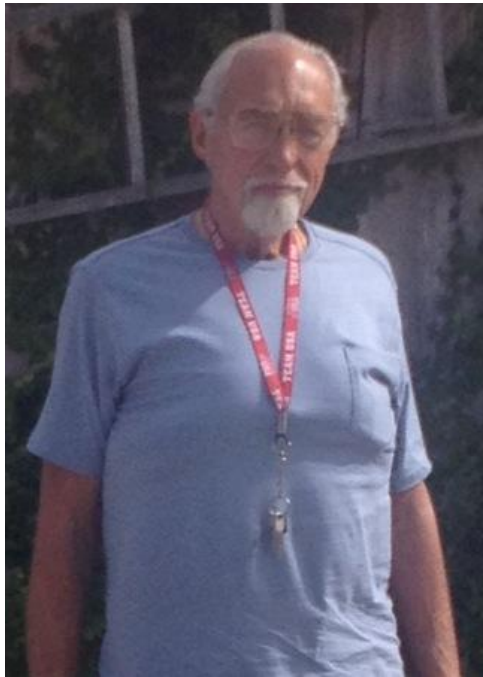


My doctor had been trying to get me into MOVE!<sup>®</sup> for 4 or 5 years, but I thought it just wouldn’t work. I finally decided to do it, and went to my first class in Jan 2012. I was fortunate to meet someone who shared his story with the class. He told me that portion control was the most important thing to do. He said, ‘get rid of the big plate, eat slower, and worry about the other factors later.’ That made sense to me, so that’s what I did. And I started losing weight!

I have to applaud the MOVE!<sup>®</sup> program—the information and tools presented have been really helpful and are now so beneficial to me. I had no idea about things like reading food labels, but now I do it. I began eating more fresh fruits and veggies, and then it was all about substitution—choosing grilled chicken, for example, instead of a burger, or using mustard on a baked potato instead of butter and sour cream.

Logging my food made sense after I got into it, and now I do it religiously. I can look back to all my meals and see what I’ve eaten. I eat 6 times a day—breakfast around 7 a.m., a snack about 10 a.m., a meal at noon, a snack at 2 p.m., dinner around 5 p.m., and an evening snack later. With this schedule, I never get hungry and that’s good for me!

After I had lost some weight with MOVE!®, I started to exercise. I got on an old stationary bike one day and I rode for only 5 minutes before I was exhausted. But I kept at it, doing 5 minutes here, 10 minutes there, and now I can go for 90 minutes! Lately, I've learned to increase my intensity during exercise instead of riding longer. I do it 30 minutes at a time, every day, and often watch the news while riding.



Now if I don't exercise, I feel sluggish. I typically get up and get my physical activity done first thing, so I then have the rest of the day. I rarely miss getting my daily physical activity—even when I'm away on vacation, I try to get about 10,000 steps per day. When it rains, I go to a store and walk.

I've gotten a lot of help from people in the MOVE!® class—we share ideas and bounce things off of one another. My wife also has been very supportive, and has lost about 14 pounds with me. She makes sure I'm on track eating balanced meals. MOVE!® Coordinator Krista Kazembe has been great, too!

The combination of portion control, food logging, and exercise has worked for me and the weight just keeps coming off. I was 386 pounds when I started MOVE!® and now, at 70 years old, I weigh 213 pounds! I've gone from a size 60 to a size 36, and I'm wearing a large instead of a 4XL shirt. I've even dropped to a smaller shoe size! My A1C is now 4.3, and I'm no longer on metformin or blood pressure medications. My first goal was to get below 300 pounds; now I'm working to get below 200.

Because I was motivated by reading MOVE!® Veterans' success stories online, I hope I can inspire others to get healthier, too. Those stories really motivated me to get the weight off. Once I started to see their pictures, I knew I could do it, too! My local TV station interviewed me for a story on Telehealth, which was cool.

I often hear people say that they don't have time to get healthier. But while you can find all kinds of excuses to not do something, there is always time to take care of yourself. Believe me—if I can do it, anybody can!"