



# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

## *It's the Climb!*

***MARINE VETERAN DAVID NEVAREZ GOT BACK ON HIS FEET AND LOST WEIGHT AFTER TWO KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERIES MADE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DIFFICULT.***

Over the course of two years, with a combination of the MOVE! Program at the El Paso, TX, Veterans Health Clinic and bariatric surgery, David lost 188 pounds!

## *Looking into the Future*

In August 2017, David Nevarez was rushed to the William Beaumont Army Medical Center (WBAMC) emergency room struggling with diabetic complications. He was also being treated for hypertension and high cholesterol. At a follow-up appointment with his primary care doctor at the El Paso Veterans Health Clinic, David realized he needed to do something about his condition. "The doctor showed me my bloodwork and I saw where my health was going down and my medications were going up."



### *Getting Started with MOVE!*

In the MOVE! Program, Nevarez made goals to cut his 8,000 calorie per day intake to 1,200 and limiting his diet to mostly protein and vegetables. He also began to increase his physical activity with short, slow walks at first. He challenged himself to walk up McKelligan Canyon Road, which is 4,200 feet above sea level and a 600 foot uphill climb. By December 2017, he had lost 35 pounds on his own and was now considering bariatric surgery.

### *Undergoing Surgery*

David underwent gastric bypass surgery in March 2018 at WBAMC. Food intake and physical activity was a challenge after surgery. "It's like a newborn infant. You have to work up to foods and activity all over again." But after surgery and regular bariatric support group meetings, David realized that the MOVE! Program had prepared him for these challenges. Without MOVE!, he would have had a much harder time keeping the weight off.

“Have attainable goals. This is all a mental game.”

– David Nevarez

“Stay positive because that positivity bleeds into your family life and friendships.”

– David Nevarez

### *Getting Support*

David owes much of his success to the support and encouragement he received from his wife, WBAMC support group and staff, and to the VA. David's wife, Sandra, was a key supporter during his weight loss journey. She also participates in MOVE! and goes to the gym with him. She has lost 45 pounds.

### *Advice for Others*

David suggests that any fellow Veterans interested in bariatric surgery should seriously consider giving MOVE! a try. "You are getting a three-month head start. Doing the MOVE! Program is like getting ahead of the game. It is a good running start. You are given literature and taught all you need to know about nutrition."