



Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

Giving It All He's Got

NOW ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH HIS GRANDSON, VETERAN ED MCPHERSON DISCUSSES HOW TELEMOVE! HELPED HIM GET 70 POUNDS LIGHTER

Edward McPherson had a job that didn't involve movement, and people would bring in donuts and other unhealthy foods that he couldn't resist. That started weight struggle that lasted for 5 years, and before he knew it, he was obese. He'd gotten so big that he had to put his feet up just to tie his shoes. He couldn't bend over without feeling like his head would explode, and just walking up a flight of stairs left him embarrassed and winded. But the worst part was not being able to play with his very active 6-year old grandson.

"At a March 2015 appointment at the Boston VAMC my primary care provider, Deb Roussinos, told me that I'd gained 15 pounds. I weighed about 265 pounds, and my blood pressure and cholesterol were poorly controlled. She talked about how losing weight could improve my health and she arranged for me to see a nutritionist—a first step in the right direction.

Less than 2 weeks later, my VA nutritionist and 'savior' Pat Collins told me about VA's weight management programs. I was interested, and about 2 month later, I was enrolled in TeleMOVE!. I knew I would be successful in the program because I'm self-motivated. I was determined and committed to making better choices for a healthy life.

A year later, I've lost over 70 pounds. My life is very different today. I have a new lease on life and I owe it to the TeleMOVE! program, my VA nutritionist, and my TeleMOVE nurse.

After losing the weight, I can do so much more! I can bend over to tie my shoes and get dressed without having to hold onto something. I used to wear XXL shirts, but now I can fit into a large shirt with room to spare. When I was in Ireland seven years ago, I bought some clothes—now I can actually wear them.

I used to quickly run out of energy and just couldn't keep up with my grandson. When we took him to an amusement park, I couldn't even fit into the bumper cars. The best part of getting healthy and losing weight is that I can play with him—now he has to work at keeping up with me! This summer, I'm looking forward to having lots of fun with him and creating some great memories for him.

I eat more chicken, fish, salad, and fruit. I still write down everything I eat in my food log. If I gain weight, I check the log to see what triggered it. I'm more mindful of foods that lead to weight gain. I don't consume soda and fried foods. I still go out to eat, but I make better choices when I order. I still enjoy favorite foods like French fries and muffins—but in moderation and not every day.

Currently, I walk every day, doing 10,000 or more steps. I compete with my physical therapist to see who can get more steps. I am healthier—I feel like I did when I joined the Navy. I have a physical coming up and I believe my provider will be taking me off a few medications. I'm excited about that!

I found that staying motivated can sometimes be difficult, so having a support system is really helpful. There were so many people who helped me reach my goals—my girlfriend, daughter, mom, brothers, and surprisingly, some of the workers at the local convenience store I go to. These people would encourage me and compliment me along the way. My TeleMOVE nurse was also tremendously supportive with her check-in calls to see how I was doing.

“ I love this VA program. It's the best weight loss management program I have come across.”

— Edward McPherson

Sometimes, I look at old pictures and say to myself, “Wow, how did I get that big?” The pictures are a great reminder of how important it is to make good choices every day. I don't want put back on the weight I worked so hard to lose.

I hope other Veterans who've let themselves go and want to lose weight will inquire about Tele MOVE! and VA's other weight management options. Without a doubt, I love TeleMOVE!. It's the best weight loss management program I have come across.

The program is really effective, but to be successful you need to put your mind to it. As Veterans, we pride ourselves on starting something, then seeing it through to the end. I say to Veterans, ‘Give TeleMOVE! a chance. It's hard at first but in the end you, too, can have a new lease on life. You have 3 choices in life— give up, give in, or give it all you've got!’”