



# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

## Working Her Way Back to Better Health

**VETERAN DARLENE WEIGAND MADE SMALL CHANGES TO IMPROVE HER LIFESTYLE AND WAS REWARDED WITH GREAT RESULTS**

With the help of the MOVE! teams at the VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System and the VA Saginaw Healthcare System, Darlene adopted healthy habits that led to success in her weight loss journey.



### *A History of Struggle*

Before enrolling in the MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans, Darlene had struggled with her weight for roughly 30 years. She began gaining weight when she had children, and later tried to lose weight over the years, but never had any lasting success. By 2019, her weight had begun to cause health problems and lowered mobility. When her primary care provider suggested MOVE!, Darlene knew that she had to seize the opportunity. "I didn't want my kids to be without a mom," she recalls.

## ***Beginning to MOVE!***

With her family and her health in mind, Darlene enrolled in MOVE! She soon discovered that sharing the experience of working toward better health with her peers helped her to stay focused. "Hearing other people's stories and getting support" kept Darlene motivated. Darlene enhanced her MOVE! group sessions by adding one-on-one sessions, TeleMOVE!, and Be Active and MOVE! to her routine.

## ***Making Changes***

Darlene learned that to lose weight and improve her health she needed to build healthy habits like eating wisely and being physically active. She replaced her daily candy habit with vegetables, saying, "I...tried a new vegetable every week" and focused on drinking more water. Darlene quit smoking and ramped up her physical activity. "I think about my family...that's what keeps me moving." She enjoys spending her free time with her dogs and family, and has walked a 5k, 10k, and even a half marathon!

## ***The Benefits of Better Health***

Since enrolling in MOVE!, Darlene has lost 90 pounds and gone from a size 22 to a size 12! After these changes, she explains, "I feel healthier. I can do more things and I have more energy. My joints feel much better!"

**“You are not alone!  
[MOVE!] helps you  
talk to others [and]  
keeps you honest and  
motivated.”**

– Darlene Weigand



## ***Continuing to Work***

Darlene plans to maintain her healthy habits and continue to lose weight. Most importantly, she shares, "I feel a lot better and I am much happier."