



Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

"Enough is Enough!"

VETERAN ROBERT JAROUSAK DROPPED 88 POUNDS WITH OKLAHOMA CITY'S MOVE! WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR VETERANS

Robert, who served his country in both the Navy and the Army, had struggled with his weight for as long as he could remember.

NOTE: This story originally appeared in [VA Insider](#) on January 22, 2020 and is being shared here with permission of the author, Audrey M. Umhoefer, Acting Public Affairs Officer, Oklahoma City VA Health Care System.

Concern and a Referral

"I used to eat anything I wanted, at any time I wanted, day or night," said Jarousak. "When I ate at a buffet, my plate was piled high with food. I would usually go back for seconds, plus have several desserts. I would also drink at least four Mountain Dew's a day and exercise very little." During his yearly check-up, Robert's physician was concerned when his liver function test results came back abnormal. He immediately referred Robert to a specialist who confirmed fatty liver disease and prediabetes. Weighing 276 pounds, Jarousak met with Clinical Dietitian Misty Loafman at the Lawton VA Outpatient Clinic in March 2018. During their first conversation, Misty listened to his doubts and offered several options for him to lose weight and improve his overall health.



Since first trying a 5K race, Veteran Robert Jarousak has participated in several others and ended 2019 by running the Honolulu Marathon.

Obesity and Chronic Disease

Recent studies have revealed that the Veteran population has a weight problem. As of 2019, about 80% of Veterans who receive care in VA medical centers nationwide are classified as having overweight or obesity. Obesity is linked to chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. It is also associated with arthritis pain, injuries, and muscle atrophy.

Choosing a Plan

Robert thought VA's 16-week MOVE! Weight Management Program might work for him. He began working closely with his MOVE! Care Team and his Primary Care Team to address not only his diabetes, but also his other health concerns. "Now that I have started my diet and exercise program, I eat a lot healthier," said Robert, who says he found success by setting goals, keeping a daily food journal, and being mindful of his caloric intake.

Road to Success

With the encouragement and continuous support of his MOVE! Care Team, Robert started out slowly by walking every day. At first, he could only walk about ten blocks. Eventually, he increased that number and started running. After hearing about Misty's running adventures, Jarousak decided to try a 5K race. Since that first event, he has participated in several others and ended 2019 by running the Honolulu Marathon.

“I’m crushing my run times, setting personal records, and I’m committed to a healthy lifestyle.”

– Robert Jarousak



Robert Jarousak and his MOVE! Dietitian, Misty Loafman, at the Las Vegas 5k.

“In MOVE!, I learned the bottom line was eating and drinking fewer calories and exercising more,” said Jarousak. “This meant tracking my daily calories and reading food labels to make healthier food choices.”