

THE SECRET TO DEVELOPING HEALTHY HABITS IN YOUR 40S, 50S, AND BEYOND

— One Man's Story: Luis Moya knows the secret. It has changed his life. —

Last November, the 54-year-old grandfather had some chest pains. When he went to his doctor, Moya learned that the culprits were his elevated blood sugar levels and obesity. At 5 feet 8 inches, he weighed 260 pounds and had a body mass index (BMI) of 41—11 points above the 30-point benchmark that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention labels as “obese.”

His physician, Dr. Jeffrey N. Gerber of Littleton, had been telling him for a few years that he was pre-diabetic, but it did not click until that moment.

“I came to the conclusion that enough is enough. I’m not going to live my life like this,” Moya says. “I was thinking I don’t want to die of a heart attack. It just wasn’t worth it. I sat down with Dr. Gerber and he showed me the diet plan, and I just went from there.”

Gerber believes that with weight loss and exercise, all kinds of diseases and disorders are reversible. “The key to weight loss is reducing the amount of carbohydrates,” he says. “The combination of fat and carbs in foods like pancakes, French fries, donuts, and potato chips is a killer.” He adds that “with exercise, studies have shown that combining both cardio and weight lifting improves blood sugar and diabetes.”

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Gerber prescribed a low-carbohydrate diet for Moya and provided him with a glycemic index chart that showed him how many grams of carbohydrates were in different foods.

“I created my own menu and pretty much stuck by it,” Moya says. “It was awful boring the first month, but I saw the results. I lost 20 pounds that first month.”

Moya went from eating whole pizzas and large amounts of cookies and chocolate to eating a sensible balance of proteins and lean meats with salads and vegetables. Now, his heaviest meal is breakfast, with a lighter lunch and something really light for dinner. He also drinks a lot of water.

In addition, Moya began exercising. “I was a couch potato. I would sit and watch baseball, football, and not do much. I would try to go hiking but would easily get out of breath. I was fishing, but just sitting in a chair,” he explains. “Now I go fly fishing and I’m walking in the river. My lifestyle has totally changed. I’m coaching baseball now.”

Moya walks a lot more now at his job as a building supervisor of a 60-acre property. He even started a few 30-minute

workouts a week, alternating running, walking, using an elliptical machine, or weight training with a Bowflex®.

Moya has already lost 60 pounds, hopes to lose another 50, and is feeling much stronger and healthier. He is saving money because he’s spending less on junk foods and eating out. More important, he just might have saved his life.

“My biggest thing I want to live for is my grandkids,” Moya says. “I had a great time the other weekend on a lake with them. A year ago, I couldn’t have done it. They’re my main reason to stay alive. I’m not ready to call it quits. My health has to come first.” ■

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