



THE BENEFITS BULLETIN

“Serving our members and their families”



June 2009

Finally Feeling Fit

Board member Victor Musial speaks about losing weight and feeling great.

After 60 pounds lost; OEBB Board member Victor Musial only has 60 more to lose. Easier said than done, certainly, but Musial already knows that the goal he's set for himself in losing a total of 120 pounds is well within reach. Half way there and he only just began his transformation in January.

Musial, 52, the Director of Field Operations for the Oregon School Employees Association, started at a pound below 320 when he joined his wife in her dieting regime, hoping for a new lease on life. Not his first attempt at shedding weight, this has been his most successful effort. But that success hasn't come easy. It's meant a change to his eating habits and adding more physical activity.

It's also meant a dramatic, possible lifesaving change regarding his health. In the last six months, he's been able to stop taking every medication he'd been prescribed to manage his high blood pressure, cholesterol and his Type 2 diabetes. Plus the arthritis in his knee has practically disappeared. He's got more energy than he's had for years, his sleep apnea is improving and he can climb a flight of stairs without getting winded. Under the watch of his doctor, he exercises four to five times per week, usually out of the house on the elliptical equipment, with weights, or walks with his family.

“Now I can go 30 minutes on the elliptical and break a sweat, but I'm not wheezing.”

Another change is that he now eats up to six planned low carb meals per day as part of the mail-per-meal program. The reasoning behind that is to keep his body's metabolism up. Along with the program, he and his wife also are learning how to rethink shopping for groceries. Now they stick to the items on the diet, lots of green vegetables and some lean meats.

In the past, Victor said he was lucky to eat once a day, and the

meal was usually when he had the time and not very healthy. “Breakfast was coffee, lunch was if I had the time, and dinner was often late at night and out of the drive through,” he said.

Musial has been dealing with weight issues for years and decided it was time to make the change for his two kids. He wasn't modeling good behavior, he said, and knew that it could cause a ripple effect that would harm more than just himself. “I reached a point of fear about not doing something and that outweighed the fear of doing something,” he said.

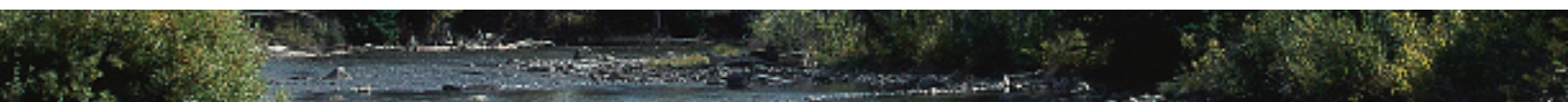
Looking into other diets and considering surgery, he settled on a more traditional approach including changes to eating habits, exercise and taking control of the foods he decides to eat. With that, he's shed between two and five pounds per week.

“My goal weight is 200; my ideal weight is 175,” Musial said with a chuckle, though he wasn't joking. “I'm setting a goal and moving toward it. That doesn't mean I can't change it.”

Since the change, he's gotten others to begin dieting, has improved his social life because he feels better about being in public and feels less guarded than he thought he had to be for the last 20 years. He also feels there's new opportunity for better things to come, a new lease, he might say. ★



Musial





Make Your Calories Count

Use the Nutrition Facts Label for Healthy Weight Management

Make Your Calories Count is an interactive learning program that provides people with information to help plan a healthy diet while managing calorie intake.

The exercises, as part of the program, help people use the food label found on all food products to make decisions about which food choice is right for them. For simplicity, the program presents two nutrients that should be limited (saturated fat and sodium) and two nutrients that should be consumed in adequate amounts (fiber and calcium).

This free program is available as an interactive training module and helps people understand how to read nutrition labels and make healthy and informed decisions based on this information. If nothing else, the slide show and nutrition quizzes are both entertaining and informative tools.

Sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Make Calories Count Program is a good teaching tool for kids to use when providing them with guidance about eating healthy.

For more information about the free program, visit <http://www.fda.gov/Food/LabelingNutrition/ConsumerInformation/ucm114022.htm>. ★

Additional weight loss management resources

Body Mass Index (click each link to be directed to the site).

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number calculated using a person's weight and height. BMI provides a reliable indicator of body fatness for most people and is used to screen for weight categories that may lead to health problems.

Diabetes and You

Research studies have found that moderate weight loss and exercise can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes among adults at high-risk. Find out more about the risk factors for type 2 diabetes, what it means to have prediabetes, and what you can do to prevent or delay diabetes.

Interactive Toolbox

The Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) at the National Agricultural Library (NAL) contains links to Web sites that allow consumers and professionals to input information and receive individual feedback to help with dietary assessment and planning and checking personal health risks.

MedlinePlus

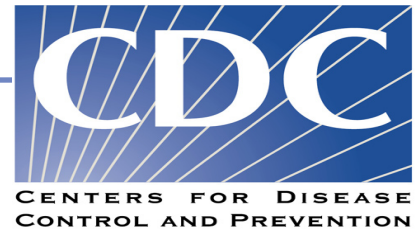
MedlinePlus is a service of the US National Library of Medicine that brings together a wealth of authoritative obesity information from NLM, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other government agencies and health-related organizations.

MyPyramid

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
MyPyramid Plan can help you choose the foods and quantities that are right for you. This online dietary assessment that provides information on diet quality and related nutrition information. It also assesses physical activity.

Physical Activity for Everyone

Regular physical activity offers many health benefits. The new Physical Activity Web site provides information on the importance of physical activity and how to make it part of your life.



Get Moving to Improve Your Health

Looking to lose some weight, shake off feelings of stress or depression, or lower your blood pressure? Even small amounts of exercise can help.

Walk it off

Walking regularly can help you take off pounds, reduce stress, prevent depression, lower blood pressure and improve your overall health and fitness – and it's free! No drug offers so many benefits to your health.

Tips to get started:

- Start with a short-term goal, such as walking for 10 minutes before or after work every day.
- Gradually increase your minutes.
- Once it's a habit, set a bigger goal, such as walking briskly for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Consider getting a step counter and aiming for 10,000 steps a day.
- Get a walking buddy to keep you energized and motivated.

Boost strength by adding weights or resistance

Maximize the health benefits of exercise by strengthening muscles and bones with activities such as these, at least twice a week:

- Lifting groceries.
- Digging and shoveling in the garden.
- Working out with weights or resistance bands.
- Doing sit ups, push ups and other weight-bearing exercises.

Before you start, talk to your doctor to make sure it's okay for you to begin a walking program and/or exercising with weights.

Exercise your brain

In 2008, the Federal Government issued its first-ever guidelines for physical activity for all Americans. You can find dozens more great ideas for making physical activity a part of your life at www.health.gov/paguidelines.

WebMD - All Providence members in OEBC have access to online tools for Weight Management through the WebMD Health Manager. To access the WebMD Health Manager, log on to myProvidence at <http://www.providence.org/healthplans>. Once in the myProvidence Web site click on "More Health Tools." Choose the

link "Improve My Health." There you will find links to information about physical activity and nutrition. Under those sections you will find many tools for weight management including the Five Steps to Nutrition, Nutrition Library, Physical Activity Trackers, Body Mass Index Calculators and more. ★

Information provided by Providence Health Plan

Every Step Counts -- More On Walking

Did you know that one of the easiest, safest, and most effective activities you can do to maintain your health is right at the tips of your toes? It's walking. And one way to keep track of how much you walk is with a pedometer.

A pedometer is a small battery-operated device that measures the number of steps you take as you go about your day. Using a pedometer can tell you if, within your normal day, you are being active enough to improve your health. A pedometer can help you:

- Increase self-awareness around your daily activities.
- Begin thinking about making healthier lifestyle choices.

Walking, continued on page 4





Keep on Walking, continued from page 3

- Become more active over time.

The first step

Many people say the activity they would most like to pursue is walking. Why? Because walking is easy, doesn't cost a lot of money, can be done practically anytime or anywhere and requires no special skills.

Can be fun!

According to Kaiser Permanente, researchers have found that 10,000 steps (approximately five miles) is a baseline for improving health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Most people average 3,000 to 6,000 steps during a regular day. The rest of your steps can be achieved in 30 to 45 minutes of walking at an average pace.

Add steps

There are a variety of ways to add steps to your day:

- Use the stairs rather than an elevator or escalator.
- Get up to change the channel on the TV.
- Park farther away from your destination and walk the rest of the way.
- Take your kids for a nature walk—combining physical activity and together-time.
- Take your dog for a walk.

Adding strength

Mile for mile, you can burn as many calories walking as you would jogging, but with far less stress on your joints. Walking also is a weight-bearing exercise, which means it strengthens the bones and muscles in your lower body. For upper-body fitness, supplement your walking program with weight-lifting or aerobics.

Walk it off

In addition to building bone and muscle, walking can help reduce body fat. Burning at least 2,000 calories in activity a week will improve your health. Walking 10,000 steps burns 300 to 450 calories, depending on your speed. If you average 10,000 steps a day, you'll be in that health-promoting range.

Tips

Remember to stretch before and after you walk. Stay hydrated—drink plenty of water prior to walking, and carry a bottle on longer hikes.

Most adults do not have to visit their health care provider before starting a moderate walking program, unless they:

- have been inactive for a long time;
- have a history of heart disease or chest pains;
- have diabetes;
- are very overweight;
- use tobacco products; or
- have high blood pressure. ★

Information provided by Kaiser Permanente



**Official newsletter of the
Oregon Educators
Benefit Board**

Carrier Contacts

Kaiser Permanente:
866-223-2375

ODS:
866-923-0409

Providence Health Plan:
800-878-4445

Willamette Dental:
800-460-7644

Information to Remember ...

These links will take you to pages that may be helpful if you'd like to learn more about the Board and the programs being offered.

Dependent Eligibility Rules:

<http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OEBB/administrativerules>

Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OEBB/FAQ>

OEBB Web site:

<http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/OEBB>