

PEHPWAISTAWEIGH

SUCCESS STORY: JOHN C.

Consistency with Small Steps is Better than Big Change

My journey started after years of watching the needle on the scale inch higher and higher. I am a lover of food, and was a hater of exercise.

After my wife had our second child, I realized that the “sympathy weight”

TOTAL LOST

Duration: 12 months

Weight: 52 pounds

I had put on when she was pregnant had landed me at 215 pounds.

I knew I had to do something, but I didn’t know where to start.

After speaking with my PEHP Waist Aweigh coach and telling her that “exercise was not my forte,” I decided to start my weight loss journey by focusing on what I was putting into my body. My love of food resulted in my eating very large portions at mealtime.

My wife had recently started using an app called “MyFitnessPal” and recommended I use it to help me count my calories. I was wary at first, but as I made a concerted effort to record each food that I ate into the app, I began to see just how many calories I was consuming.

Over time I became more aware of how my food choices resulted in my high caloric intake. I began to make changes to what I ate. I learned that there were other foods that would satisfy my cravings that didn’t carry with them high amounts of fat and calories.

Slowly, I began to see my weight start to drop. I lost an average of 1-2 pounds a week and, after losing



about 20 pounds, I decided it was time I start exercising.

For a guy who didn’t like exercise, I found it hard at first to get on the elliptical and work out. I usually would only last 15-20 minutes before I felt exhausted, but I kept with it. I noticed that without all that extra weight I had been carrying around I found it easier to get on the elliptical and work out.

Around this time my wife and I made several New Year’s resolutions together, one of which was to run a 5K – something I had never done, and had always been afraid to do. I knew this goal was going to really push me



out of my comfort zone.

I had tried to get into running about nine years before, but after only three runs I never laced up my shoes again. This time was different, however.

I had found success using an app to help me take control over my food portions and food choices, and so when it came to running I thought, “There’s gotta be an app for that!” That’s when I started using the app “Couch-to-5K.” The name basically described me to a tee. It started me on a running schedule so slow at first that I was alternating running 30 seconds at a time, and walking 30 seconds at a time.

Each run, it would increase the running intervals, helping me build endurance. I can still remember when the app had me run three minutes without stopping for the first time – I thought I was going to die!

I kept with it and over several months worked up my endurance until I was able to run a 5K without taking any breaks to walk. The sense of accomplishment that came following my first 5K race helped me to continue taking small and steady steps toward my next goal: a 10K.

By this time, I was having fun. It was nice getting outdoors and enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells that accompanied my early morning runs. I found myself viewing my weight loss journey differently. I realized that what worked for me was not the idea “How big of change can I do?” but rather “How consistent can I be with a small change?” I found that consistency with small changes over time brought about the most change for me.

I’m happy to report that in October 2014 I ran my first half marathon, something I never in a million years thought I’d be able to do. One year to the day after starting PEHP Waist Aweigh I have lost 52 pounds (one pound a week), and met my weight loss goal. Today I feel more confident and healthy, having learned that I can set a goal, and follow through with consistent baby steps toward that goal.

– John C.

Stories are personal and PEHP does not endorse or recommend any programs mentioned. Seek your Doctor’s advice when beginning a weight loss or exercise program.