



Dietician Could Be Key to Weight Loss Success

April 29, 2010

Working with a dietitian and logging what you eat can make a big difference on the scale, and really help in your plan to lose weight. Just ask Louann Dunkle. Seven months ago, the wife and grandmother made the decision to lose weight for herself and her family.

"We also have grandchildren that are the love of our lives, and I want to be here for them. I want to be able to play with them and do all of the things that I dream that a grandmother will be able to do," said Dunkle.

So far, Dunkle has lost 63 pounds and has stopped taking one of her blood pressure medications. She attributes her weight loss success to Melanie Wilder, her dietitian. Dunkle said, "She taught me things like, when I look at my plate, half of it should be vegetables and a quarter of it should be my protein or my meats and a quarter of it should be the carbs."

"Self-monitoring is the number one skill for changing any health behavior," explained Wilder, a dietitian at Village Health Partners in Plano. "Specifically for weight loss, it's tracking calories."

Wilder taught Dunkle how to count her calories and log them daily. "Once she understood that she just needed to keep track of her calories, it freed her up to stop avoiding the foods she really enjoys," Wilder said, "and gave her the ability to eat what she likes and learn how to eat foods that she enjoys in smaller amounts."

Now, Dunkle plans out her meals and sets realistic goals for long-term success. "She taught me that it's not a diet," Dunkle said. "It's being mindful of what I put in my mouth."

"Instead of eating potato chips a couple at a time, eat one in as many bites as you can," Wilder said. "That way, the stuff that's maybe not as healthy, you can still get a lot of satisfaction out of a little bit."

And for extra motivation, Dunkle keeps a list of the benefits of weight loss on her bathroom mirror. On the list: playing with her grandchildren.

An eight-week weight management course starts May 5 at Village Health Partners. [Click here for more information.](#)