



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Free Program Inspires Barre Woman to Steer Clear of Type 2 Diabetes



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Workshops Offered at myhealthyvt.org

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BARRE – Diane DesBois was told by her physician two years ago that a diagnosis of diabetes for her was not a matter of if, but of when.

That is no longer true. DesBois took advantage of a free, year-long health self-management program, including 16 weekly meetings and eight monthly meetings at Central Vermont Hospital in Berlin and steadily charted her weight loss and lower blood sugar levels.

The Helping Yourself to Health diabetes prevention program (Small Steps Are the Start) was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and supported by the Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Blueprint for Health and the Greater Burlington YMCA.

Programs are offered throughout the state on six topics: diabetes prevention, diabetes management, quitting smoking, emotional wellness, chronic disease management and chronic pain management.

An overview of the free workshops is available at myhealthyvt.org

The journey for DesBois to losing weight and lowering her blood sugar levels started with small changes.

“The two primary things are to write down everything you eat and cap the grams of fat, which makes losing weight logical and doable, you can see it in black and white and you can accomplish your goal,” she said.

DesBois was most surprised by the grams of fat recorded in the Partner Toolkit provided to the 15 people in her group who participated in the program. A muffin or hot dog can have a shocking amount of fat, she said.

DesBois also walks five days a week to compile the recommended 30 minutes of exercise each day, sometimes 10 minutes at a time.

“Vermont is made for walking,” she said, “and anyone can do it.”

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