

What Cisco Employees Say about: Condition Management

Musculoskeletal Pain

Person:

38-year-old male, Cisco employee, DCBU

Initial Problem:

My health was getting worse – I had gained weight and my doctor told me my cholesterol was going up. I had crazy hours and was not eating well or exercising. And, I had foot and back pain that stopped me from exercising because it was so painful.

Reason for Participation:

I needed professional help to get back on track. I knew what I should be doing, but I needed someone to talk to on a timely basis who would keep me on track. Otherwise, I would put it on the back burner, as I had been up to this point.

How the Coach Helped:

I think this is a great program. First, my coach sent me literature on my foot problem and worked with me gradually to start to exercise. I started with short walks and exercises for my foot and now I can jog without much pain.

I liked that my coach worked cooperatively with me. She would ask questions to find out what problems and issues I was dealing with and then she would work with me to address them. She would also tell me where to go to get more information and help.

My coach was great. She would tell me how well I had done and how well I was doing. Her support and encouragement was helpful. I knew that she would call me every month and check in and that caused me to follow all of the recommendations. I probably could have followed them a little more closely, but I did the best I could and my coach was always supportive.

Results and Plans for the Future:

So far, I have lost 12 – 15 pounds and, thanks to my coach, have been slowly getting into exercising. She has also helped me with how I eat and I am much more energetic.

Before, I worked until I went to sleep and then would start again as soon as I got up. My coach helped me learn to prioritize my work and I don't feel as if I am living just to work.

Heart Failure

Person:

37-year-old female, spouse of a Cisco employee

Initial Problem:

At age 37 I developed congestive heart failure due to an enlarged heart from a virus I caught.

Reason for Participation:

What motivated me to participate in the program was that free advice was available to me at the click of a button. I did not have to call my doctor and wait until he got back to me or had time to talk.

How the Coach Helped:

I like that my coach calls me by my first name and that I am not just another number to her. We are about the same age, we both have three children and she can identify with many of my issues. She has become a part of my close circle, more like a friend. I copy her on the follow-up reports from my doctor. I trust her advice and her input.

My coach always puts in her two cents – not in a nagging way, but just making suggestions to help me. We have two-way conversations. She is an active partner who educates me and keeps me informed. When I review the materials or web sites she suggests, I usually ask lots of questions which she answers.

She even gives me suggestions of things to talk with my doctor about. After hearing my symptoms, she told me to ask my doctor to check my blood for potassium magnesium. My doctor was shocked that I had that level of knowledge. My coach helps me become an informed and active partner with my doctor – because of her I feel that I can be actively involved in all aspects of my recovery.

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Results and Plans for the Future:

I am still in the heart program and have been very happy with everything. The key outcome for me is that I have someone to talk to. My doctor controls my medicine, my church is there for support and my coach is another part of my support.

Diabetes

Person:

45-year-old male, Cisco employee, Customer Advocacy

Initial Problem:

I already knew I was diabetic and had been on medication for over five years.

Reason for Participation:

What initially motivated me to participate in the diabetes program was the \$100. I think the money is a great door opener and gets attention. Why not get paid to do something?

How the Coach Helped:

I can now say that the program is excellent. In short, it gave me three things: knowledge, discipline and tools.

It taught me about the importance of consistently eating properly – and what could happen if I did not. I learned good eating habits, how to time my meals, and how to read labels.

I also learned portion control and became aware of how I eat. This is all part of the education I received and I have a much better understanding of how eating properly helps control the sugar going into my system.

What I liked most about my coach was her persistence when making a point. She was always very nice and not overbearing, but she was persistent. She would always tell me the various options available and which were the better ones – but the decision about what to do was always up to me.

I always felt very comfortable talking with my coach. Almost every time we spoke she revised what we had done the last time and we always covered a new topic. She handled one issue at a time. What she ultimately did was connect the dots for me.

Results and Plans for the Future:

The things I learned from this program helped me decide to change doctors, from my long-term PCP to a specialist. The specialist put me on different medications, which have enabled me to lower my glucose level in the morning from 145 to 90. I now have confidence that I can keep it down. I am in a much better position to get involved and make decisions that affect my health.