Better Me Wellness

Meet Darci: Darci is the Director of the Center for Women and Gender (Student Affairs). She is married and has 3 children ages 22 months, 11 and 14 years old. She has worked at RIT for 5 1/2 years.

The Wake Up Call: Darci experienced injuries to her ankle and foot during her last pregnancy. She was in significant pain. An orthopedic doctor told her she would need surgery unless she lost the baby weight she gained during her pregnancy. She was also experiencing chronic neck, shoulder and back pain and was taking muscle relaxers and prescription pain medications every day. She felt terrible and was under a lot of stress at work and at home with a new baby getting very little sleep. Her doctor said that her ailments were related to stress. Her blood pressure was elevated for the first time in her life and she was also experiencing headaches. Darci found it more difficult to lose weight after her third child. She bounced back much more quickly with her first two pregnancies.

Program and Services: The director of the Better Me wellness program completed a wellness action plan with Darci after her biometric screening in 2013. He shared with her some information on the PATH program (Proactive Approaches to Health), so she could learn more about healthy eating, stress management and exercise.

New Life: Darci felt the accountability from the registered dietitian and personal trainer who met with her weekly. “It kept me going as it was much harder this time to get motivated. I did not want to have surgery. I started to feel better and have less pain participating in the program. The accountability also forced me to make exercise and healthy eating a priority. The workouts helped me manage my stress.” Darci also learned more about the nutrients in the food she ate. In the past she was focused on cutting calories. Through the program and food journal reviews she learned about the foods that contained carbs, protein and fats and how to balance them. Before starting the program she states “I was not conscious of what I was eating and always felt bloated. Now I pay attention to my diet and how it impacts the way I feel.”

Outcomes: Darci has lost 49 pounds since starting the program in August 2014. She has lost 7 inches off her waist and 7 inches off her hips. Her blood pressure is normal. “I no longer have pain and have much more energy. Exercising has given me an outlet for my stress. I no longer take pain medication or muscle relaxers. I physically feel better! I feel stronger.”

The New Life:

“I am not complacent this time. I am reclaiming my body. I am determined this time and have a goal in sight to get to 165 pounds.” When she was asked what she would tell a coworker who is contemplating a change in their health, she said “you have to make it a priority. You can always find something else to do or life can easily get in the way.”