

# Taking charge

For this employee, losing weight and getting healthier started by taking advantage of Boeing Well Being programs

By Susan Birkholtz and photo by Elizabeth Morrell

**J**ames Kiely finally decided enough was enough. It was time to slim down and get healthier.

His weight had steadily ballooned during his adult years, and in January he topped the scales at 298 pounds (135 kilograms). He was 48 years old and the weight gain was taking a toll on his health and energy.

"I realized that I needed to start taking better care of myself because I was robbing myself of time down the road that I could spend with my wife," said Kiely, a 23-year Boeing veteran who works in data management for the Space Shuttle program in Houston.

To get started, Kiely used Boeing's online health assessment as an opportunity to evaluate his overall health and figure out what he should do to lead a healthier lifestyle. He decided to take advantage of one-on-one health coaching—it's available as part of Boeing's portfolio of Well Being programs, tools and resources—to learn more about how to eat better and incorporate more physical activity into his daily routine.

Consulting with his lifestyle coach on telephone conference calls, Kiely worked on figuring out the types of physical activity that would work for him. The feedback from his coach was important. In April 2009, Kiely had torn his hamstring while playing in a softball tournament. The injury, in addition to his weight, contributed to bursitis in his knee, chronic back pain and plantar fasciitis in his foot. Being overweight also contributed to his high blood pressure and high cholesterol that he has been controlling with medication for the past decade.

His coach helped him understand the connection between diet and exercise and the importance of fueling his body with more fruits and vegetables and lowering his carbohydrate and fat intake.

"I learned that I didn't have to completely eliminate things that I enjoy from my diet, but that I need to watch my portion sizes and not overindulge," Kiely said.

Kiely joined his on-site fitness center and began fitting in a midday workout. He found that a lunchtime workout refreshes him and breaks up his day. His health coach also helped him understand that he needs to take small steps and be careful not to push himself too hard.

With his increased energy level, Kiely now is working out five times a week—with the elliptical machine being his preferred choice. He supplements his gym workouts with landscaping and walking his dog.

Since the beginning of the year, Kiely has lost 47 pounds (21 kilograms) and slimmed down six pant sizes. His doctor anticipates taking Kiely off his blood pressure and cholesterol medication. He no longer has knee or back pain.

Kiely served as a team captain on the recently completed Boeing on the Move physical activity challenge. And he shares his success tips with many people who approach him.

Meanwhile, his wife caught his workout bug and is now regularly exercising.

"The most beautiful side effect of all of this," said Kiely, who is halfway to achieving his weight-loss goal, "is how motivating it is to others." ■

[susan.l.birkholtz@boeing.com](mailto:susan.l.birkholtz@boeing.com)

## Coach's corner

Employees interested in taking charge of their well-being should consider participating in Boeing's on-site health screening, taking this year's online Health Assessment and signing up for health coaching. On-site health screenings will continue through the summer. Visit [www.boeing.com/screenings](http://www.boeing.com/screenings) for schedule information.

The Health Assessment will be available at [www.BoeingWellness.com](http://www.BoeingWellness.com) beginning Sept. 1 through Nov. 30, 2010.

For more information about health coaching, employees can call Boeing TotalAccess at 866-473-2016. When prompted, say, "Wellness" to be connected to an OptumHealth nurse who can help with enrollment. Hearing-impaired callers with a telephone typewriter can access TotalAccess TTY/TDD services at 800-755-6363.

