

Biking to Better Biometrics

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I have always been active, walking on my breaks and lunch at work, but several years ago I got a wakeup call from my biometric screening. It prompted me to visit my family doctor and he told me I was pre-diabetic. He suggested that I change my diet to no flour, no sugar, and no fruit juices. At that time, I also decided to increase my level of activity to see if that would help as well.

I decided to see if I could bike to work. I live near Hickman, so this was a big challenge. My husband helped me the first couple of times. He drove me to work with my bike and then would be waiting for me at the trail head by Roca at the end of the day. It was about a 10 mile ride – 5 on the trails in town and 5 on the Jamaica Trail. Once I accomplished that I decided to try it both ways. I did this until about mid-November when the weather turned bad.

I was able to resume riding for a while in January when the weather was unseasonably nice, and then began again in March. I was able to ride my 20 miles a day until the first of May when the floods forced the closure of the Jamaica Trail. To be able to continue to ride, I decided to drive into Lincoln and park our pickup as far out as I could and ride the rest of the way to work.

I only ride about 10 miles a day now, but I ride more often. I have figured out how to ride in extreme heat and watch the weather closely to figure out if I can make it to work before it will rain. My husband and I also bike in the evenings and on weekends. We enjoy exploring new trails throughout the area. I even biked down to the Walk This Way photo with the governor this year. I can't wait for the trails to be repaired so that I can get more miles in again.

Since we had been more active and changed our diet, my husband's and my biometric screenings have been much improved. We have more energy and don't shy away from going for bike rides like we might have several years ago because it was really hot or windy. I remember several years ago we were going to go for a ride on the trail in early spring. We got about one half mile into our ride and turned around because the trail was so spongy that it felt like it was grabbing our tires. Last weekend, we went for a ride on the Oak Creek Trail and it had rained earlier in the morning. About 3 miles into our ride, the trail was the same as we had experienced earlier that spring, but we continued on until we got to our turn-around point. It was very motivating to see how much we had progressed!

It's never too late to try. Start walking on your breaks. Eat more fruit and vegetables. Watch your sugar and flour intake. When the Walk This Way program first started, I can remember how hard it was to get to 10,000 steps a day. Now with my conversion for minutes biking, I reach about 30,000 steps a day. Wearing the pedometer reminds me to be more active. I believe that having the **wellNEssoptions** program to record our steps and see our progress is important. It helps to motivate us to try to do better.

