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In 2003 I was 50 pounds overweight and wanted to shed some weight. I wasn't into changing my lifestyle so I took the easy way out and got diet pills from my doctor. Eventually, I began experiencing side effects from the diet pills and I realized this wasn't a sustainable option for the long run. I began looking at my diet from a nutritional standpoint and changed my way of eating. I started a walking program to fulfill the wellness PPO program requirements and reaped the rewards of feeling ever more able to do the things I wanted.

I have been able to maintain a 35 pound weight loss now over several years. It makes it easier to buy clothes. It's easier to move around and I feel better about myself. Medically, I've been diagnosed as being pre-diabetic, but have been able to avoid taking drugs because I have maintained my A1C level through the increased activity of my walking program.

My wake-up call came when my 10 year old son was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. I realized that the lifestyle and eating habits that he was forced to adopt made sense for us all. I believe that making small, manageable changes rather than drastic changes allow these changes to become long term. I also believe we should try to avoid highly processed foods and environmental and chemical contaminants.

The State of Nebraska wellnesoptions program, focuses on keeping well, not waiting to treat emerging diseases. I like that this is available for the State of Nebraska employees. Offering screenings for PSA levels and colonoscopies keeps on top of emerging conditions, while the annual screenings and health surveys give focus to things that are easy to forget along the way.

I also like being "rewarded" through financial incentives (lower premiums) for taking some responsibility for my own health and well being.

