

Healthy lifestyle changes: a patient story

This is the story of a 59 year old patient in Bolton who has had three heart attacks, and has coronary heart disease, prostate cancer, osteoarthritis in his knee and hip joints, depression, and just been diagnosed with pre diabetes.

“I had my first heart attack in 1998 so I have a long history of ill health. In the summer of 2014, I said to myself “enough is enough” because I’ve got so many illnesses and my trousers were too tight! So I started with my diet. I love red meat and Polish sausages - basically anything that is a little bit fatty! I always bought my lunch every day from the corner shop so I decided to stop. About six months later I forgot to bring my sandwiches with me to work, so bought some from the corner shop and I ate half and half I threw away because I didn’t like it. Tasted far too fatty! I have no idea how I was able to eat like that for so long.

I’ve cut about 60% of red meat from my diet and instead eating more chicken and sea food. I’ve also cut my sugar intake down by 95%. My favourite drink was a slice of lemon, tea and two sugars. Sometimes I would drink this twice a day but then I realised I was drinking over seven hundred spoons of sugar a year! This isn’t including any sweets I use to eat. So that has been completely cut from my diet. I told Lynn, my Practice Nurse, that I’ve cut my sugar intake down by 95% and she said “cut another 5%!”

I now eat a lot of blueberries, grapes, oranges, and melon every day. I’ve lost weight as a result of these changes. I was 99kg and I’m now 84kg. So I’ve lost about 30lbs in weight. I feel a lot better and now wearing 36 inch size trousers and wearing ‘L’ rather than ‘XL’. I also feel my problem with my knees has gotten better as my weight isn’t pressing on them as much.

In summer 2014, I started fighting cancer which helped convinced me I needed to change my diet. I had 15 Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA), now it is down to eight or nine. When I had the first biopsy, out of twelve shots taken nine had cancerous cells in, but last time only three out of twelve had any cancerous cells. My doctor has decided to not operate on me yet as the tumour is no longer aggressive, but instead is just watching and will decide in December if I need the operation. My doctors are surprised at how quickly my PSA has come down, and believe it could be because I’m now eating less fat and sugar.

I have fantastic doctors and never had any problem with any of them. With my Practice Nurse, she is like a friend as known her for about eighteen years and she knows everything about me. She is a fantastic nurse and helped and encouraged me to make changes in my life.

I did not make a decision to target the diabetes but just wanted to make me feel better as a whole, and hopefully help me fight some of the other illnesses I have.”