

AMH

InsideOut

Hanford Employee Sheds 100+ Pounds in 8 Months!

by Kelly Harnish, BS, CHES, AMH Health Education

Troy Cooley was on a rollercoaster ride to which many people can relate. In August 2009, he weighed 322 pounds and was familiar with losing 10 pounds, just to gain back 12 and start all over again. "It was getting hard for me to find clothes that fit, my feet and knees hurt all the time, my health was deteriorating rapidly, and I really didn't like the way I looked."

Fast-forward to January 2010 when his S&GRP work group started up a Biggest Loser competition. His team at 100K decided that they had to win, and the "Biggest Loser" of the competition had to come from their group. So Troy, with the support of his pals, Mark, Aryn, Kathy, Jennifer, Dennis, Mike, and Blue, began the journey to lose the weight and win the competition.

But Troy needed some tools. He used the [calorie calculator](#) from the [AMH website](#) to find out how many calories he should consume. That's when everything changed. Vegetables used to be something to put on a burger with cheese & bacon; now he loads up on veggies. He also cut out sugary foods, watched portion sizes, and limited fat. He had to break some tough habits: fast food, eating out, unhealthy snacking, and excess beer. "I had to convince myself not to eat every time I see a little food, but rather stick to my guns," he said. He also started to listen to anything people had to say about nutrition and metabolism. With all he's learned, he formed a diet that he plans to follow long-term. The results of the lifestyle he has followed are

astonishing! Since January 2010, he's lost 102 pounds, as well as 10 pounds from the previous four months, for **a total of 112 pounds!** But Troy would not claim it's all been easy. It can be hard to stay away from junk food and continue to exercise. His current exercise of choice-- running--is not his favorite activity. So he's decided that it's time to join a gym to keep exploring new exercises so he can find a routine that will continue to bring him health benefits and also be personally enjoyable.

Troy's children are great sources of motivation for him. "I have two kids and I need to be around to raise them and hopefully see them raise their kids." The rewards of having lost the weight are numerous; his asthma has improved, allowing him to sleep better and reduce some of his medications. He's even motivated his doctor to lose weight! Every day he stays on course, his new lifestyle becomes more of a habit and a way of life.

We asked Troy if he had any words of advice for someone who might be ready to shed some pounds. We can't say it any better, so here it is straight from the expert: "You can't do it halfway. Don't start a diet; don't get on one of the fads. Go through the [calorie calculation](#) and see where you are and then change your life. It can't be a temporary change, it has to be a change for life or the weight will come back. Try to remember we eat to live, we shouldn't live to eat. But don't be so regimented that you burn out. I allow one meal per week where I don't worry so much, just a bit of a treat, but I still watch my portion size. Find some



co-workers or friends and enjoy their support and criticism. I needed some of both. And don't forget to exercise!"

Troy understands the importance of not looking back, he wants to live life, and he has found that life is much easier at his lighter weight. He also wants to share his motivation with others. Being a good role model will certainly help him stay on track! He believes anyone can do what he's done. And he wants to say thanks to everyone around the site who continues to encourage him. "I have taken some bit of advice from nearly everyone, and I just want to say thank you."

Congratulations Troy, you're an inspiration!



Invite AMH to be a guest at your next work group meeting.

SEPTEMBER FEATURED PRESENTATION:
"COLDS AND FLU: HOW TO STAY WELL--WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T, WHAT MAKES IT WORSE."

FOR PRESENTATION INFORMATION CONTACT: 372-0407 OR SANDY_ROCK@RL.GOV

WATCH FOR UPCOMING EVENTS WITH AMH

September

[Weight Loss Convoy \(ongoing\)](#)

[Site-Health Fairs \(9th\)](#)

[Beryllium Disease Presentation at HAMMER \(10th\)](#)

October

[Weight Loss Convoy \(ongoing\)](#)

[Site-Health Fairs \(14th\)](#)

[Potpourri of Important Public and Hanford Health Issues - Presentation at HAMMER \(8th\)](#)

Select a link or visit our website: www.hanford.gov/amh



Obesity: it's weighting us down

by Shannon Haselhuhn, MS, AMH Health Education

If your buddy asked you to haul several 80-pound bags of concrete mix in the bed of your mid-size pick-up, you'd say no. With a maximum payload of around 1,200 lbs, 25 bags of concrete would be well above the capacity for your automobile, possibly causing damage, and creating a major safety risk. In order to make that haul, perhaps your friend should borrow a truck that is a bit more equipped to move such mass. Maybe a truck with dual rear tires, or a flat bed with a dual axle would be more fit for the job. Seems like common sense, right? I heard a great analogy a while back comparing truck frames to human frames. We would never expect our pickup truck to be able to do the work of a dump



truck (that would be too hard on the axle, the engine/transmission, not to mention gas mileage). However, while sparing our truck, many of us ask our bodies to take on such a task. It is not uncommon to see a human frame that is dangerously overloaded with extra weight. In fact, with the obese population reaching over 300 million globally, it's becoming the new norm.

Obesity Data

The prevalence of obesity in this country, this state, and most importantly on the Hanford Site has continued to rise each year, and with it so have the health care dollars spent on obesity-related conditions. Obesity affects far more than a person's pants size. Obesity is linked to many conditions including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal pain and injuries, sleep disorders, and some

cancers. This extra weight is putting demands on the body's frame and systems that are, quite frankly, beyond capacity. To be more specific, in our Hanford population, eighty-four percent (84%) of workers are overweight or obese. In the obese population, less than 30% had blood pressures within normal range, compared to 67% among normal weight workers. And 57% had normal glucose levels, compared to 81% among normal weight workers. Additionally, 90% of all injuries in the past year occurred in the overweight and obese population.

Safety First

While every logical precaution is taken to ensure worker safety, there is still a major risk factor that extends beyond the well-known safety protocols: personal physical condition. If obesity leads to elevated blood sugars, high blood pressure and cholesterol; elevated heart rate; sleep deprivation; joint instability; and increased heat sensitivity, it should certainly have our attention. Keep in mind that these conditions are not limited to on-the-job circumstances; they affect individuals in their personal lives and into retirement. With the pursuit of safe, happy, productive lives being the objective, health seems to be the common denominator and walks a fine line between worksite safety and personal responsibility.

What can we do?

It is clear that intervention is inevitable and needs to be offered on many levels. Here are some suggestions to becoming a part of the change.

Lifestyle changes:

- Limit meals at restaurants
- Track daily caloric intake
- Increase dietary fiber
- Control/limit portion sizes
- Avoid unplanned meals/snacks (donuts at meetings, cake in the lunchroom)
- Take the [Health Risk Appraisal](#) on the [AMH website](#)
- Move your body more



Program offerings:

- Visit AMH for [1-on-1 Health Coaching](#)
- Join the AMH Weight Loss Convoy Class
- Host a 5-week AMH weight management class at your work location
- Join the CHIP program at Kadlec Medical Center
- Find a local weight loss support group
- Join a gym
- Eat more vegetables by joining the [local CSA](#)

Culture changes:

- Try meetings on the move (walking meetings)
- Find out how to "[Energize Your Meetings](#)"
- Walk at each break
- Participate in 15 minutes of [Hanford WorkFit](#) EVERY day
- Provide [healthy food options at meetings and events](#)
- Recognize employees for health improvements

Resources: AMH Epidemiology, and CDC

What is your "health age"?

Log on to the [Personal Wellness Profile \(Health Risk Appraisal\)](#), and find out.



HOST AMH BACK SCHOOL AT YOUR LOCATION IN NOVEMBER

Whether you are currently experiencing chronic back pain or want to maintain a healthy back, this class will offer tools for everybody. Back School is a series of four, 1-hour classes lasting four weeks.

Back School Goals:

- Educate about common back injuries, signs and symptoms, and rehabilitation.
- Identify hazardous postures and situations to prevent injury.
- Learn proper body mechanics for lifting, sitting, sleeping and standing that reduce and prevent back pain.
- Develop and practice skills to effectively manage and prevent back pain.

The class is designed for work groups of 10-20 participants and will be held at a time and location best suited for the target group. If your work group would like to participate, talk to your manager (approval is required) and contact **Laura Eddy at 376-9040**. *Classes are first come, first served so call early!*

For : [Healthy Recipes](#)