

What can be gained when you lose?

By Arielle Estes, Community Relations Director

A health “wake up call” can come in a variety of ways. Some are sudden and scary while others are more subtle and kind of sneak up on you. For forty year old Gail Price, her call came in the form of a cholesterol screening.

As an employee of Rockcastle Regional Hospital & Respiratory Care Center, Gail was able to participate in annual, free health screenings and had her cholesterol checked in September 2011. When Gail participated in an employee health fair and had it checked again in March 2012, her cholesterol had increased from 223 to 245. At that time, she was basically eating whatever she wanted and not really exercising. According to Gail, “Meatless Mondays was about as healthy as I got,” she said.

Gail decided she should share her test results with her physician and his remarks are what motivated her to make some life changes. “Dr. Tony Arvin told me that I needed to do something about my cholesterol level,” said Gail. “It was almost like he challenged me to improve my levels and warned that a cholesterol-lowering pill would be a ‘lifetime sentence.’ At my age, I didn’t want to be faced with taking a pill everyday for the rest of my life. Dr. Arvin told me to try something for three months and see how much of a difference I could make.” The challenge from her physician was all she needed and Gail’s competitive nature took over her health.

She immediately began making changes to her diet such as eliminating fried foods and soda (diet and regular) and adding more vegetables and whole grains. She also started living by the philosophy “If something comes from the planet and is natural,

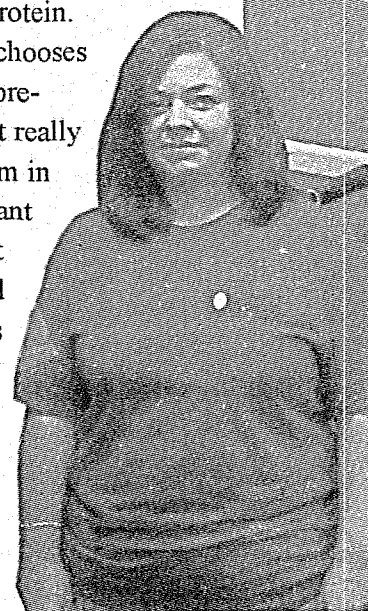
then it’s OK. If something comes from a plant/facility it is not safe. Also produce instead of packaged,” (junkfood).

Gail also started cooking more and experimenting with ways to add protein. When she must eat out, she chooses turkey or fish that has been prepared healthily or a salad. “It really is kind of crazy that now I am in this routine, I really don’t want those foods that I used to eat like cakes and cookies,” said Gail. “Now, a treat for me is yogurt with fresh fruit.”

Another important aspect of her lifestyle change was incorporating more exercise. With a small child and a husband that works a lot of hours, she had to be creative. “I started doing the ZUMBA

workouts at home. Then, I started coming to the Wellness Center at Rockcastle Regional...I am here almost every day!” said Gail. The range of classes and opportunities for fitness keep me coming back. I enjoy trying new workouts.” Gail incorporates a variety of exercises into her week...including everything from the treadmill and weights to kettle bell class to meditation and ZUMBA.

Gail’s motivators for success include always trying new things so you don’t get stuck in a rut and also noticing and paying more attention to the way you prepare food. She also credits having a



At left, Gail Price in February 2012. Above, Gail at 50 pounds lighter in January 2013

workout partner so that you have someone to make you accountable.

Gail has since gone from a size 16 to a size 4 with a 50 pound weight loss. In July of 2012, she had her cholesterol checked again and it had decreased 37 points. “One of the first calls I made was to Dr. Arvin to share the good news,” she said. “He told me great job and to keep it up!”

Gail has really taken charge of her new life and says she is the healthiest she has ever been. While admitting the hardest part was getting started, she is now into a routine and shows no signs of stopping. While she isn’t focused on weight-loss anymore, she will continue making healthy food choices and working on toning and keeping her cholesterol down. “You can get what you want – if you really want it,” she said. “Until last year, my health wasn’t a priority of mine. Now, I actually want to go to the gym instead of sitting around watching t.v.”

Gail recently completed her first race and ran in the Snowball Express on January 27 in Brodhead.

You can get what you want — if you really want it.