

Losing Weight, Gaining Your Health

Cape Neurosurgeon Loses 60 Pounds on Starting Point Program

by Delain Stafford

Kevin A. Vaught, MD, a neurosurgeon with the Brain and NeuroSpine Clinic of Missouri, LLC, and his wife, Christy, made it their joint New Year's resolution to lose weight. But they didn't want some crazy diet that would put their health at risk. In January, they enrolled in the Starting Point program at HealthPoint Fitness, a weight loss program that promotes nutrition and healthy lifestyle changes rather than traditional dieting.

Dr. Vaught, a member of the Southeast Missouri Hospital Medical Staff, said he and Christy enjoyed the spirit of camaraderie during the program's weekly meetings.

"Everyone supported and encouraged each other and the process was fun, so we wanted to keep going back."

The group meetings — a core component of the program — are coached by dietitians who teach participants about nutrition and establishing healthy lifestyle patterns. "You learn how to recognize the pitfalls we often face, like social eating and other bad habits that can lead to weight gain," Dr. Vaught says. "The key is learning to change those habits so you can keep the weight off."

The program also utilizes a unique meal replacement product called Health One®, which can be made into shakes, muffins, pancakes, pizza crust, baked chips, soup and a variety of other dishes. "My big fear going into the program was always being hungry," Dr. Vaught says. He was pleasantly surprised to find that the high-protein shakes kept that from being a problem. The Vaughts also enjoyed experimenting with some of the other Health One recipes together. Dr. Vaught's favorite? Lemon bars.

Dr. Vaught says he and Christy saw results each time they stepped on the scale, so it was easy to stick with the program. Ultimately, he lost 60 pounds and improved his health dramatically. His initial lab work showed high cholesterol and was consistent with early diabetes. By the end of the program in May, all his lab results were normal. He says the difference between his before and after photos was remarkable.

His experience with the Starting Point program has also inspired Dr. Vaught to incorporate more patient education into his practice. "As a neurosurgeon, I see obesity play a role in back pain and other problems. Weight loss could help improve these conditions."

Dr. Vaught also encourages others considering the program to dive in. "It's a safe, well-structured program," he says. "Anyone committed to losing weight and improving his or her health can

Did You Know?

The Starting Point program has been available at HealthPoint in Cape and Jackson since October 2004. Since that time, more than 500 people in southeast Missouri have completed Starting Point.



Kevin A. Vaught, MD, incorporates cycling into his fitness routine.

do it. It really is an achievable goal with the support and guidance of the coaches. You just show up and do your part."

How It Works

Starting Point offers a comprehensive, intensive approach to successful weight loss. "This program is not a quick fix, it is a highly-effective treatment option with long-term results," says **Raina Childers, MS, RD, LD**, a registered dietitian at Southeast Missouri Hospital and nutritional services coordinator at HealthPoint Fitness.

You don't have to be a member of HealthPoint Fitness to participate in Starting Point. New classes will begin Oct. 28 at both Cape and Jackson HealthPoint locations. If you're interested in enrolling, call **573-986-4440** or visit **healthpointplaza.com**.