

Towanda Young Puts her Health First

Towanda Young, a UPMC employee for 25 years, admits that her own health and wellness have rarely been on the top of her priority list.

“I’ve always put the needs of others in front of my own,” explains Towanda, who works in UPMC’s Corporate Payroll Department. “I raised two sons, help with my church, watch my granddaughter, you name it. I’ve never really taken time for me,” she reports.

With her sons now in their twenties, and some seldom-used exercise equipment in her “empty nest,” Towanda wanted to make a change and improve her overall health.

The UPMC Health Plan Let’s Get *Active!* campaign gave her the extra push she needed.

Let’s Get *Active!*, a four-week physical activity campaign, encouraged UPMC employees to incorporate more physical activity into their day. Specifically, participants were tasked with taking at least a one-mile walk (or other equivalent aerobic exercise) on five or more days a week.

She and several co-workers decided to walk the floors of their office building, the U.S. Steel Tower, each day.

“At first I didn’t see the weight loss on the scale,” reports Towanda. “But I knew I needed to be patient and give it time.”

She soon started to exercise at home in the mornings as well, doing a combination of squats, sit-ups, and time on the treadmill and stationary bike.

Towanda has recently started to see the pounds come off, but she is even more proud of her progress in changing to a healthier lifestyle than she is of the numbers on the scale.

Her advice to others: “Don’t get frustrated, and take even small amounts of time for yourself. With time, you’ll see and feel the difference.”