

Patient Testimonial

Bariatric surgery and regular fitness helps Menomonie woman lose and keep off weight

JoAnn Trainor decided it was time to speak with her doctor about her health when her daughter asked her if she had ever considered gastric bypass surgery. The 60-year-old Menomonie woman struggled with her weight most of her life and had high blood pressure, sleep apnea, prediabetes and high cholesterol. She was overweight and wanted to make a change.

Trainor was accepted into the bariatric surgery program at Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire. She completed the required presurgery program, which includes help from physicians, a dietitian and an exercise physiologist. During this time, she began exercising and eating healthier.

In March 2012, she had Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery. Trainor began to lose weight and continued with regular exercise. For 12 months after her surgery, Trainor attended monthly support group meetings to connect with people who were on the similar journeys. "It was very helpful to hear their stories and keep me motivated."

Four years later, Trainor continues to improve her health and still exercises daily. "I try to do some form of exercise every day. Some days, it's at the Employee Fitness Center," says Trainor, who has worked at Mayo Clinic Health System – Red Cedar in Menomonie for nine years. "I keep workout clothes in my car, so I can go right after work. Even if I only have 20 minutes, I'll go. Twenty minutes is better than nothing."

Trainor attends fitness classes, water aerobics and participates in 5K runs and walks, including the Buckshot Run in Eau Claire. Due to arthritis in her ankle, Trainor completes these events while walking. She is proud to have completed her first half marathon in October 2015.

"Completing the half marathon was great," says Trainor. "I walked it with my sister. My goal was to finish, and we did it within the time limit. We each have two daughters who ran the half marathon, so it was a fun and special family affair."

Trainor also makes an effort to walk and ride her bike as much as possible. Even in the winter months, she bundles up and walks to work. Overall, Trainor's health has improved greatly. She no longer needs some medications or a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device to treat sleep apnea. Since her surgery, Trainor has lost approximately 130 pounds.

"I feel better. I'm off medications, and I'm happier about myself," says Trainor. "The key is to stay motivated and to do some form of exercise every day."

