



Eduardo's Story



Eduardo wasn't taking care of himself.

He wasn't exercising regularly and didn't have a healthy diet. As his health started to decline Eduardo was feeling sick and suffering from stomach pains. He didn't have a primary care physician and wasn't sure where to turn for help.

That's when a friend recommended that he visit Esperanza Health Centers, a United Way partner agency that provides free or greatly reduced price health services. When he had his first check-up at the clinic, his blood sugar level was 400—almost 4 times the normal recommended level. The doctor then diagnosed Eduardo with diabetes. "My head was spinning," said Eduardo, "I was scared but I made the decision to take the bull by the horns."

The doctor prescribed medication to get Eduardo's diabetes under control, which he was able to purchase at a low cost directly from Esperanza. The doctor told Eduardo that Esperanza always had its doors open for him. She encouraged him to enroll in support groups and nutrition classes at the health clinic. In the classes, Eduardo learned new ways of preparing food as well as how to prepare a meal plan that worked with his diabetes. The doctor also recommended that Eduardo start a regular exercise routine. He started to go on short runs in his neighborhood, increasing his mileage little by little. After a few months he was running 5 miles at a time.

Eduardo is now running regularly and even completed the Chicago Marathon in support of Esperanza Health Centers. Eduardo's weight when he was diagnosed with diabetes was 205 lbs. With the help of Esperanza's nutritional classes and support groups and his exercise routine, Eduardo now weighs 160 lbs and has control over his diabetes.

Eduardo says his life is completely different now and credits his success to Esperanza and United Way, "It is vital, the help that they provide people."

Eduardo's story—and thousands more like it—changed because of people like you.

Through proven strategies and quality programs, United Way measurably improves lives for individuals, families and entire neighborhoods across the region. Join us and change the story for those in need in greater Chicago.

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Eduardo's story changed because of people like you. Help us continue to *change* the story.