

Flagler Health+ Employee Steps into a Healthier Life After Heart Attack & Stroke

By Jennifer Jamack

Ebony is a 34-year-old woman who defeats all odds. She is strong, courageous, and determined to enhance her overall health after recovering from not only a heart attack, but also a stroke. She did so with help from the Flagler Health+ CareSteps program.

“After struggling to learn to walk, speak, and function all over again, I feared my life may never be completely normal again,” said Ebony. Most importantly Ebony recognized that if she continued to follow the path of unhealthy eating, she would likely end up right back in the hospital.

An employee of Flagler Health+, she decided to join the CareSteps wellness program. This program offers a personalized approach to help all of the organization’s benefits-eligible employees achieve their wellness goals, no matter how big or how small.

“I really wasn’t ready to start a weight loss journey,” she continued, “but my diabetes, high blood pressure and medical emergencies inspired me to take a leap of faith.”

She made an appointment with Wellness Coordinator Kyle Murdock and opened up about her obsession with juice and poor daily eating habits. Kyle initiated a plan where Ebony would carefully log her food intake, and they would conduct bi-weekly meetings to review her progress and make an overall lifestyle change.

“I have tried so many diets it’s not funny,” she said. “I could always lose the weight but never keep it off. Kyle helped me adopt a complete lifestyle change, not a diet.”

During the bi-weekly counseling sessions, Kyle provided guidance, conducted a biometric screening, and provided tips on how to make her food log more successful.

“The one thing about this relationship that stood out to me was the ease of speaking with Kyle. He never made me feel judged.” Knowing that Ebony was able to rely on Kyle’s expertise, helped her stay



Above: Ebony After with Kyle. Right: Ebony Before.



true to herself and want to do her best with losing the weight and sticking to her wellness plan.

In over a year, Ebony has lost 70 pounds and 10% body fat!

“For anyone trying to lose weight or start eating healthier, I want to say, don’t give up. This did not happen overnight, nor is it a quick fix. You didn’t put the pounds on overnight, and you won’t lose them overnight, but if you keep going, you will get to your goal.”

Ebony’s new goal is to reduce the amount of medication she is taking, and ultimately feel good in her clothes.

“One of the most rewarding parts of

my journey has been helping my whole family change their eating habits and start exercising more often,” she added. “My cousin started going to the gym with me three days a week, and has also tried to remain supportive in developing a healthier lifestyle after seeing my success.”

“Coach Kyle” has been with Ebony every step of the way and loves seeing her become more confident, happy, and determined to achieve other goals in her life after getting through multiple hurdles. “This has been an incredible journey to follow. She seems to now have an attitude that she can do anything – and I believe her,” he smiles. *ng*

ABOUT CARESTEPS

CareSteps offers unlimited one-on-one wellness coaching sessions, group fitness classes such as HIIT and Power Yoga, free wellness center access, fun challenges, employee assistance program services, mindfulness meditation classes and more. Flagler Health+ employees have the opportunity to earn paid time off for participating in personal health and development programs. This ‘wellness your way’ approach is designed to assist employees on their wellness journey.

About Us: Flagler Hospital is a 335-bed, acute care hospital. The hospital has operated as a not-for-profit healthcare institution in St. Augustine, Florida, since its founding in 1889. Flagler Hospital has also earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ from the Joint Commission for primary stroke care centers, national accreditation for its total hip and total knee replacement programs, accreditation from the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer, Center of Excellence designation for its bariatric surgery center, and ANCC magnet status for nursing excellence. To learn more about all of the hospital’s services, log on to www.FlaglerHospital.org.