

# Weight Matters



## Success

### Charles Scott

Charles Scott is a true success story. For more than 25 years, he was 350 pounds or more overweight and suffered from a series of medical conditions including diabetes, high-blood pressure, lower leg edema and arthritis. "My family doctor told me that if I did not get the weight off, I was going to die in the near future," he said.

At 563 pounds, Scott wanted to get healthy using diet and exercise. In April of 2004, he joined the Medical Weight Management Program at The Methodist Hospital. Through the medically-supervised program, he learned how to lose weight with nutrition, behavior modification and exercise, and he received encouragement by participating in support group meetings. He lost over 300 pounds, and two years later, he has kept the weight off.

His health has improved as well. He is off of all of his medications, his blood pressure is normal, his lower leg edema is gone, and he has more energy and is able to enjoy physical activities with his daughter.

His advice for others considering weight loss: "No matter what your situation, no matter what your history — you can be successful and improve your health and physical fitness. I hope that my story can help inspire others."

## Obesity Health Risks Include World's Leading Killers

Living with too much weight is more than a cosmetic problem. Obesity can lead to some of the world's scariest diseases. The long list of health problems associated with overweight and obese people includes heart disease and stroke, some cancers, Type 2 diabetes, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea and breathing problems, hypertension and others.

Knowing these health risks and taking action to resist them can save lives. Losing just 5 to 10 percent of body weight — as little as 10 pounds — can reduce many of these health risks.

- Because obese and overweight people are likely to have high blood pressure, high levels of bad cholesterol and low levels of good cholesterol, they are at risk for **heart disease and stroke**.
- **Cancers** of the colon, kidney, esophagus, uterus and breast have been linked to obesity and being overweight. Doctors don't know exactly how extra weight increases cancer risks, but they believe fat cells produce hormones that may affect cell growth, which in turn, can lead to certain types of cancer.
- **Type 2 diabetes** is the most common type of diabetes in the United States. Formerly called adult-onset diabetes, many patients refer to the condition as having high blood sugar. Most Type 2 diabetes patients — more than 80 percent — are overweight.
- High cholesterol is a risk factor for gallstones, painful clusters of solid material that grow in the gallbladder and can lead to **gallbladder disease**.
- **Osteoarthritis** occurs when joints and cartilage wear away, and extra weight puts additional pressure on both. Extra body fat also produces inflammation-causing substances that damage the joints and raise the osteoarthritis risk.
- **Sleep apnea** stops breathing for short periods. Stored neck fat can actually make airways smaller and limit breathing, especially at night. Too much stored body fat can also lead to inflammation, another risk factor for this disease.

Losing weight, even minimal amounts, reduces the risk factors for all of the above diseases.



free

### FREE Orientation Sessions

To learn more about the Methodist Weight Management Center, sign up to attend a FREE upcoming orientation session.

To register, please call (832) 667-LOSE or visit [www.methodistweightmanagement.com](http://www.methodistweightmanagement.com).

**new**  
**direction**  
weight control system

## Astros Mascot Junction Jack Loses Weight

The Houston Astros mascot, Junction Jack, entered The Methodist Hospital Weight Management Center last month because he wanted to look and feel better and lose a few extra pounds.

Junction Jack “participated” in the Weight Management programs which included counseling and nutritional support, how to make healthy food choices, and the importance of exercising.

“The entire Astros organization applauds Junction Jack for wanting to become a healthier mascot,” said Marian Harper, Astros vice president of community development. “It’s nice to see Junction Jack — a public figure and role model so many children look up to — decide to take positive steps to become more physically fit.”

On Friday, June 2, the new Junction Jack was revealed to fans at Minute Maid Park.



Dr. Jones, medical director of the Weight Management Center, congratulates Junction Jack on his successful weight loss.

## Exercise is Key to Healthy Living

Any kind of movement is a form of exercise. We don’t have to drip sweat and wear spandex to make our bodies healthier and lose weight. A “Keep Moving” mantra can become a way of life — a habit that can reduce disease risk factors and help ensure a longer and better quality life.

Walking is one of the best exercises available. And the directions are easy: put one foot in front of the other and repeat. Relish and enjoy your ability to move the muscles, swing the arms, carry yourself to your destination. The benefits of walking — increased energy and better flexibility — can become a good addiction. Take the stairs, walk the long way around, park far away from the grocery store.

Did you know housework and yard work can be good for your health? They can also save money. Instead of hiring out light household chores, do them yourself. The independent route provides satisfaction and is another way to incorporate movement into daily life.

Once the habit forms, try to expand this movement into a regular workout. First, consult your doctor and make sure you are physically able to start a consistent exercise program.

The second-best step is to find a partner. It’s easy to make excuses when you feel like missing a workout. It’s much harder to do it when someone else is depending on you. Walk with a friend, neighbor or family member. Join your closest club with a pool and move around in the water a few times a week. Swimming is a low-impact sport which exercises the body without putting stress on the joints. Try to work up to the recommended four to six workouts a week, with the sessions lasting from half an hour to an hour.

Keep moving and lose extra weight, reduce your health risks and live happier. One last benefit: when you’re moving so much, it’s harder to find time to eat.



## Mary Jo Rapini, M.Ed., L.P.C.

Mary Jo Rapini is a psychotherapist at The Methodist Hospital Weight Management Center. She conducts psychological evaluations for patients who wish to undergo bariatric surgery, and leads several support groups for the clinic. Rapini’s specialty area involves intimacy issues as they relate to patients with chronic illnesses, especially obesity.

Rapini is a firm believer in the value of diet, exercise, and faith in psychological well-being. Her experiences in psychotherapy have been diverse, and she is an expert in psychosocial issues of breast cancer, intimacy and sexual issues for the chronically ill patients, sexuality of the working woman, stress avoidance tactics, loving yourself, and marriage survivorship.



**“I have such a passion for patients with chronic illness who still have intimate needs, from friendly hugs to relationships with significant others.”**

**— Mary Jo Rapini**