

Waimārama's Story, Ngāti Kauwhata

In February, during a visit at the family doctor with her kids Waimārama told the doctor she had lost 10kg in the last 6 months and had started drinking 3-4 L of water a day. Although she was feeling good the doctor sent her for a blood test. Two days later the nurse called her back in.

"I was panicked that the nurse wanted me to come straight in" said Waimārama.

Waimārama was diagnosed with diabetes and an HbA1c of 104.

"My Mum, Dad, and Gran all have diabetes. The amount of junk I've eaten – chocolate and the sweetest cakes from the bakery – no wonder I've got diabetes" said Waimārama.

Waimārama and her partner attended the Manawatū Horowhenua Tararua Diabetes Trust self-management classes the next month. At the first class Waimārama found out about the complications of diabetes – heart, eyes, circulation, amputation and kidney troubles.

"I was shocked. I'd never heard bad stories about losing sight or legs because of diabetes before".

Another important turning point for Waimārama was listening to the stories of other people in the MHT Diabetes Trust classes.

"When you see someone in your class who hasn't managed their diabetes and had a heart attack it makes you realise how real it is" said Waimārama.

After the first MHT Diabetes Trust class her whole family got on board to change how they shopped, cooked, and what they ate.



"My partner was the one making me take it seriously" said Waimārama. "We cut out all the sugary snacks, processed foods, and puddings". "I was referred to the dietitian Melissa at the Central PHO. She's lovely, lots of new ideas and non-judgemental."

Waimārama also took on board the message of 30 minutes exercise a day.

"I love walking. It's always in my head, 30 minutes a day from the classes. It makes me feel rejuvenated".

After 3 months when Waimārama had her second blood test her results came back with an HbA1c of 48. Waimārama's story is a real diabetes success story. Waimārama is continuing to learn new things about how to provide herself and her family with healthy food choices. For her it is a continuing wellness journey.

Waimārama's advice to others with diabetes: Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei. Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.