



## **Media Release**

**Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center**

**Public Affairs Office**

**36000 Darnall Loop**

**Fort Hood, Texas, 76544**

**[mikaela.t.cade.civ@mail.mil](mailto:mikaela.t.cade.civ@mail.mil) Email**

**Telephone (254) 288-8005**

**Web site: [www.crdamc.amedd.army.mil](http://www.crdamc.amedd.army.mil)**

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### **Army Wellness Center offers tools to ensure health and fitness success**

FORT HOOD, Texas—"I'm seeing results," said Maj. Karl Harness. "I'm already down a shirt size and my pants are too big. I'm well on my way to that 'beach body' I've always wanted."

How did the 1st Cav. Div. Soldier achieve such great success? Not from following some fad diet from a magazine.

Harness decided to tap into the Fort Hood Army Wellness Center (AWC) and the varied health promotion programs it offers after he initially visited an AWC at another post.

AWCs at various installations provide standardized primary prevention programs designed to promote and sustain healthy lifestyles and improve the overall well-being of Soldiers, Family Members, Retirees, and DA Civilians.

Preventing disease and injury before they occur is the key factor in the Army Medical Command's recent "Performance Triad: Your prescription for a longer, healthier life" campaign. The AWC supports its clients as they strive to meet the Performance Triad's emphasis on nutrition, sleep, and exercise.

The AWC uses a holistic approach, taking into account all of an individual's physical, psychological and social circumstances when providing services. The knowledgeable and experienced staff at AWCs helps clients set individual goals, shows them the best way to achieve their goals and continues to follow up with them.

That individualized and personal service at the AWC especially appealed to Harness. "It's one thing to read about diet and exercise in a book or on-line. But it's a whole other thing to have your own

tailored plan and personal trainer. I think that's the difference between actually meeting your goals and giving up on your goals," he added.

The AWC's concept of "well-coaching" has proven key in helping Harness and other clients achieve—and sustain—success.

"We appreciate that change is hard and takes time. Life happens and sometimes the best laid plans and intentions get reprioritized and/or folks get discouraged and give up on their goals altogether," stated Allyson Pritchard, director of the Fort Hood AWC. "Our health educators work with clients to help them set realistic, attainable goals as well as 'coach' clients through, around and over the obstacles that they will undoubtedly encounter along the road to meeting their goals. We don't want to be a one-stop-shop and done. Our clients are encouraged to return with frequency for as long as they need us."

AWCs offer health and fitness assessments to create a snapshot of a person's health and create individualized plans and strategies for improving health, fitness, nutrition and weight loss/gain/maintenance.

The AWC uses state-of-the-art testing and equipment such as the Bod Pod which accurately calculates a person's body-fat percentage and metabolic testing which measures the amount of calories burned while the body is at rest. The direct-gas submax VO<sub>2</sub> test determines a person's target heart rate by monitoring his or her breathing while jogging or running on a treadmill.

"We also offer strength and flexibility testing that helps us establish a baseline for a client's physical fitness," Pritchard said. "At our center we are piloting a functional movement screen where we look at seven basic movements that are part of people's normal routines. While it's not diagnostic, if we identify incorrect form we can provide exercises that can help individuals correct or adapt their form. The premise is to help reduce muscular skeletal injuries."

The AWC also offers education classes and information on topics such as healthy lifestyles, good sleep habits, increased resiliency, preventing chronic disease through healthy living habits, and self-care. For stress management, the AWC offers biofeedback, stress relief techniques, and positive coping skills.

Jeannie Drayton, a Department of Army civilian who works at the Department of Public Works, said she has learned quite a bit during her visits to the AWC.

“All the testing and education sessions have been so helpful. I’ve learned so much,” Drayton said. “For instance, I was surprised that with my current weight and body composition, I’m considered ‘at risk.’ Also, I didn’t know just how much stress and sleep can affect your metabolism and weight.”

Drayton said with the help of the staff at the AWC she’s motivated and confident she will meet her goal to lose weight and get fit.

Eligible DoD card holders may self-refer to the AWC. The Fort Hood AWC is located at the Resiliency Campus, building 12019. For more information visit the CRDAMC website <http://www.crdamc.amedd.army.mil/prev-med/hpw.aspx#wtl> or call (254) 288-8488.