

## Participating in MissionPoint's pilot food program helps Kimberly learn healthy habits



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- Kimberly Harris

Kimberly Harris knew she needed help, but didn't know who to ask.

Deeply depressed, she was struggling to manage three painful health conditions – lupus, fibromyalgia and rheumatoid arthritis – that rendered her unable to work. Seeking to get Kimberly the help she needed, her psychiatrist suggested she reach out to MissionPoint.

“MissionPoint has been a blessing to me,” Kimberly said. “I called MissionPoint hoping to get access to the YMCA to exercise, but I got so much more.”

Shortly after becoming a MissionPoint member, Kimberly opted for gastric sleeve surgery to help her lose weight and better control her hypertension.

That's when her Health Partner, Jessica, suggested that she enroll in a food program pioneered by MissionPoint and Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee. The program provided one healthy meal a day for eight weeks as part of a pilot to determine the effect of good nutrition

on health. For Kimberly, the timing was perfect – she received healthy meals throughout her recovery from surgery.

In addition to offering prepared meals in a time of need, the food program was a chance for Kimberly to change her eating habits. Living on a fixed income means she often makes tradeoffs at the grocery store. In the past, that meant buying cookies and frozen pizzas, instead of pricier fruits and vegetables.

“The food program has shown me what a balanced meal looks like – what the portions should be.” Kimberly said. “And, it has given me ideas for meals I can cook myself.”

Almost a year after accessing MissionPoint services, Kimberly is well on her way to better health.

“Having a Health Partner and being part of the food program has really helped me,” she said. “I just hope that other people benefit from it, too.”