



HOW THE NUMBERS CHANGED



BEFORE/AFTER

SIZE → 12  
→ 8

WAIST → 33.5 IN.  
→ 33 IN.

HIPS → 40 IN.  
→ 39 IN.

THIGH → 22 IN.  
→ 19.5 IN.

WEIGHT LOSS  
→ 16 LB.

↑ BEFORE: photographed on June 17, 2010  
← AFTER: photographed on November 3, 2010

# MY (RELUCTANT) FITNESS MAKEOVER

Life was good! Nachos for lunch. Cocktails before dinner. Spinach dip at midnight. Exercise, never. Here's how my day of reckoning arrived—and a workout-phobe became a new woman >> *by* JUDITH NEWMAN

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**HERE** are the facts about me. I am 49 and had kids at 40. (Twins—better living through chemistry.) I am chronically sleep deprived. I never exercise. I am five foot eight and have always been 20 to 25 pounds overweight. Never mind what that number on the scale is; I don't know, and I don't want to know. But I've been a size 12, fluctuating to a 14 or even 16, my entire life.

Here's the truth: I never really minded. Having my particular father helped. My skinny father was a chubby chaser; my mother was always fat, and he liked it that way. And you know that when it comes to body image, fathers matter. I was doted on and admired, and I never grew up with the sense that I'd be more appealing if I dropped a few. Undoubtedly there were plenty

SETTING LIMITS

The USDA recommends consuming two to three servings of low-fat or nonfat dairy a day for optimum health (a serving is equal to 1 cup of milk or yogurt or 1.5 to 2 ounces of cheese). Neither the government nor the National Dairy Council considers three servings an upper daily limit. But the independent experts consulted by *More* emphasized that if you're aiming to give your diet an overall disease-fighting effect, you need diversity in your menus, and that mission is difficult to accomplish if you're eating more than three servings of dairy a day.

Three servings of low-fat milk, for instance, provide 75 to 100 percent of your daily calcium needs; you can find additional calcium in other foods you're urged to eat, such as broccoli and other greens, or make up the difference with supplements. In fact, some experts, such as Harvard's Willett, maintain that two servings a day—not three—is the more prudent amount in light of some very preliminary research that links the lactose in three dairy servings a day to increased ovarian-cancer risk. "Just as important, having three servings a day instead of two doesn't seem to provide any additional benefit in terms of preventing bone fractures," he says. In other words, by Willett's calculations, eating two servings a day would provide you with the bone-sparing advantages of dairy without subjecting you to any known possible ovarian-cancer risk.

However, since fortified dairy is the main source of vitamin D, there's reason to continue including at least some of it in your diet. "Some of the most promising research on diet and cancer is on the protective effect of vitamin D," says Patricia Moorman, PhD, associate professor of medicine at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina. To make sure you're getting enough D from a dairy product, check the label (vitamin D does not occur naturally in high amounts in dairy, so it is added).

DRUMROLL, PLEASE

All right, maybe a kazoo squeak would be more appropriate. Because this is a story of succeeding despite not rigorously sticking to a program. Even partial changes can give you good results.

After five months of exercising and controlling my food intake, I lost 15 pounds. (And I liked the meal plans so much, I ended up paying for a couple of months myself when the freebies ran out.) I went from a tight size 12 to a supertight (but breathable) size 8.

Aside from a week of illness, I worked out—cardio and/or weight training—two to four times a week. I could have done more, but I didn't. Nonetheless, I lost eight inches around my waist, hips, thighs, arms and chest. I stand straighter, though I still have to think about it. I have much more energy, which is a very pleasant surprise; at night my children and I dance to Lady Gaga. At last count, my blood pressure was 120/70. My fasting glucose level has fallen to 91. My LDL cholesterol is now a healthy 102. My numbers weren't terrible to begin with, but now they are clearly out of any you-gotta-be-careful zone.

Have I changed my habits? I think so. I am never, ever going to be cooking three balanced, small, tasty meals a day for myself, so the transition to eating on my own versus accepting deliveries is difficult. But I make a point of eating something with a little protein in it three times a day, whether it's a bit of peanut butter in the morning or my current favorite, a shake containing Dr. Morrison's Daily Benefit Daily Detox Powder, a 160-calorie rice-based cinnamony concoction. (For stores, go to [dailybenefit.com](http://dailybenefit.com).) And I'm continuing with a trainer. Now that this is on my own nickel, I've strong-armed a friend into joining me for a group session, cutting costs and reducing my chances of being bored.

I think I can live like this. I am cautiously optimistic. But ask me in a year.

There was one goal, though, that I am very happy was attained. This weekend, Zach reported, he and M. told each other, "I love you."

3 servings of veggies in one box. Pretty amazing they all fit.



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