

Spring time slim down

Written by Marcia Humphrey • Style on a Dime
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I'm getting a late start on this week's article because I just came in from riding my new bike (got it from Costco for a good deal-it would've cost at least \$100 more at Dick's Sporting Goods). I couldn't resist the beautiful sunny weather and warm temperatures. Spring is definitely coming and that's my cue to put my fitness activities into high gear-I'll soon be peeling out of my long heavy sweaters, and I need to make sure that I can comfortably fit back into my warm-weather clothing. After all, who has money to buy a new wardrobe just because of gaining a few pounds??

Like many women, I am always looking for a new, quicker way to reach my fitness goals, without expensive meal plans like Jenny Craig or high-cost personal training sessions. By visiting the library and borrowing, not buying, a few key fitness magazines, like *Self*, *Shape*, and *Women's Fitness*, I have combined a few principles to make my own DIY Spring Fitness Program-I'm calling it "Just Say, 'NO!'" So join me on my fitness quest, and hopefully we will soon be putting away winter coats with confidence!

NO More Shooting for Instant Results! Since I know that slow and steady gives better results, I plan to lose 1-2 pounds a week by eating several small meals throughout the day, which helps to keep my metabolism moving. I'm not going with my old strategy of fasting to shed pounds quickly, only to find them, plus one additional pound, a week later. Also I will give myself two to three weeks to slowly reduce portion size and I'll begin keeping a food journal.

NO Starving Myself! Lots of unsuccessful dieters complain that it's hard to stick to a diet, because they feel deprived. For me, when I still feel unsatisfied after eating a meal, I go on an eating rampage! I have been known to hit two, *even three* drive-thru windows, in one day, trying to satisfy my demanding taste buds. Truth is, there are some foods that are far more satisfying than others: vegetable and bean-based soups and chilis, lean grilled meats, brown rice, whole grain couscous and pastas, are all good choices that keep you feeling full. Don't forget the nuts; just don't overdo it -- about a handful will do.

NO Being a Couch Potato! Now that my neighborhood streets are no longer covered with a sheet of ice, I'm going to take my new bike out for a spin or lace up my gym shoes and take a brisk walk at least 3 times weekly (as long as the weather is at least 35 degrees). When I can't

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go out, I plan on using the **free** On-Demand feature of my Comcast cable service to access fitness videos that I can do in my family room.

So you see, there is absolutely no reason why I have to pay big bucks to jumpstart my fitness program (no reason for you to either). Since successful eating is probably 85% of the fitness equation, and exercise is the other 15%, my goal is to say, "NO" to mindless eating; say, "NO" to supersized meals; and say "NO" to the notion that eating is the only social activity that there is!

Finally, I plan to celebrate spring by going outdoors as often as possible and moving --it's a gift from God to have strength to do so. Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.