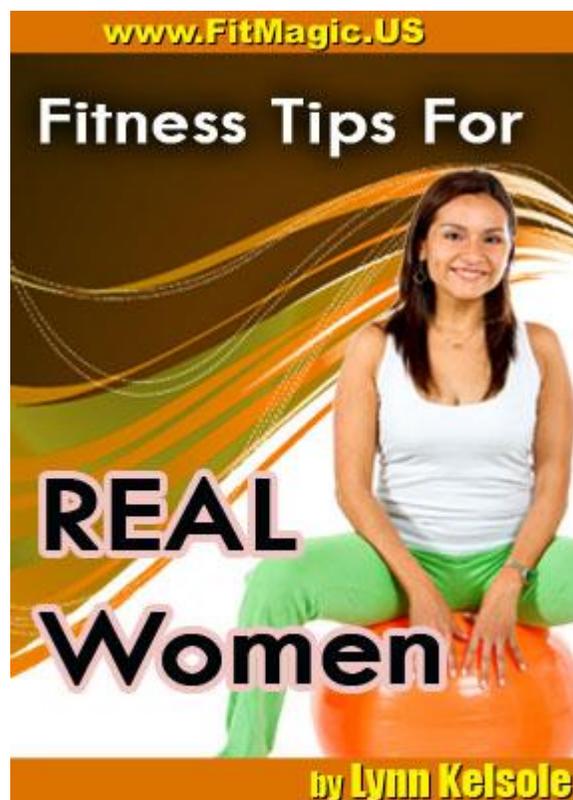


Fitness Tips For REAL Women

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The busy schedule for most women tends to result in them putting their own needs last. When they try to juggle home life, being a mother, and a job time is often something in short supply. However, staying healthy at any age is very important, especially for women. If you aren't taking good care of yourself, you can't take care of the needs of anyone else either.

We live in a society where models and celebrities are on TV, magazines, and everywhere we look. The impression given to women is that we have to look a certain way. That pressure can be very tough but it is something that has to be put into the past.

Today is the day to look at what you have going for yourself as a real woman. Most of us don't have unlimited time for working out, personal trainers, people to make meals for us, and numerous other aspects that make the lives of models easier to focus on their bodies.

As a real woman though, there are steps you can take that will allow you to feel good about yourself. Losing weight and getting fit are important steps to take. They should be a priority in your day so that you will be able to be healthy and feel great.

Finding that balance where you are able to carve out time for your own fitness and to eat right is very important. Make it a priority every single day so that it starts to fit well into your routine. Keep in mind that you are a real woman, and not someone that can be stretched too thin in any one direction.

Your fitness needs are going to change during different parts of your life too; for example: when you are pregnant, when you have a baby, going through menopause, and much more. Your fitness goals are going to need to be evaluated and updated as you go through such changes.

It is important to start by talking to your doctor. Get a full assessment of where you are in terms of overall fitness. You can make the necessary changes, but they won't happen overnight. Talk to your doctor about how you can lower your health risks, lose weight, and get back into shape.

As you make eating right and exercising part of your daily routine, you will find you look better. You will also find that you feel better both physically and mentally. Too many women are fatigued, irritable, and suffering from stress and anxiety every single day.

That is a huge weight on their shoulders to be able to eliminate. If you are a busy woman that wants to be healthier and to look better, this information can be a step towards making positive changes in your life.

Chapter 2

Evaluating your Fitness Goals

What are your goals right now when it comes to your level of fitness? For many women, they do desire to get into shape. However, they have no game plan to make it happen. Instead, they say when they have time, one day they will get started, and then that day doesn't come.

You need to make that day one in the very near future. However, you want to be able to layout some goals first. Taking your current level of fitness into consideration is very important. No matter where you are now, you can make changes.

Log Fitness Activities

It helps if you keep a daily log of your fitness activities. By doing so you will be able to see the efforts you are making. Even the small changes such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator make a huge difference. Go for a walk during your lunch break to help you sneak in some extra workout time too.

Schedule Workout Times

The #1 reason that women give for not working out is that they don't have enough time. Granted, your life is likely very fast paced, with not

all the time to get everything done. However, you do need to schedule workout times. Place it at the top of your to do list and you will be able to get it done early in the day.

Get out of bed 20 minutes earlier and workout. Trust me, you won't miss that sleep and you will start your day knowing you have already started to meet your goal of getting some daily exercise. That can improve your motivation and your mood for the rest of the day.



Don't let kids stop you either, take them along! You can take them to the park with you and walk around. You may have to take turns with other moms watching the kids, but you can make it work. Get yourself some workout equipment for home too. Then you can work out while they are asleep.

Do you keep a daily planner of events and meetings? If so, schedule in your workout times. Don't be afraid to say no to additional commitments. You don't have to tell them your reason for declining. Too many women overextend themselves and that contributes to not enough time to work out.

Put your workout times in pen too so you aren't tempted to erase them and to pencil something else in. It can take time for you to not feel guilty about this process but you need to stick to it.

Be Realistic

Sadly, many women end up setting themselves up for failure when it comes to them working out. They try to go from very little to super human. You need to be realistic when it comes to what you strive for. Give your body and your mind time to adjust to the changes that are going to be taking place.

For example you can start out with a goal of walking 15 minutes a day. Then after a week you can kick that goal up to 20 minutes. By the end of the month though, you want your goal to be at 30 minutes or more. These are realistic goals

Stay Motivated

It can be hard to keep yourself motivated when you have so much going on. However, remind yourself why you want to look and feel better. Then you can refer to that list when you need some extra motivation. For example if you want to stay fit to be healthy with your children, then don't feel bad about taking time for you to work out.

Fitness Changes as you get Older

It is important to understand that fitness needs are going to change as you get older. You will likely find your metabolism is going to slow down. Therefore, you may need to work out more to burn calories.

You also want to look at changing the types of exercises you do. Your body should be fully benefiting from them.

If you have health problems such as back or knee pain, don't let that hold you back either. Instead, you can work with your doctor or a fitness coach to be able to find the right types of exercises that are right for you. Make sure you do all you can to keep your bones strong and healthy as you age too.

Fitness Goals after Menopause

Many women find that they seem to gain weight and to lose muscle tone during menopause. Since that period of time can last for many years it is important to be ready for it on a fitness level. The ability to complete a workout that will help you get passed menopause without your body losing muscle or you being at an unhealthy weight is very important.

Forms of exercise that assist with muscle tone are very important during menopause. This includes Pilates and yoga to name a few of them you can take part in. Aerobic exercise is very important too so that you burn calories and your heart remains healthy.

The destruction of bone mass is something that a woman is very vulnerable to once she has started menopause. The average decrease in bone mass can be from 1% to 5% annually. However,

exercising on a regular basis is going to help keep those bones very strong.

The result of this is a body that is strong and able to continue working out. It also means your body is less likely to be harmed by falls where broken bones occur due to that decrease in bone mass.

Many women experience hot flashes, mood swings, and insomnia as they go through menopause. Studies show that regular exercise is the number one way to help reduce the effects of these problems and symptoms. Even women that take hormone replacement therapy are going to be bothered by such symptoms so do all you can to reduce their effects.

Chapter 3

Should I Join a Fitness Group or Hire a Trainer?

Many women consider joining a fitness group or hiring a personal trainer. Some gyms have such trainers available. These could be options that you want to consider. However, there are some pros and cons to each of them that you want to evaluate. Only then will you be able to really decide which route you should take.

When you join a fitness group you will have access to all types of exercise classes and equipment. This is going to be less expensive than buying a few pieces for your home. You can also work on different equipment to decide what you like the most. The idea is to get a quality workout but to also be doing things you enjoy.

You may feel like you have support from others when you belong to a fitness group. The encouragement you get from those around you can be enough to keep you coming back. Plus, you can share stories and swap tips for a great workout. Some wonderful friendships can start in such locations.

The downside though is that most women have a tendency to compare themselves to other people. Therefore self confidence can be lacking when they join a fitness group. When they see women that

are fit and trim, they may feel anxious and that can prevent them from coming back in the future to enjoy the environment.

Cost

Many households are on a tight budget right now. That can make joining a fitness group stressful because you don't want to be spending money for the monthly fees if you can't afford it. Many women don't like to waste money though. When they pay for a membership they are going to show up so that they get their money's worth from it.

It is a good idea to explore the fitness group to see what is offered. You will find that there is quite a bit of variety out there among them. Look at prices, what the offer, and the type of membership you have to commit to. Some of them are at least 1 year in term.

Daycare

If you have children, daycare costs can be something to worry about too. You may already feel you are spending too much money on it. Not to mention the additional time you would spend away from your children to participate in the fitness group.

Check around though as many facilities have in house childcare available. It is part of the membership fees. You will be able to bring your children along with you and not worry about additional costs.

They will have fun activities to take part in so you don't have to feel guilty that you are spending some time for yourself either.

Hours

If you have a very busy schedule, the hours of a fitness group can work against you. What you may find it is that you become stressed to be able to get there and do your workout during the hours they have available. There can also be peak hours when the place is so busy you have to wait to get your workout done. That is a frustration as well.

Commute

If the fitness group is a long distance from where you live, the cost of commuting can add up too. Gas isn't cheap these days and continues to get more expensive all the time. The time involved with the commute can add up too. For example if it is 30 minutes each way, then that is an hour a day just to get to the facility to workout.

Many people can belong to a fitness group though and not be getting the workout they really need. That is because the fitness level and needs of each person can be very different. The benefit of a fitness trainer as you get older can really help.

For example if you have gained weight due to a pregnancy or your metabolism slowing down, a personal trainer can help you with the target goals you have in mind. If you want to tone up versus losing weight they can help you to conduct the right type of exercise program.

If you want to be able to gain muscle mass they can assist you in that area too. Many women assume that if they lift weights they will end up bulky but that isn't the case. They can look great and very toned. It can also help them with burning more calories when they workout.

A fitness trainer can help you to stay motivated too when you are getting down on yourself. That is a great benefit and it can be the driving force that keeps you moving forward with your



fitness goals. A fitness trainer can assist with making changes to the workout too as you are ready or as your body and life changes.

A common theme is that a woman is doing very well working out and then she hits a plateau. She feels that she has been stopped right in her tracks. However, a personal trainer can introduce new methods to shake it all up. By doing so, it can be the change that is needed to get passed that plateau.

The secret to doing well with a fitness trainer is to find one you can really work well with. The methods that you use for communicating and your personalities have to mesh. You need to feel that you can tell them anything and that you are getting one on one attention. Be honest with what you would like to accomplish and they can help you to do it.

When you have a fitness trainer you gain the benefit of having someone in place that will show you the right way to perform the various exercises correctly. This significantly reduces the risk of you getting hurt as you perform them. It can also help you to get the most benefit from the time you do spend working out.

Chapter 4

Healthy Weight Loss

If you ask any group of women what they would love to change about their bodies, the majority of them would say their weight. Losing weight requires a formula comprised of two things – watching calorie intake and burning those calories through exercise.

There is no quick fix for losing weight if you want to do it in a healthy manner and keep it off. There are many fad diets out there that restrict your food groups and that isn't good for the body. There are diets that only allow you to have liquids and they aren't good for you. Various pills and supplements are also out there.

Millions of dollars are made annually from the sales of diet products. However, these items simply don't work and that leads women to think they are to blame. They may get some temporary weight loss but it is usually in the form of water weight. They will gain it back when they start eating normal again.

The restrictiveness of many diets is why they fail. It isn't practical or healthy for a person to eat in such a manner. Yo yo dieting can lead to problems with the metabolism and the thyroid. It can also lead to serious eating disorders.

Many of the pills out there offered to help lose weight can cause serious health problems. They include leaks in the valves of heart, insomnia, changes in heart beat, dizziness, and more. They should be avoided at all costs including those that are sold over the counter.

A reasonable weight loss goal is 1 or 2 pounds per week. That doesn't seem like much and you are right. However, this is the best way for your body to successfully adjust to the changes you are making. Just think, if you only lose 1 pound a week for the next 3 months you will be at least 10 pounds lighter and that is significant progress.

Weight Loss and Breastfeeding

It is understandable that a woman wants to lose weight after giving birth. However, while breastfeeding it is essential that both the mother and the baby are able to get the essential nutrients that they need. First, it is important to mention that the act of breastfeeding will help with weight loss naturally.

This is because it helps the hormone levels in the body to get back to normal in less time. You never want to skip meals as that will actually slow down your metabolism and that means it is going to take more time to shed the weight. Plus, skipping meals can release harmful toxins into the milk you are producing to feed to your baby.

The efforts you make to lose weight while breastfeeding need to be mainly in the form of exercising. However, you can create health problems for you and your baby if you exercise too vigorously daily. Talk to your doctor about your own body and what they recommend. You should be able to lose ½ a pound a week without any complications though.

Exercises to Burn Calories

There are many types of exercise you can take part in that will help you to burn calories. Aerobics are very popular and they get your entire body moving. You can do them at home to an exercise video. You can also join a class and get some personal instruction as part of that class.

Walking or jogging is a great way to burn calories. You will find strollers out there for jogging too so you can take your little one along. They will enjoy the fresh air and you can get your workout in without leaving them behind. It is a winning situation that you will both benefit from.

A treadmill is another great type of exercise that you can consider. It will help you to walk, jog, and run at a pace you are happy with. Some of them are very advanced so you can choose the level of incline, see your heart rate, and even see how many calories your exercise session has burned.

If you get bored easily with the same thing, consider circuit training. Many professional athletes use this to burn calories and to build muscle. Circuit training involves spending just a couple of minutes doing a particular exercise. You do it intensely and vigorously until that time is up.

Then you move on to the next exercise in the circuit and do the same thing. It is a great way to get a wonderful work out. Plus, you get to work on various muscle groups. You can set up a low cost form of circuit training at home too. This isn't something that is restricted to only a gym setting.

Sports Activities that can help you Lose Weight

Taking part in various forms of sports can help a woman to successfully shed weight too. These sports include those that really get your body moving. Consider basketball, volleyball, tennis, and racquetball. The idea is to explore various types of sports that you will really enjoy being involved with.

Then you will be having a great time playing them. Your focus will be on having fun rather than on losing weight and exercising. You can decide if you like individual sports or team sports better. Do you feel that you aren't very good at sports you may want to take some lessons. For example tennis lessons can help you to improve your game. Then you can spend more time practicing and playing.

Chapter 5

Eating Right even with a Busy Lifestyle

We all have to eat as that is part of life. Yet most women fail to eat like they should. It is understandable with a busy lifestyle that they grab what they can here and there. However, the calories from a donut and coffee in the morning are ridiculous. Such choices don't keep you full and they can cause you to put on weight. They can also cause you to feel fatigued from an early point in the day.

Eating right doesn't mean your food doesn't taste good either. That is a common misconception. It doesn't mean you have to cook one meal for you and then another for the rest of your family. Not only is that time consuming, it is very expensive.

You should never feel hungry when you are eating a healthy diet. You will find you can consume more than before, but you still have energy and you are losing weight. Making good choices and keeping an eye on portions is important for healthy eating.

Eat Small Meals throughout the Day

If you are one of those women that only eats once a day, your body is suffering. You aren't offering it the fuel it needs to be energized, happy, and healthy. You need to get into the habit of eating 3 to 5

small meals throughout the day. You will find you stay full this way so you aren't going to binge eat when you do sit down.

Only eat what is on your own plate! Mothers tend to hate to waste, so they graze on the leftovers that children leave at the table. This can result in eating too much without realizing it.

Eat Healthy Snacks

Snacks are important too so that your blood sugar remains constant throughout the day. Look for items that you can easily grab on the go for such snacks. There are pre-packed items but you have to be careful with many of them. Make sure you are an avid label reader.

Watch what you Drink

A healthy body requires plenty of water every single day. Make sure you are drinking at least 64 ounces per day. If you don't like the flavor of the water from the tap, add some lemon. You can also buy a water filter and fill up bottles to take to the office.

Drinking a glass of water before each meal is going to help you feel full in less time. It is also going to help you with realizing when you are hungry and when you are thirsty. Too often we assume we are hungry but really our body just needs a drink.

Tons of empty calories are consumed daily due to drinking sugar filled items. They include coffee, soda, latte, and much more. Pay close attention to them because they can cause you to consume hundreds more calories a day than you should.

If you get tired of plain water, consume green tea. It tastes great both hot and cold. Try it out to see how you like it the best. Diet soda isn't really good for you either due to the high level of sodium found in it. Juice often is high in sugar so make sure you look at labels.

Adults should be drinking milk daily for healthy bones and teeth. Whole milk has a great deal of fat in it though. Consider switching to 2% milk so that you get the nutrition without all of the fat. You can do this with other dairy products too including cheese.

Alcohol should only be consumed in moderation. That is a big area where many women pack on extra pounds without realizing it. There are studies that say a glass of wine with dinner is good for you. However, this can also be additional calories if you don't keep a close eye on what else you are consuming along with it.

Plan a Menu

How many times do you go out to eat or hit the drive up window for dinner because you don't have time to go to the grocery store? This is a common dilemma for many mothers. Planning a menu though will

help you to have everything on hand you need to make delicious meals.

You can plan in advance and make casseroles, place food in a crock pot so it is ready when you get home, and more. Mothers don't always have the time to cook as much as they would like. Still, there are some really simple ideas out there that allow you to do so.

You can even cook a double batch of something so it is dinner for two nights. Then you only have to cook every other night. This is a great way to ensure the entire family has time with each other and you don't get stressed out in the kitchen so much.

Pack your Lunches

If you work outside of the home consider packing your own lunch. This is going to save you a great deal of money over going out each day. You can eat in the break room or you can go to a nearby park. Once you are done eating you may have time to fit in a nice walk before you go back to work.

When you pack your lunches, you can be confident you have food you like. You can also make sure you have some healthy choices to select from. If you don't have time to eat breakfast before rushing out the door, pack something you can munch on the way such as a granola bar or an apple.

Healthy Eating when you Dine Out

Eating healthy doesn't mean you can't ever go out to eat. There are times when you don't want to cook. There are special occasions and even luncheons for work you need to attend. If you travel a great deal for work or leisure you will be dining out often too.

Learning what types of foods are healthy for you and those that aren't can help you out. For example various sauces at restaurants are typically full of calories. Portion sizes can be ridiculously huge too. Consider asking for a child's portion or splitting a large sized meal with another person.

Eating a salad before your main course is a good idea too. The bread may be delicious but consume it only in moderation. Many restaurants now have the healthier choices on the menu depicted with special symbols. However, if you don't see them ask your server for recommendations.

Keep Plenty of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables on Hand

Sometimes we eat because we are bored or need something to occupy our hands. Keeping plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables on hand is a great way for help you eat right. You can consume plenty of them without it being something to feel guilty about.

You can cut up and wash them so that they are ready to access. You can even place them in plastic bags so that you can easily take them with you in the car or to work. This is a better alternative to consuming a bag of chips or candy from the vending machine when you have the urge to eat something.



Try new Recipes

You never want to get bored with the same old foods when you are eating right. One way to avoid doing so is to try out new recipes. It can be very exciting to do so. What you will find is that many of them your family loves. You can start a recipe collection of them and use those ones again and again.

There are many places you can find great new recipes to try. The internet offers you an abundance of them for free. If you are looking for certain types of foods that are healthy you can narrow down the search based on different keywords.

Try to find new recipes that are simple to make and that aren't very time consuming. Those that don't require tons of ingredients are also going to be very affordable. When you try new recipes you will be excited about healthy eating. With many of the dishes, they taste so good you won't believe they are good for you!

There are plenty of cookbooks out there too from experts you can purchase. They have various recipes you can make including appetizers, entrees, and desserts. Many of them have pictures too so you can see how they are going to be visually appealing for your family.

Consult with a Dietician

If you are struggling to come up with a healthy eating plan on your own, don't give up. You may find that consulting with a dietician can really help. If you or anyone in your family has special needs due to health problems or food allergies they can also help you to customize the planning.

Allow Kids to Help with Planning and Cooking



Get your kids involved with the planning and the cooking. This is a wonderful way for you to give them the gift of healthy eating themselves. When they get to help pick out new dishes to create and they get to be part of cooking them they will be interested in eating them. Older children can help a great deal in the kitchen so let them do what they enjoy. It can also give you time to talk while you are making wonderful food.

Don't Deprive yourself

Eating right doesn't mean you never get to have items you love. In fact, depriving yourself or your children of them is a way to cause you to binge on them. Enjoy that ice cream you love once in a while. Make cookies for the family now and then.

However, you want to keep the consumption of them moderate. You will find that with many healthy choices on hand, you are less likely to want these items. Sometimes just a bite or two of them is going to help you to get passed that initial craving for them.

Chapter 6

The Benefits of Daily Exercise

Daily Exercise offers you plenty of value so don't side step it. Many women don't realize how much better they will feel both physically and emotionally when they exercise.

Physical

When you have mobility of your body you are going to enjoy a better quality of life. Exercising now is going to make older age easier for you. You will find you continue to have a wide range of mobility so you can enjoy life at any age.

When you are able to shed those extra pounds you will have more self confidence too. When we are happy with our physical appearance it carries over to every aspect of our lives.



Heart disease is the #1 killer in the United States for both men and women. Exercising on a regular basis is going to reduce the risk of that occurring for you. With a healthy heart, you have the opportunity to live a longer life and one that is healthier overall.

Emotional

The body releases natural endorphins when you exercise. This is why your mood will improve when you work out. Stress is going to be melting away too as you work out. You will feel good taking time to do something for yourself. At the same time you can feel good about the positive role model you are being for your children.

Exercise and Childbirth

It is highly recommended that you exercise during a pregnancy. Your doctor will discuss with you any limitations or restrictions. The types of exercise you are able to do will depend on how your pregnancy is progressing. Pay close attention to what your doctor tells you in such regards.

Most women find that exercising during a pregnancy helps them to feel good. With the changes in the shape of the body as well as the hormone levels, this is a great way to make sure you feel your best. Studies also show staying active during a pregnancy can reduce the length of the labor.

Your body needs ample time to heal after childbirth so don't be in a rush to start exercising right away. You need to be getting lots of rest and you need to meet the demands of a newborn. However, you may

get out for a nice stroll when your body feels up to it. Pay attention to the cues you get from it.

During your six week checkup, you can discuss with the doctor more advanced forms of exercise. As long as everything is fine you should be able to return to your regular exercise program. You may want do some research about great forms of exercise after a baby is born too.

Exercise and Sex Drive

Many women also find that exercising on a regular basis increases their sex drive. They may have felt on the other end of that spectrum in the past. That is one benefit that can bring new levels of pleasure to your relationship with someone special. Part of how exercise increases sex drive is that stress levels are reduced, mood improves, and you won't feel tired out all the time.

If you are seeing positive changes in your weight and body shape due to the exercising, you will also feel more attractive. When a woman feels attractive it often triggers her desire to take part in intimacy on many levels.

Body Shape

The right combination of exercises for losing weight and toning are important if you want to change your body shape. You may have heard about women being shaped like a pear or an apple. Take your

own body shape into consideration. If you have areas you would like to see changed, find the right exercise plan to make it happen.

Keep in mind though that you need to do an overall workout. You can't allow your body shape to dictate what you will do. For example if you feel that your stomach needs to be tighter you can't just work on your abdominal region. Instead, you have to work on your entire body and those changes will occur with time.

Enjoy It!

The only way you are going to really stick to a great exercise plan is to enjoy it. Don't view working out as something you have to do like cleaning the toilet or other duties. Instead, change your mindset so that you will enjoy it. When you find forms of exercise that entice you, the motivation to continue taking part in them will be there.

Let go of the guilt that you aren't spending every single extra minute with your spouse, your children, or focused on your career. Don't spend your free time making the house perfect. You will be a better person, a better spouse, a better mother, and more focused on your career when you exercise and you eat right.

Chapter 7

Support

Making significant changes in your routine, when it comes to working out and eating healthy, takes time. You are going to need support. Sit down with your spouse and your family. Explain to them what changes you would like for yourself and why.

Ask them to become a part of that journey with you. Most couples and families don't get enough quality time with each other. Ask them to go for walks with you, to play a sport, or even to jump outside in the yard on the trampoline.

Take action to get your entire family up and moving about. Instead of watching TV on a Saturday afternoon plan a picnic and a family hike. Go to the zoo and walk around while you experience the wonderful animals there. Active children are going to become active adults and that is a very big achievement for any mother to be involved with.

Let your family and your partner know how much you need their support. For example ask your partner to watch the children in the evening so you have time to workout if he or she doesn't want to do it with you. Ask them to help you find great recipes to try and to help you to stay focused on your goals.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Your future is completely up to you... however, what you eat and the level of physical exercise you get is going to dictate how you feel. It is going to dictate how your health is overall too. Take a careful look at where you are right now. Be honest and realistic about what is taking place.



If your level of fitness isn't where you want it, take action. Devise a reasonable plan so you can carve out at least 30 minutes a day to begin working out. Find forms of exercise that you enjoy so that you stick with them.

Eating right goes hand in hand with working out. Most of us don't have the best eating habits. Now is the time to change all of that. Be dedicated to eating better and to making new foods that your family hasn't tried before.

Don't consider yourself being on a diet. Instead, you should view your additional exercise and your better eating as a lifestyle change. You will be very happy with how you look and how you feel. In no time at all you will see the differences.

You will be setting an amazing example for your entire family as a woman. The role can be tough but it can also be rewarding to be involved with so many things. Keep it real though – you are only one person and you are human. Don't compare your own image to those of models and other celebrities.

Your goals should be to create a lifestyle where you are healthy and you are happy. Eating right and getting daily exercise are key elements that have to be in place for you to successfully achieve such goals.