

# “How getting healthy changed my life.”

Just one month shy of completing REDBOOK's Real-Life Healthy Life challenge, Adrienne, Julie, and Jennifer have more energy, feel sexier, and are closer to their families than ever. Who knew better nutrition and exercise could do all that? **by Nancy Rones**

Back in January, we introduced you to REDBOOK's Real-Life Healthy Life Makeover and our three reader participants—Adrienne, Julie, and Jennifer. Unlike weight-loss plans designed to deliver fast results via deprivation and flashy gimmicks—you know, the kind that never last—this program was created for long-term success, and our group of knowledgeable experts helped to provide small, gradual steps for getting fit and healthy. Dare we call it the “anti-diet”?

While each of our three participants wanted to lose weight, they also brought their individual challenges and concerns to the table, such as Jennifer's inability to squeeze exercise into her jam-packed schedule and Adrienne's addiction to sweets. Nearly one year later, they've conquered many of their issues, while others are still works in progress (that's *real* life). Each woman is her own amazing success story, equipped with the tools to help her stay healthy for the rest of her life. Here, Adrienne, Julie, and Jennifer share the life-changing lessons they never expected to learn.

**Adrienne  
Schiffer, 34**

Stay-at-home mom;  
married with  
two children, ages 7  
and 4, Powell, OH



More surprising ways that getting healthy can improve your life: ● Exercise becomes easier as you lose pounds. For proof, try holding a one-

# "Exercise strengthened my marriage!"

**WHEN WE FIRST MET ADRIENNE...** after struggling unsuccessfully for years to lose the weight she'd gained during her two pregnancies, her confidence was shot. Once an outgoing, strong woman, she felt herself growing depressed, shying away from social events, and worrying constantly about what others thought of her. This low self-esteem led Adrienne to deprive her body of the healthy foods it needed and deserved—meaning that lunch often consisted of Oreo cookies and cheese nachos. "I always had excuses for why I couldn't exercise or eat healthy," explains Adrienne. "Usually it was, 'I'm too busy,' or 'I'm too tired.' But I felt like I was at the end of my rope, and it was time to break the cycle. I put myself out there with REDBOOK to get the accountability I needed."

## Adrienne's big hurdles and how she's faced them:

■ **A major sweet tooth.** "I still crave sweets, but I've gained more control over them since speaking with Dr. Michael Roizen [M.D., RLHL general-medicine guru and coauthor of *You: The Owner's Manual*]. He told me that realistically I would always have some difficulty with sweets cravings, and that I should simply cut back and find substitutes. Getting permission to have some gave me a better handle on desserts because they didn't seem as 'forbidden,' and therefore desirable. Now, I allow myself some chocolate or ice cream, but I don't get carried away with portions or go back for seconds. Also, I've become more selective. If a treat doesn't taste great, I stop eating it."

■ **Overdoing it on portions.** "Not only do I have a better visual understanding of what a serving is thanks to the portion 'hand tricks' from Lisa Young [Ph.D., RLHL nutrition expert and author of *The Portion Teller*] and switching from 13-inch plates to nine-inch plates, but I also listen to my body when it starts telling me I'm full."

Now, when I do start to eat too much, I actually feel sick."

■ **Feeling guilty for avoiding exercise** while her husband works out regularly. "Gone! At the very beginning of RLHL, I had to push myself to exercise. But once I started feeling healthy and strong from the workouts, I loved going to the gym. Now I'm equally as dedicated to the gym as my husband, Tim—we motivate each other to exercise. It's created some healthy competition. When he gets in all his workouts for the week, you can bet I'm going to as well!"

■ **Cooking unhealthy meals just because the family likes them.** "It's still difficult sometimes but we've made a lot of progress in this area. I've asked Tim to look through cookbooks and choose recipes he thinks he might like, and now I eat all the healthy foods my family refuses to touch—such as fish, broccoli, and cauliflower—either at lunch or when Tim works late, and I can fix something else for the kids that's quick and easy. I also simply try not to worry about it as much."

## The top lessons Adrienne learned from RLHL:

- "How much better I feel when I choose to eat nutritious foods and exercise regularly."
- "The value of a heart-rate monitor. Now, I wouldn't go without one!"
- "The difference small changes can make, such as placing a fruit bowl on the kitchen counter. I used to think this was silly advice, but it does make me eat more fruit."
- "To shop at the grocery store with a focus on nutrition, rather than value. We are worth the extra expense!"
- "That it's important to be emotionally connected to my own well-being, not just that of my kids and husband."

## Best surprise benefits of living a real, healthy life:

- "I'm much happier. I don't have to push back feelings of insecurity all the time, especially when I meet someone new."
- "I can wear anything in my closet without worrying about how it fits, and I get compliments all the time."
- "My improved food choices and more-active lifestyle are setting healthy examples for my kids, which is especially important as Olivia approaches the age when many girls start being aware and critical of their bodies."
- "My husband and I are a couple again, instead of feeling like roommates. Our joint interest in health, fitness, and nutrition is something that's bonded us, rather than remaining points of contention."

### then & now

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT:	5'3"	
WEIGHT:	244 lbs	193 lbs
BODY FAT:	42.6%	30.6%
WAIST:	47"	38½"
HIPS:	57"	46½"
BUST:	47¼"	41"





## Eat-Right Strategies for Thanksgiving

Although you shouldn't deprive yourself this holiday season, that doesn't mean a second piece of pumpkin pie automatically gets the green light. Here, RLHL nutrition guru **Lisa Young, R.D.**, reveals how to enjoy without going overboard.

### Don't arrive famished.

Instead of saving your appetite for the big four o'clock feast, make sure to have a healthy breakfast and a light lunch (such as fruit and yogurt). Starving yourself earlier in the day will just lead to major bingeing—and uncomfortably tight pants—at dinner.

### Limit hors d'oeuvres.

Rather than blowing your calories on finger foods—after one mini quiche, a cracker with cheese, and a Swedish meatball you've already downed 230 calories—pace yourself. Dig into the crudités, have one or two of the must-try nibbles, then wait for the main event.

### Keep portion size in mind.

Knowing what a serving really looks like will help you to set limits. Some useful visuals to keep in mind: one serving of turkey measures about the size of a deck of cards (tip: white meat has less fat than dark); one serving of stuffing, mashed potatoes, or cranberry sauce looks like half a baseball.

### Shift your focus away from the food.

Instead of wondering when it'll be time for seconds, enjoy the company you're in. Get updates on everyone's family or career, bring some pictures of the kids/grandkids to show off, or exchange recipes.



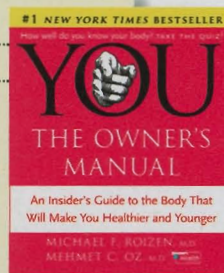
## Dr. Roizen's lifestyle changes for November

RLHL GENERAL-MEDICINE GURU

Michael F. Roizen, M.D.,

is the coauthor of *You: The Owner's Manual*.

Rx DATE *today*  
FOR *you*



**1. Stand up straight.** Truth is, most of us stand like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Practicing good posture is one of the easiest ways to strengthen your abdominal muscles and support your back (about 65 million Americans suffer from back pain). So when you're upright, bring your head and neck back and tighten your gut. The last part lifts your chest and gives you ballerina-esque posture.

**2. Redefine "dessert."** Our culture is programmed to end meals with something sweet—a piece of chocolate, a cookie, or some mile-high fudge monstrosity. Ending meals with sugary foods promotes bacteria buildup on your teeth and, not surprisingly, it can damage your waistline, too. Instead, think of dessert alternatives: For instance, follow the lead of many Europeans and make salad the last thing you eat. Or, try some low-fat cheese or a handful of nuts—foods that help clear harmful sugars and plaque away from your teeth.

**3. Quit living with pain.** When something hurts, don't just put on a brave face and suffer through it. The reason: The more pain you live with, the more intense it'll become. (Basically, your pain receptors go into high awareness mode and start to expect pain, so the pain you feel spirals up.) The goal is to live pain-free for at least six hours at a time, which resets your pain receptors and makes your next potential bout less severe than previous ones. Talk to your doctor about remedies, and research potential forms of therapies on your own, such as acupuncture and massage.



### CHECK US OUT ONLINE

Go to [lifestyle.msn.com/redbook](http://lifestyle.msn.com/redbook), where you can:

- Discover advice for maintaining weight loss once you've reached your goal weight.
- Find the entire RLHL program and hundreds of slim-down secrets.
- Learn how to enjoy your Thanksgiving feast without sabotaging your weight-loss goals.
- Read Adrienne's, Julie's, and Jennifer's blogs to learn more about their successes and their struggles.

■ **Coming next month:** It's makeover time! Our team of beauty and fashion editors pair up with celebrity stylists and makeup artists to give Adrienne, Julie, and Jennifer a head-to-toe makeover. Tune in to see their hot new looks, plus get parting advice from our RLHL experts.