

40%

of U.S. households
have the TV on
during dinner, a
habit linked to
weight gain.

Is your house making you fat?



Chances are, the answer is yes. Here, 18 fix-it solutions.

Answer honestly: Do you have a bowl of candy sitting out on your coffee table? Is your blender tucked away in a hard-to-reach kitchen cabinet? Are there tray tables in every room that has a television? If you answered yes to any of these questions, your house may be sabotaging your healthy-eating intentions. REDBOOK's yearlong Real-Life, Healthy Life Makeover is all about pinpointing those little decisions and lifestyle choices we make every day that get in the way of eating right, staying fit, and maintaining a healthy weight.

So when our three participants—Adrienne, Jennifer, and Julie—told us about the bad-health traps in their homes, we knew it was time for some health-smart spring cleaning. by Nancy Rones

Here, we search Adrienne's house for hidden fat traps. Read on to see what she was doing wrong—and right!—to create a home that works with weight-loss goals, not against them.



1 Keep these three appliances on your kitchen counter: blender, slow-cooker, and steamer. They make cooking healthy a cinch, says RLHL nutrition expert Lisa R. Young, Ph.D., author of *The Portion Teller*. And if they're always visible, you'll use them more often. We had Adrienne clear some of her kids' crafts supplies off the counter to

make room for her blender (great for soups and smoothies) and slow-cooker (for low-fat, one-pot meals).

And hide these three: deep fryer, bread machine, and ice cream maker. Put them way in the back of your cabinets and pull them out for special occasions only.

2 Banish clutter. A disorganized kitchen makes dialing for take-out that much more enticing than cooking, says Young. To pull it all together, organize one cabinet or drawer each weekend and find a proper home for those rarely used gadgets or pans. (The key word is "used"—so if you *never* reach for a certain gizmo, toss it.) In no time, you'll have a kitchen that's actually easy and fun to cook in—and making fresh meals won't seem like such a burden.

3 Make your fridge a shrine. Adrienne's refrigerator was loaded down with about 15 Disney magnets. The result: There was no room to hang a photo that reminds her of why she's doing the program—a visual prompt that will keep her committed, says RLHL expert Dan Baker, Ph.D., founding director of the Life Enhancement Program at Canyon Ranch spa in Tucson, AZ. So she stashed the magnets and hung a photo of herself from a 1994 vacation when she was a size 8 (above). "Now, the picture of where I want to be weight-wise catches my eye and keeps me motivated," says Adrienne.



WAS:
244
pounds

NOW:
211
pounds

Adrienne Schiffer, 33

Stay-at-home mom, married with two children, ages 7 and 3, Powell, OH

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:

"I spend a little more money at the grocery store for fresh produce. Healthy items can be more expensive, but I've realized that my family and I are worth the \$5 splurge for a carton of strawberries, especially since I serve the fruit immediately and don't let it rot."

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT, WEIGHT:	5'3", 244 lbs	211 lbs
BODY FAT:	34%	23½%
WAIST:	47"	41¼"
HIPS:	57"	52¼"
BUST:	47¼"	42¾"

THE HURDLE SHE STILL FACES:

Accepting that permanent weight loss is a slow, gradual process. "Even though I've lost 33 pounds and dropped two dress sizes, I feel frustrated that it's not noticeable to me."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT:

Adrienne needs to remind herself that she's not on a typical quick-fix diet, but a lifelong journey for good health, says RLHL fitness expert Jillian Michaels, author of *Winning by Losing*. Whenever Adrienne's feeling down or discouraged by the slow rate of results, she should imagine herself at her goal weight, either playing with her little ones, receiving a compliment on a new figure-flattering outfit, or having a *Rocky* moment at the gym. Visualizing positive experiences such as these can improve self-image and motivate you to stay the course.

BEFORE: PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW PARSONS. GROOMING: DEANNA BELL.
AFTER: PHOTOGRAPHED BY GEOFF BUTLER. GROOMING: DEANNA BELL.



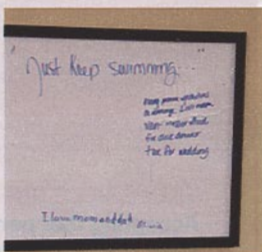
4 Use fruit as a centerpiece. A bowl of fruit will decorate your table and encourage healthy snacking. Adrienne had a few pieces of fruit hidden in a dim corner; we upped the selection, placed it in

a pretty bowl, and moved it to the center of her kitchen island. Now that it's within easy reach, Adrienne says she's snacking more on these sweet, healthy treats.

5 Keep a cutting board at the ready. When you have a small one out on the counter, it'll feel like less effort to slice veggies to munch on.

6 Create your own cookbook. Whenever Adrienne found a healthy recipe she liked, she'd copy it down on an index card. The problem: The process was a waste of valuable time! Instead, buy a basic three-ring binder and clear sleeves from an office-supply store. When you see a recipe you like, photocopy it or tear it out, then slip it into a clear sleeve.

7 Put your feel-good mantra in clear view. On a dry-erase board in the kitchen, Adrienne wrote the phrase "Just keep swimming," from the movie *Finding Nemo*. "When I hit



a plateau and see the same number on the scale day after day, I think of Dory singing this phrase and that helps me push through my frustration," says Adrienne. Terrific! Whatever quote or phrase keeps you motivated, plaster it all over—on your computer, bathroom mirror, or bulletin board.

8 Throw away holiday sweets. We reached up and grabbed a big basket of Christmas and Halloween candy from the top of Adrienne's refrigerator. Whoa! Those treats should be enjoyed on those holidays—with only a few days' grace period afterward, says Young. Likewise, the bowl of candy Adrienne keeps out for her son as "potty rewards" serves as temptation for her. Young suggests keeping a small stash of candy for the kids out of sight. (Like in a high cabinet that requires a stool to reach.)

3 cookbooks every kitchen should have

For weeknights and company

Getting Thin and Loving Food! by Kathleen Daelemans. The author, a Food Network host who struggled with her own weight, pushes "flavor first" in her simple, restaurant-worthy recipes, such as Sweet-and-Sour Pork Tenderloin and Skirt Steak Fajitas. Yum!

When you dread washing dishes
American Heart Association One-Dish Meals. Whether you choose a

seafood, meat, poultry, or vegetarian recipe, you wind up with a scrumptious heart-smart meal and only one pot to clean (often, your slow-cooker).

For finicky families
Betty Crocker Win at Weight Loss Cookbook by Betty Crocker Editors with James Hill, M.D., and Susan J. Crockett, Ph.D. All 140 recipes, from Fiesta Chicken Lasagna to Stuffed-Crust Pizza, have 10 grams of fat or less per serving and were designed to be adult- and kid-friendly.



9 Keep your workout gadgets together. Kudos to Adrienne—on her dresser we spotted a basket containing her gym necessities, a heart-rate monitor, and an iPod. "The less time I have to hunt around for my gym stuff, the less time I have to talk myself out of going," says Adrienne.

10 Make your living room less TV-centric. Studies show that the more TV you watch, the more likely you are to be overweight. Unfortunately, most

Americans, including Adrienne, arrange furniture around the television, says Young. We repositioned Adrienne's furniture around her fireplace instead to inspire more conversation. Adrienne should also keep the TV behind the armoire's closed doors when no one is watching it. (Out of sight, out of mind.)



11 Hang a full-length mirror. There wasn't a single head-to-toe mirror to be found in Adrienne's house—and it's the best reality check to keep you honest. We hung one from her closet door, so she can better gauge her progress by seeing how her clothes fit.

12 Take water with you. Adrienne keeps a stash of bottled water near the door for easy grabbing—

a great strategy, says Young. Guzzling water while running errands will keep you hydrated and thus ward off false hunger pains, says Young.



13 Donate your "fat" clothes.

When you keep too-big clothes, you're giving yourself permission to regain weight, says RLHL fitness expert Jillian Michaels. "I don't know why I held onto clothes that were too

big," says Adrienne. "It's liberating to get rid of them." For inspiration, hang a goal outfit in a can't-miss spot in your closet. For Adrienne, it's a much-loved size 12 blue suit that she wore before having kids.

14 Keep your treadmill or stationary bike in a favorite spot.

If yours is in a dark basement, you'll never feel like using it. Adrienne keeps hers in front of a TV, which is a great idea, says Michaels. She can watch the news or a favorite show while working up a sweat. If you can, move your equipment to your family room or near a window for an inspiring view.

get your table set for portion control



■ **Make your table inviting.** It's as easy as lighting a few candles. The result: You'll make your meal feel special, not something to rush through. And slowing down will help keep you from overeating, since it takes about 20 minutes for your stomach to signal your brain that it's full.

■ **Use tall, skinny glasses for juice.** They visually make it seem like you're drinking more than you are, says Young. And make a no-refills rule! Once you've drained your glass, switch to water.

■ **Dish up your main course on salad plates instead of dinner plates.** You can fill your plate and still not overeat.

■ **Serve your food on plates in the kitchen, not at the table.** This makes it impossible to just mindlessly nab seconds.

■ **But do keep the salad bowl at the table.** So if you decide to have seconds, you're eating light but filling veggies, not calorie-dense meats or bread.

Jennifer Strange, 28
Housing specialist for parolees and part-time graduate student in social work, single mom of a 2-year-old son, Traverse City, MI

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:
"Instead of relying on prepackaged dinners, I make fresh meals every other night. I get my son involved—he chooses the vegetable—which makes the process more fun."

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT, WEIGHT:	5'10", 211 lbs	199 lbs
BODY FAT:	33%	31%
WAIST:	43 1/4"	39 1/2"
HIPS:	47 1/4"	45 7/8"
BUST:	41"	40 1/2"

THE HURDLE SHE STILL FACES:

Getting enough sleep. "Work, school, and playing with my son leave little time for studying and doing the laundry and dishes. Sometimes I stay up until 2 a.m. to get it all done. Which means I hardly have the energy to exercise the next day."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT:

Jennifer may be wasting valuable time by surfing the Web or watching TV, says RLHL organization expert Ronni Eisenberg, coauthor of *Organize Yourself!* Jennifer should keep an activity log to see where her time is going. And she should cut herself some slack. If the sheets don't get changed right away, it won't make a difference in the long run, but getting to bed earlier so she'll have the energy to exercise will.

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REAL-LIFE
**HEALTHY
LIFE**
MAKEOVER



Julie Graves, 40

Pharmaceutical sales rep, married with two children, ages 10 and 8, Indianapolis

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S ALREADY PAID OFF FOR HER:

"My husband and I just went on a vacation to France. Instead of taking a lot of taxis like we normally would, we walked everywhere. I wore a pedometer and exceeded my goal of walking 10,000 steps a day."

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT, WEIGHT:	5'4", 178 lbs	178 lbs
BODY FAT:	34%	35%
WAIST:	33"	34"
HIPS:	44"	43"
BUST:	38¾"	38¾"

THE HURDLE SHE STILL FACES:

Finding her passion for being healthy.

Although she did walk all over Paris, Julie confesses she also ate baguettes and chocolate with abandon. In fact, she's had a hard time committing to the everyday ideas behind the Real-Life, Healthy Life Makeover—and, unfortunately, her progress reflects that. "At the outset of this plan, my desire was to be fit and healthy in time for my 40th birthday, which just passed," says Julie. "While I've made some great lifestyle changes, such as drinking a lot of water and cutting trans fats out of my diet, I am back to the same weight I started with. I really need to refocus."

LOOKING FORWARD:

Next month, our RLHL experts will give Julie the information and support she needs to refocus her efforts and recommit to a healthy lifestyle.

◀ **GETTING BACK ON TRACK TODAY:**

Above all, Julie needs to cut through her **negative self-talk** (Why is it so hard for me to stay on track? Why is healthy eating so easy for other people?), and then ask herself again, "What could drive me to succeed?" says Baker. One big motivator for Julie seems to be the satisfaction she gets from a good workout. Thinking about that "high" during weak moments is one way to stay emotionally invested in getting fit. Julie may not have reached her immediate goal for her 40th birthday, but she can think long-term and switch her motivation to living with great health for *another* 40 years.

Dr. Roizen's lifestyle changes for May



Rx DATE *today*
FOR *you*

- 1. Practice road smarts.** Being healthy isn't just about eating your broccoli, exercising, and seeing your doctor. It also includes being careful at the wheel. Car accidents are a leading killer of women ages 21 to 44, and even if you survive a crash, you could suffer from a chronic, painful condition. My three rules: Make sure you and your passengers are buckled up, stay within five miles of the speed limit, and save cell phone conversations for emergencies only.
- 2. Enjoy coffee guilt-free.** If you like waking up to the smell of a fresh pot brewing, grab your mug and indulge. Drinking coffee (easy on the cream and sugar) can actually make your body months younger. Numerous studies show that regularly drinking a few cups of caffeinated joe a day can reduce your risk of Parkinson's disease by 40 percent and Alzheimer's by 20 percent.
- 3. Keep immunizations current.** Shots aren't just for the school-age set. The immunizations most adults need to be vigilant about are: Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough); MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella); influenza; and varicella (chicken pox). Other vaccines, such as hepatitis B, are recommended for certain people. Talk to your doctor about what you need.

PHYSICIAN *Dr. Roizen*



RLHL GENERAL-MEDICINE GURU

Michael F. Roizen, M.D., is the coauthor of *You: The Owner's Manual*.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW PARSONS. GROOMING: RENNE CARTER

results! Denial doesn't. • Taking a two-mile walk burns about 150 calories. Next time you're tempted to guzzle a sugary soda after a stroll, ask ▶

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more healthy
home fixes

REDBOOK ALSO PEEKED
INSIDE JENNIFER'S AND JULIE'S
HOMES TO HELP THEM MAKE
LIVING HEALTHY EASIER.
HERE, WHAT WE FOUND AND
OUR EXPERTS' SIMPLE
SLIMMING SOLUTIONS.

THE HABIT: Jennifer and her son typically eat meals in front of the TV.

THE FIX: Jennifer should turn off the TV during meals and take advantage of her beautiful dining room table. Not only does watching the tube promote mindless eating, but using a space dedicated to dining will help Jennifer focus on every bite, says Young. She'll also instill in her son the importance of taking time to savor meals—a wonderful lifelong health lesson that trains the body to tune into satiation signals—and they'll both enjoy the benefits of truly focused family time!

THE HABIT: Julie sits at the desk in her kitchen to organize the family calendar.

THE FIX: Since Julie has both a library and a home office, she should move her work out of the dining area and into one of those rooms. "It's risky hanging out in the kitchen more than you have to," says Young. "Julie's mind is likely to wander to the food surrounding her, making her more apt to eat when she's not hungry—and less likely to accomplish her tasks."

THE HABIT: After the kids are in bed, Julie and her husband often veg out in the family room, eating snacks that they put on the coffee table.

THE FIX: Position a large flower arrangement, oversize coffee table books, or even healthy cookbooks on your table so there's no room for chips and cookies. "Coffee tables may seem like innocent decoration, but they make snacking way too easy," says Young. "I tell clients to eat only at the dinner table."



CHECK US OUT ONLINE

Go to lifestyle.msn.com/redbook, where you can:

- Learn how to transform your home into a health-friendly haven with our checklist of common household weight-gain culprits.
- Find recipes for healthy and tasty fare, each with fewer than 10 grams of fat per serving.
- Read Adrienne's, Jennifer's, and Julie's blogs about their successes and their struggles.
- Post your own message to them and other readers in the RLHL program.
- Plus, bonus tips on how to lose weight.

DON'T LET
YOUR
HOUSE MAKE
YOU FAT!

■ **Coming next month:** It happens to the best of us: Despite lofty diet goals and a gung-ho attitude, focus and dedication slowly fade and the pounds creep back on. Sound familiar? Don't fret! Our experts share the best ways to get back on track.

yourself. Do I really want to undo those calories I burned? Probably not!