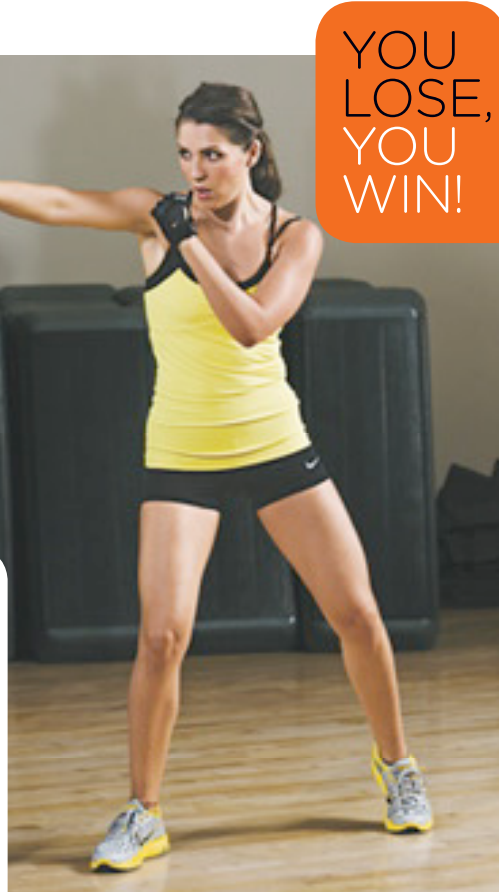


# “I finally feel at peace with myself”

**A**t age 12, Loida Fraijo moved with her family from Hermosillo, Mexico, to Tucson, where she discovered fast food. “I supersized everything,” she says. “My sister and I would each eat a foot-long sub and then split a third one.” By the time she was 19, Loida was carrying 173 pounds on her 5’7” frame. She dabbled in crash diets while attending Pima Community College in Tucson, but she could never commit. “I’d get upset and start eating again,” says the 30-year-old aesthetic laser technician.



BEFORE  
**173 lbs**  
AFTER  
**125 lbs**



**YOU LOSE, YOU WIN!**

### THE CHANGE

Although Loida was a size 14, she squeezed into the short skirts and tight tank tops her thin friends wore. “I didn’t feel comfortable or pretty,” she says. Then, at a party in the summer of 2000, she overheard a guy announce that the “chunky girl”—Loida—was leaving. “When I realized that’s how people saw me, I knew I had to change,” she says. “I wanted to transform my life more than I wanted a hamburger.”

### THE LIFESTYLE

Loida replaced fast food with fresh spinach salads, grilled fish, and chicken, and treated herself twice a month to veggie-loaded pizza or bunless burgers with a side salad. Setting foot in her college gym the first time, Loida says, “I felt like an alien.” She had to stop and throw up after 15 minutes of walking on the indoor track, but she managed 25 more minutes after

the nausea passed. “I knew if I left then, I’d never come back,” she says. In three months, she was power-walking four days a week. As the pounds gradually peeled off, she busted plateaus by adding strength training and Zumba, cycling, or kickboxing classes to her routine twice a week. After five years of small changes, in August 2005, she was down to 125 pounds.

### THE REWARD

Now a size 4, Loida is thrilled to wear the cute clothes that felt too tight in college, and she has more confidence too. “I love bikinis—and I look good in them!” she says. “With my body in better shape, I finally feel at peace with myself.”

### LOIDA’S TIPS

**Think (and cook) ahead.** “If I know the next day is going to be hectic, I’ll prepare healthy meals the night before so my diet stays on track.”  
**Surprise yourself.** “I switch up my routine every few months by hiking, running, or climbing the bleachers at a nearby school. That way, my muscles never get in a rut.”  
**Auto-tune your workout.** “I listen to up-tempo music at the gym. When you move to the beat, your workout is easier and flies by.”

> Share your weight-loss success story and you could be featured in the magazine. Go to [WomensHealthMag.com/YouLose](http://WomensHealthMag.com/YouLose).

# Q & A

## TAKE A LOAD OFF

• KERI GLASSMAN, R.D.  
NutritiousLife.com

### I live for chocolate. Can I get my daily fix and still lose weight?

—Kristen B., Emmaus, PA

Definitely! In fact, depriving yourself may backfire: Researchers found that women who suppressed thoughts about chocolate craved it more—and ate more when they gave in. Try these healthy sweets: a dark-chocolate Kashi cookie, one cup of air-popped popcorn tossed with one tablespoon of dark-chocolate chips, or a cup of low-fat chocolate pudding. In one study, women who ate chocolate pudding downed 30 percent fewer calories than when they drank chocolate milk.

### I never eat lunch because I constantly snack. Is this ruining my diet?

—Hayley H., San Francisco, CA

Grazing can keep your metabolism stoked, but watch the calories. A fat-free Greek yogurt with blueberries, a Luna bar, and an apple with peanut butter are slimming “snacks,” but combined they have about 130 more calories than a turkey and cheese sandwich. The lesson: If you can’t keep your snacks to 150 to 300 calories every two and a half to four hours, it’s smarter to have a “lunch” of veggies and lean protein to keep you full.



## EAT THIS, NOT THAT!



...at Dunkin’ Donuts



| Cappuccino (small)    | Dunkaccino (small)      |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 80 calories           | 240 calories            |
| 4 g fat (2.5 g sat)   | 11 g fat (9 g sat)      |
| 7 g carbs (7 g sugar) | 35 g carbs (26 g sugar) |
| 70 mg sodium          | 220 mg sodium           |
| 0 g fiber             | 1 g fiber               |
| 4 g protein           | 2 g protein             |



### Ask the Expert

SEND KERI YOUR WEIGHT-LOSS QUESTIONS AT



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