

Secrets of a Former Fat Girl by Lisa Delaney

Lisa Delaney is one of the rare souls who know what it's like to be an "after." This journalist, author, and mom shed 70 pounds — and six dress sizes — and has kept it off for 20 years.



LISA DELANEY

Second Time Around

I'm a college student and I've hit a peak weight of around 210 (I'm 5'4"). I have been overweight since I can remember, except during my freshman year of high school, when I was playing on the volleyball team and doing Weight Watchers.

I ended up getting myself down to a healthy 134, but when volleyball ended I gained back far more than I lost. The hardest thing for me is to go through this process again and try to keep it a secret from my roommates while dealing with homework and trying to have some sort of college social life. What are your suggestions?—Sandy

Dear Sandy: Talk about swimming upstream: College is typically the time when women put on weight, not take it off. For some reason (the liberation from parental control, maybe?) excess seems to define many college students' experiences. It did mine, at least when it came to food and drink. So what

you're experiencing isn't unusual. And if you're saying "Duh!" right now, hear me out: The fact that there are other students in your same boat means that you may be able to find a buddy on the same road as you are to support you in your efforts. Now, part of what I learned during my journey was that keeping my diet a secret from those around me was a good thing — it helped insulate me from well-meaning but ultimately sabotaging questions, criticism and scrutiny. (You know, comments like "Are you sure you should eat that?" and "My friend lost 50 pounds on that diet, but gained it all back a few months later.") Completely unhelpful.)

But part B of that advice

was to seek support if you need it, whether you join an online support group (like Spryliving.com's Dream It Do It Diary), or find an in-the-flesh buddy, someone who is truly supportive, not competitive, not preachy or critical.

Finding that person can be tricky. Try taking a fitness class in your student center or at least becoming a regular at the gym. I promise you: The clientele will not be just a bunch of jocks and zero-body-fat babes. Not only may you find a weight-loss buddy there, but you could also discover a new, healthier social life.

The fact is, your social life doesn't have to revolve around drinking and eating. I admit — it takes a bit

of creativity. But there are lots of no-calorie things you can do on campus and off. Volunteering. The arts. The outdoors.

There are plenty of women on campus who are struggling with this, just as you are.

It may mean you have to take some risks, reach out, show some leadership. Give it some time, and you will find your spot — or make it yourself.

Lisa Delaney is editor of Spry magazine and author of Secrets of a Former Fat Girl. Send your questions to lisa@formerfatgirl.com. And sign up for Lisa's bi-weekly email newsletter, The Big Weigh-In, at spryliving.com/newsletter.

What's the deal on chicory root fiber?

Q: I've noticed chicory root fiber listed in several foods I thought were high in fiber from basic whole grains or fruit. Does this form of fiber have the same health benefits or is it a trick?



KAREN COLLINS
MS, RD, CDN

A: Chicory root is the most common source of a substance called inulin, and it is now added to a wide variety of bars, cereals and bread, and even foods which naturally provide no fiber, such as yogurt, ice cream, cottage cheese, juice and chocolate bars. It is listed on labels as contributing to total fiber intake because, like all fiber, inulin passes undigested to our colon.

Different types of fiber vary widely in their effects. Foods providing inulin from chicory root or Jerusalem artichokes may not reduce LDL cholesterol like fiber from oatmeal and barley, but research does support a variety of likely health benefits.

Inulin is what is called a prebiotic, meaning that it feeds growth of health-promoting bacteria in our gut. It may also suppress growth of unhealthy bacteria and production of substances within the gut that have been linked to development of colon cancer. Emerging research suggests it may also help decrease insulin resistance and lower blood triglycerides, possibly by slowing the speed at which the stomach is emptied.

First caution: as with many things, when some is good, more is not always better. We don't yet know if there are health risks with too much inulin, but too much (from supplements) can lead to uncomfortable gas

and bloating.

Second caution: lower risk of cancer and heart disease in studies with high-fiber diets is not necessarily due to the fiber alone, so foods with chicory root fiber or other sources of inulin should not be considered replacements for whole foods that provide fiber along with a wide range of nutrients and phytochemicals.

Q: I've heard that being overweight can make a woman more likely to experience menopausal hot flashes. How much weight would I need to lose before I got some relief?

A: Studies do suggest that women who are more overweight seem to be more likely to have moderate or severe hot flashes, but you don't necessarily have to reach "ideal" weight to feel an improvement. We don't have much research about what happens when overweight women lose weight, but one recent study of women in an intensive weight reduction program gives us some tentative data.

Among women who reported both-

HEALTH TALK

ersome hot flashes at the beginning of the program, each 11 pounds of weight lost made a woman 32 percent more likely to report some degree of improvement in hot flashes (such as from "quite a bit" to "moderately" or from "moderately" to "slightly" bothersome). Each two-inch drop in waist measure was also linked with 32 percent greater likelihood of improvement.

Hot flashes may be related to many different interacting factors, so each woman will be different. However, since excess weight and waist size are also linked with increased risk of breast cancer after menopause, overweight women have plenty of reason to make some modest cuts in calorie consumption and boosts in activity level. Start by aiming for a 10- to 15-pound loss and let your new habits settle in there; then if you're still carrying excess weight, look for a few more basic changes in your routine habits.

SAVE \$\$\$\$

Get the Best Roof:
130 MPH Wind Warranty
Lifetime Shingle at the
30 Year Shingle Price!
Roofs by Nicholas
520-7348
1-800-266-7348

Midland's Favorite Roofing Company
 Permian Basin's Favorite Roofing Company

Mention This Ad To Receive Up To \$250.00 OFF Complete Roofing Job!

Something special's happening in the Circle.

December 2010 Activities

- Dec. 14** – Mall Walking, 8:00 a.m.
Supper Club, "Cowboy's", 5:30 p.m.
- Dec. 15** – Senior Appreciation Day, 11:30 p.m.
Movie, 1:00 p.m., "A Christmas Carol"
- Dec. 16** – Mall Walking, 8:00 a.m.
Just Peachy's Cafe, 10:00 a.m.
Volunteer Blood Drive, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Bunko, 5:00 p.m.
- Dec. 17** – Christmas Present Party & Pot Luck
11:30 - 2:00 p.m.
- Dec. 20** – Games, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- Dec. 21** – Mall Walking, 8:00 a.m.
Marcy House, 10:30 a.m.
Supper Club "Spanish Inn", 5:30 p.m.
- Dec. 22** – Senior Appreciation Day, 11:30 p.m.
Movie, 1:00 p.m., "National Lampoons Christmas Vacation"
- Dec. 23** – Mall Walking, 8:00 a.m.
Just Peachy's Cafe, 10:00 a.m.
- Dec. 28** – Mall Walking, 8:00 a.m.
Supper Club, "Pizza Inn", 5:30 p.m.
- Dec. 29** – Senior Appreciation Day, 11:30 a.m.
No Movie Today!

Call Anita Cline today at 268-4721 to find out what the Circle is all about.

SPONSORED BY
SCENIC MOUNTAIN MEDICAL CENTER

Senior & Circle

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
 We Appreciate Your Support And
 Wish You Health & Happiness In 2011!

SOME THINGS WEREN'T MEANT TO BE BOUGHT INDIVIDUALLY. LIKE INSURANCE, FOR EXAMPLE.

COMBINE HOME, AUTO AND LIFE. SAVE AN AVERAGE OF \$522. Yes, insurance can be that simple. Fact is, that's what a Farmers® agent's here to do. We even compare your current coverage to our own comprehensive policies. That way, you see the savings clearly for yourself. Call me, your local agent, and find out how much you can save.

Tommy Churchwell
 432-267-3857
 tchurchwell@farmersagent.com
 2303 Goliad Street
 Big Spring, TX 79720

FARMERS

**Products and features may not be available in all states and may vary by state. Discounts apply to selected property and casualty coverages, perils and policy types only and may vary by rate and eligibility. AS-8893 (1/10/11)

The Big Spring Herald is offering Fax & Copy Services

Fax \$2.00 to send 1st page
Additional Pages \$1.00 per page
Incoming Faxes \$1.00 per page

Color Copies .50 per copy
Black and White .25 per copy

For More Information
CALL 432-263-7331