



BEST SHAPE *ever*

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The weeks and months leading up to your wedding are some of the most exciting, and sometimes stressful. Every woman wants to look her best. If your upcoming wedding is inspiring you to get in better shape that's great, but please be realistic and kind to yourself. This is a special time in your life, so savour it and don't stress. Only make small, smart changes to your current diet and fitness regime.

- 1 SET A CLEAR GOAL** Be clear about your goal before you start. What do you really want? Is it to drop a dress size? Do you want to tone a particular area? Have a set target and then you can stick to it.
- 2 MAKE A PLAN** Next step is to make a plan specific to this clear goal – that's essential. If you just want to lose a couple of pounds there may not be a need for a complete diet, fitness and general life overhaul. It's about doing what you need to do for you. Following a plan also keeps you on track when enthusiasm wanes and it will wane, you are human, so be prepared. Everyone falls off the wagon, everyone has tough days but having a plan gives you direction and motivation.
- 3 GET HELP** Whether it's from a friend who has done it before or a personal trainer, it is important to get guidance when it comes to exercise and diet. Even one session can help steer you in the right direction and keep you healthy and injury-free.
- 4 PRACTISE, PRACTISE, PRACTISE** Consistency is incredibly important. The more you do something the easier it gets but starting can be difficult. However, when you begin to nourish your body regularly with tasty, healthy foods and move more, you create healthy habits that will stand to you long after the wedding. You are training your body to crave real, healthy food and movement.
- 5 START FROM THE INSIDE OUT** It is important to treat yourself with love and compassion. Without this it is incredibly hard to care about yourself and when you don't care you don't eat right, you don't exercise and everything is affected. Beating yourself up and judging your mistakes does not serve you. Be kind to yourself and set out to make your body and mind healthier and happier – not just for your big day but for your life.

WHAT TO EAT, AND HOW TO EAT IT

You do not need to starve; in fact you should avoid doing that at all costs. It wreaks havoc on your metabolism. Eat healthy, light meals often – every three hours if possible (eg breakfast at 7am, snack at 10am, lunch at 1pm, snack at 4pm, dinner at 7pm and optional snack at 9pm). This will give your body and mind the energy it needs to function properly

throughout the day – just make sure you are eating the right foods: always think healthy and light. Avoid empty calories.

Removing entire food groups removes joy from your life so don't do it! We need fat, protein and carbs to function – end of story. If you cut a food group you are cutting nutrients. You need these nutrients for healthy skin, hair and nails – you do not want to be a waif-like hungry bride with bad hair now do you?

Reduce your sugar intake – this is trapping you in that crazy circle of sugar high, sugar low. If you are craving sugar, try to replace it with something healthier eg fruit (snack on grapes from the freezer or a square of dark chocolate – the higher cocoa percentage the better). Once you are filling up on nutritious foods (good quality protein, complex carbs and good fats) you will need sugar less.

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