

Get off Your Butt for a BETTER BEACH BODY

BY: Susan Ferrier

With the mercury rising, our thoughts turn toward days at the beach. Some of us have been ticking the days off the calendar with enthusiasm. Others have been telling ourselves since fall that we were going to be in shape this summer.

Well it's May and if you are still procrastinating, there's still a little time to look better on the beach this summer. I promise not to tell you about some crash diet or fitness fad that pledges to take 20 pounds and 16 inches off in 20 days. That's just wishful thinking. I am going to tell you that a woman who is slightly overweight and in fair physical condition, through lifestyle changes could be on her way to a better body within a few weeks. I use the terminology "lifestyle change" intentionally. Diets don't work nor will exercise if an attitude change doesn't occur first. Both conjure up negative images. We equate diet with deprivation and exercise with work. Let's face it—you will never get lasting results if you start from a place of negativity.

In the first half of 2007, I lost 20 pounds and have kept it off through lifestyle and attitude change. I started by using **SparkPeople.com**, a free online website that allows members to set goals, track eating and exercise, and receive support from other members. The site also makes recommendations based on your personal goals.

It is important to remember that more than the numbers on the bathroom scale measure results. According to Greg Troast, a certified personal trainer at the Jewish Community Center in Margate and former police academy trainer, "The first sign will be looser clothes."

In addition to healthy eating, Troast recommends a regimen of 30 to 40 minutes of cardio—any exercise that keeps you working at approximately 70-percent of your maximum heart rate —(220 minus your age minus your resting heart rate multiplied by 70), plus circuit-type weight training, which he describes as, "continuous movement between exercises." To maximize your efforts interject blasts of cardio between strengthening exercises. Three times a week Troast instructs a Boot Camp class that works on this principle. What's great about this structure is you get a complete workout, including stretching in one hour. Sixty minutes, three to four times a week and you can be on your way to a beach



A one-hour body pump class is a sure-fire calorie burner.

Photo by: Susan Ferrier

body. Troast says, "results can be seen in as little as one week depending on the amount of effort put in. The more physical output the quicker the results." If you don't belong to a gym, you can use videos to work out at home, and do your cardio outside either jogging or fast walking (not strolling!).

While you are working on that beach body, you might want to try a splash of color – a tan that is. If you are like me, you're not getting caught in a pair of shorts without a little color on those legs. Somehow a bit of tan seems to hide a host of imperfections. There are good reasons models and celebrities are airbrushed before photo shoots. We simply look slimmer, shapelier and less flawed with a golden hue.

Luckily, since the weather doesn't always cooperate there are a number of ways to get a sun kissed glow without the sun. There is an array of products to give you a touch of color, creams that build a tan gradually and tinted products that provide immediate results. They come in a variety of forms as well, sprays, lotions, foams, and prices that range from a couple of dollars on up.

From my experience, there is one drawback to these products – unevenness. But you can improve your results by exfoliating and moisturizing before applying. Pay particular attention to dry areas such as elbows, knees and ankles. Dryness is the enemy.

Or you might want to make a trip to a place like Suncatcher's Spa in the Cornerstone Commerce Center in Linwood, which offers state of the art tanning in the Magic by Sun Italia. One 12-minute session in this high pressure tanning bed provides the equivalent of six sessions in a standard low-pressure bed. If the safety of tanning concerns you, Suncatcher's can provide you a bronzed body with a spray-on tan.

What are you waiting for? Start with the tan. This will get you in the summer frame of mind. Then sign-up at **SparkPeople.com** and begin developing healthy eating habits. And get started with an exercise regimen you enjoy. Keep trying different activities until you find one that fits. Troast recommends changing your workouts every six weeks to "shock the muscles." I encourage it because, it will prevent boredom. When monotony sets in, the workout becomes work. Keep it fun! See you on the beach.

(Greg Troast is available for personal training through the Milton and Betty Katz Jewish Community Center, 501 N. Jerome Ave., Margate. Phone: 609-822-1167 or call him directly at 609-335-7214. • Suncatcher's Spa, located at the Cornerstone, 1201 New Rd., Linwood is offering one week of free tanning to new clients. Call 609-653-BTAN.)

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