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I grew up where there was as much sugar as there was love. Let's just say there was a lot of love!! I don't recall drinking water...pretty much ever. Dr Pepper, Mountain Dew, and southern-style sweet tea were my beverages of choice. When it came to food, "fast" was king. From Taco Bell to Arby's, from gas stations to vending machines, it wasn't a priority to get nutrition. Rather, the focus was simply getting fed. Amazingly, I never once struggled with weight as a child. Good genes kept me wearing my good jeans.

Then, I got older. My lifestyle of saturated fats and high carbohydrates began to catch up with me. I answered that with pregnancy! Everyone said, "You're the kind of girl whose baby weight just falls off". And they were right...for a good two weeks. I still had a long way to go but the scale quit going down. It took me a year and a half to finally be convinced I would have to do something about this. Just as I was getting back into my old clothes, child #2 entered the picture. Since it would be another 5 years before my next pregnancy, I found myself going up and down on the scale.

The day came when I saw my grandmother hooked up to machines in an ICU. I started thinking long and hard about my lifestyle choices. I was what some might call an overweight, skinny person. Although my weight never completely got out of hand, I knew in my heart I was not healthy and one day that would catch up to me.



Slowly but surely, I started making changes: whole grain instead of white bread, water instead of soda, activity instead of inactivity. And now, I've just finished my first marathon and received my NASM certification for personal training. I've come to realize there are so many that, like me, confuse health with appearance. I hope to change that!

Coaching Certifications: *NASM (National Academy of Sports Medicine)*

