

COSMETIC ENHANCEMENT • PLASTIC SURGERY • COSMETIC DENTISTRY

# COSMETIC BEAUTY MAGAZINE

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PREMIER ISSUE

THE LATEST  
IN FAT  
REMOVAL

DEFINING  
BEAUTY

COMPLETE  
GUIDE TO  
PUTTING  
YOUR BEST  
FACE FORWARD

THE  
WRINKLE  
REPORT



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body



# foreverfit

Lauren Alexander investigates the new Firm FIT program that is making a remarkable impact on each participant's fitness, body shape and lifestyle.

**A**t a glance, it would seem that Firm FIT (Focused Individual Transformation) excels because of a singular proven truth: participants shed pounds of fat and increase their lean muscle mass. The 'before and after' pictures and measurements are stunning testament to the dedication of the program's legions of successful participants. But upon closer inspection we find a much deeper philosophical commitment: 'Firm FIT was created as a body management teaching program,' explains Neil Miyamoto, FIT director at The Firm in downtown Minneapolis, MN. 'Our ultimate goal is lifetime change; that's what sets us apart from diets or boot camps.'

'People start Firm FIT to lose weight, get thin, look great in a bathing suit or fit into

their wedding dress," Miyamoto continues. "But by the end of the eight-week program their minds and lives have changed because of what they learn about eating, exercising and their own fundamental characters."

Firm FIT (Focused Individual Transformation) works because it is tailored specifically to each individual client. Every exercise, target heartrate and meal suggestion springs from information collected from participants at the beginning of the program.

Miyamoto says, "I would have a much different strategy for a 45-year-old woman who runs marathons than I would a 30-year-old man with a knee injury."

The program essentially consists of plenty of good, healthy food in reasonable portions, and good honest exercise all customized to the individual based on size, shape, age, need and gender. Throughout the eight-week session, meal program counselors and trainers monitor participants' progress.

The individual result from Firm FIT is not just losing inches, but also gaining muscle tone, flexibility, strength and confidence. Tom, a realtor, even reported an alleviation of stiffness and pain: "I am no longer sore all the time and I have less chronic back pain. My joints are no longer stiff and achy in the mornings when I get out of bed. I feel good all the time and have much more energy throughout the day."

The three pillars of the Firm FIT methodology work in concert to achieve maximum results, and the combination of the three components are what sets Firm FIT apart from the dangerous fads.

### Pillar 1 Exercise

The Firm FIT program's most crucial element is a vigorous workout schedule. Participants meet with trainers for one hour, six days a week, and alternate cardio intervals and yoga with weightlifting workouts. The physical demands of the program intensify as the participants improve. The program is easily adjusted to accommodate participants of varying physical levels. The program challenges athletes as much as it does less active or overweight people.

The workouts are also fun. Trainers use music, humor and good old-fashioned encouragement to foster a positive and motivating atmosphere. Alternating between cardio and lifting weights prevents mental fatigue, boredom and overworked muscle groups as well.

### Pillar 2 The meal program

Every day, every meal, participants keep food journals, and within guidelines described by trainers, choose enough healthy food to fuel them through their demanding daily workouts. Calories are restricted, but within reason, and eating

many small meals throughout the day is encouraged.

It can be very hard for someone with a difficult relationship with food to manage the problem, because unlike other problematic or addictive substances, food can't be given up. The simple act of journaling meals can itself act as a tool for restraint and fulfillment. The diet guidelines consist merely of lists of foods to avoid, eat in moderation or eat with abandon. Ideas for snacks and meals are provided, and counseling and suggestions from trainers and other participants help along the way.

### Pillar 3 Assessment and support

Immediately before, during and immediately following the eight-week program, participants are weighed, measured, photographed and interviewed so the trainers can get a sense of the participant's goals and preferences, as well as health risks and baseline physical details. The trainers are always available for questions and discussion, and welcome comments and concerns.

But one of the most rewarding things about Firm FIT is the camaraderie that the participants establish with each other. Each session begins with 12 people shyly regarding each other, and after the eight weeks the last session ends with big hugs and lots of congratulations.

The key to Firm FIT's lasting appeal is its common-sense simplicity. Participants learn over the course of the program to integrate the tenets of Firm FIT into their daily lives. Once the group has completed the eight-week session, many of them continue to use the methodologies they learned in Firm FIT in their workouts and in eating healthfully. These long-term lifestyle changes make Firm FIT not just an eight-week program, but also a whole-life makeover.

Susie, an editor, states, "I feel that after doing Firm FIT, I can tackle anything, from running long distances to training at home with tapes and resistance equipment on my own. I learned a great deal about how to maximize my time working out and how to integrate it into the way I live." **cbm**



BEFORE

AFTER Firm FIT program