

## Healthy & Fit Challenge—2009

[www.healthyandfitmagazine.com](http://www.healthyandfitmagazine.com)

Christine Doolittle, DHS - Lansing

You are receiving this because you have encouraged me in some way in the past six months during my participation in the *Healthy and Fit Lifestyle Challenge*. The Challenge is over and our photo shoot for the cover of the August issue is tomorrow at a photography studio in Williamston. I am really looking forward to it and think it will be a lot of fun, which is a nice change from not wanting my picture taken 30 lbs. ago .... **yes, I have lost**

**30 lbs. and over 18 inches total *and feel like a new woman!***

Now I will focus on continuing to practice what I've learned to maintain my new weight and fitness level. I have a photo of the 'new me', my hubby Dan and my son, Matt, who have been so supportive; especially Matt who never wavered in his belief that I could do this, even when I wasn't too sure myself!



My last session with my nutritionist was June 20. She has recently been hired by the magazine, and asked if I would write an article for a future issue about one of the exercise classes I took. I was quite surprised as I am no writer, but she said based on the updates I wrote in the past few months she thought I could do a good job. So now I am not only working at being healthy, but also writing about it! Amazing ...

Thank you for the support you've given me, no matter how small or large ... it is what kept me going these past few months. Christine :)

## “Healthy & Fit Magazine”—2009 Healthy Lifestyle Challenge

The annual Healthy & Fit Magazine “Healthy Lifestyle Challenge” caught the eye of yet another State of Michigan employee. “I have tried many diets and exercise programs over the years without success, said Christine Doolittle, Michigan Department of Human Services. She was one of three contestants chosen to meet the challenge which has pitted the contestants against themselves in an effort to lead a healthy lifestyle. Each Challenger will have the help of a nutritionist and trainer for six months (Jan. - June '09).

Christine agreed to share her journey to better health with WOW readers. She said, “I am the oldest (53 years) of the Challengers, with no athletic or even an active lifestyle in my past. Her goals are very different than my fellow Challengers. Their goals are more performance oriented (participating in a marathon and triathlon), while Christine’s are more functional (moving easier through my day and getting off some medications). She wanted to change her relationship with food. She knew that she was an “emotional eater” and wanted to learn how to use food as fuel instead of as a way to comfort herself or deal with stressors”.



Christine went on to say, “This is the beginning of the third month of the Challenge. As a (former) couch potato, exercising has been the most difficult part for me. I am partnered with Debbie Kennedy of the Westside YMCA. She has taught me to make exercise a priority by scheduling it in my calendar as I would any other appointment, and then it becomes a habit. I have been working hard at becoming comfortable in the gym environment and learning the workout program that has been developed for me. The first two weeks were exhausting but I kept at it, and I’m really glad I did! I am so very pleased with my results. I have lost 5.5 inches total and about 8 pounds, but even more rewarding is how I feel.

*The sense of accomplishment and pride from setting fitness goals,  
Sticking with them, and getting results is a great feeling. I am looking forward  
To seeing what changes the next three months  
in my health, weight and fitness level’.*

**This is the beginning of the fourth month of the Challenge, and Christine shared:** “As of today 4-7-09, I have lost 17 lbs and 11 inches!! I feel so much better and enjoy shopping in my very own 'bargain basement' ... that's where I keep clothes stored that became too small for me as I put on weight the last two years. Every week I try something else on and it fits!

Since exercise is such a challenge for me, I am trying to find different ways to keep moving and keep motivated besides my 3x a week strength training/cardio sessions at the “Y”. I recently purchased a weighted “sport” hula hoop (“Hoopercise” @ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSW1bUVCfrg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSW1bUVCfrg)) and am in the process of learning to use it for core fitness. I am also taking a class through Holt Community Education that is stretching and toning using a stability ball.

Thanks everyone so much for your support and encouragement!