

# How I Busted Through My Weight-Loss Plateau

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**Alicia Reich, 27, had lost 78 pounds over the last year and a half but couldn't budge the scale below 150. FITNESS gave it the right nudge and showed her how to break out of her weight-loss rut.**

*As told to Ayren Jackson-Cannady*

## Getting the Scale to Move

### The Game Plan

For eight weeks my support team would help me do what I hadn't managed to in six months: jump-start my motivation and shed those last stubborn pounds.

### The Goal

I'd come a long way since my 25th birthday, when I weighed 230 pounds and had the chronic aches of someone three times older. I gave up being vegetarian, trading bread and pasta galore for chicken and fish, and began jogging one New York City block at a time. Within a year and a half, I worked up to running 13 miles and dropped down to 152 pounds. That's where the scale stalled for months. And months. Then I wrote to FITNESS.

### My New To-Do List

1. **Think Small**

Until I consulted with weight-loss expert Madelyn, I couldn't understand why my 1,200-calories-a-day diet wasn't working. She said my body would resume losing weight when it sensed it wasn't in starvation mode. Madelyn had me eat snacks throughout the day, like sliced turkey rolls and fruit, to stoke my metabolism. Oddly, when I ate 1,700 calories daily, the pounds started to come off.

2. **Be an Easy Strider**

I had signed up for a marathon to inspire myself to run farther, but I bonked out at 13 miles. My trainer, Monica, taught me energy-saving tricks to help me push past my roadblock: I stopped shrugging my shoulders as I ran, and I interspersed walk breaks --

run five, walk one, for example -- so that long runs weren't so psychologically taxing. Soon I did a 16-mile run, which was a huge mental boost.

3. **Eat to Win**

My dietitian, Mary Jane, quickly figured out that I wasn't consuming nearly enough carbs to last through my increasing mileage. I was so focused on weight loss that I skimmed on calories, especially those from carbs; I'd learned at a medical checkup last year that I had an intolerance to gluten, a component of many grains. Mary Jane had me add gluten-free carbs -- beans, potatoes, dried fruit, and rice -- to my meals, and it made all the difference.

## **The Results**

Not only did I lose 11 pounds and finally cross the 150-pound mark, but I also crossed the finish line at my first marathon. The best part of all was ditching the deprivation diet, which was only holding me back. I know that the closer I get to my ultimate, 135-pound goal, the tougher it will be. But now I have the healthy tools to make it.

### **My New Stats**

	<b>Start</b>	<b>Now</b>
<b>Weight</b>	<b>152 lbs.</b>	<b>141 lbs.</b>
<b>Height</b>	<b>5'5"</b>	<b>5'5"</b>
<b>Chest</b>	<b>37 1/2"</b>	<b>36 1/4"</b>
<b>Waist</b>	<b>31"</b>	<b>29"</b>
<b>Hips</b>	<b>40"</b>	<b>39"</b>
<b>Body Fat</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>