



## baby steps

» She ran herself slim one minute at a time

**The Buildup** At age 16, after 8 years of competitive swimming, Jill Schieren retired her racing Speedo—but kept eating as if she were

Blue Cross Broad Street Run. By race day she'd dropped 60 more pounds.

**The Reward**

Schieren's lost 15 more pounds and is training for a

training. In college, she blew past

the freshman 15 on a diet of cheesesteaks and hot dogs—cheap, convenient food she could grab between classes at Temple University in Philadelphia. By her sophomore year, she was carrying an extra 75 pounds.

"I was a coach for a community swim team, but I stopped exercising and was eating food I didn't realize was so bad for me," she says.

**The Breaking Point** When she hit 225 pounds, Schieren realized how much her weight was interfering with her life. Working as a part-time nanny to pay for school, she could barely catch a running toddler. "I was losing my integrity as a swim coach as I got heavier and started getting aches and pains from dragging around all this extra weight," she says. When she couldn't button a pair of size 16 pants that she had bought just 3 weeks earlier, she knew she had to put the brakes on. "I didn't want to be the girl who spent her life in sweatpants because nothing else fit."

**The Changes** The next day, she bought a stopwatch and ran for one minute and walked for 20. Each day she ran a little longer. "Even if I only added 30 seconds, I kept telling myself, 'At least it was more than I did yesterday,'" she says. Schieren also stopped eating red meat, pork, and processed foods, including all the simple carbs—muffins, bagels, cakes—she used to chow on, replacing them with whole fruits and vegetables. "I live by the motto 'If it doesn't grow out of the ground, I don't want to eat it,'" she says. Two weeks in and already down 5 pounds, she made a promise to herself to fit into a single-digit-size dress by her next birthday, her 21st. After 4 months, she had shed 40 pounds and was running for 20 straight minutes. She stepped up workouts to include abs (crunches and ball situps) and light lifting 30 minutes a day, twice a week. In January 2007, Schieren started a training program for her first distance race, Philadelphia's

marathon. "When I was heavy, I missed out on a lot of the physical things other people my age did. Now I get to do all of those things and I appreciate them more." And she's changed her major from liberal studies to nutritional science because, she says, "Health is a big part of my life."

» **Her Tips**

**Eat your treats.** "I still have small portions of my two favorite foods, peanut butter and chocolate, every day."

**Have a daily goal.** "I tell myself on the way to the gym: Today you're going to run 3 miles."

**Take a day off.** "You need that mental and physical break from counting calories."



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Have you fought flab and won? Tell us your story and you could be featured in the magazine.

» **About Last Bite**

**DIGITIZE YOUR FOOD JOURNAL FOR FREE**

**Websites can track your mortgage payments, dentist appointments, even your due date. But we never trusted one to keep tabs on what we eat—until now. It's hard not to love about.com's Calorie Count Plus (caloriecount.about.com). The site is full of tools to help you calculate and stick to your optimal calorie intake, there are trained medical professionals on the staff, and it's free. Log your meals each day by choosing from a database of foods (70,000 and growing) or entering your own recipe info. Then type in whatever exercise you squeeze into your schedule, whether walking to work or doing a half-hour on the treadmill. An "Eat Meter" and a "Burn Meter" on your home page show whether you're frying more calories than you're taking in. Get friends to sign up so you can cheer each other on 24/7.**



YOU LOSE YOU GAIN

VITAL STATS

**NAME** Jill Schieren  
**HOME** Yardley, PA  
**AGE** 21  
**HEIGHT** 5'5"  
**JOB** College student, part-time swim coach, and nanny

WEIGHT BEFORE  
**225**  
WEIGHT AFTER  
**105**

Drink This, Not That...  
FOR A COZY WINTER TREAT



✔

**Nestlé Milk Chocolate Hot Cocoa Mix**

**80 calories**  
**2.5 g fat**  
**(1.5 g saturated)**  
**180 mg sodium**  
**15 g carbs**  
**<1 g fiber**  
**13 g sugar**  
**<1 g protein**

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**Swiss Miss Milk Chocolate Hot Cocoa Mix**

**120 calories**  
**2.5 g fat**  
**(2 g saturated)**  
**170 mg sodium**  
**23 g carbs**  
**1 g fiber**  
**17 g sugar**  
**1 g protein**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NO CREDIT (2); JEFF HARRIS (2)