30 Days of Gratitude Challenge Day 16 — Integrative Medicine

I learned vital lessons in nutrition, activity, and the delicate balance of being in menopause and having to keep belly fat low.

November 16, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

Shortly after my diagnosis and completion of treatment, I realized that I was now officially off. My blood counts were off, my weight (of course) was off, my hair did not exist, and I was basically a big mess.

During my treatment, I could not focus on anything beyond survival. Before my diagnosis, I had been running 5k each day (yes, I was insane); it would take me about 45 minutes to an hour. I ate well but my weight had crept up for years, from like 21 years old each year saw 1-8 pounds gained, 2 lost, etc., till I had gone from 135 pounds to upwards of 160.

After treatment, I was 180 pounds and yet I knew that was not important to freak out about — I was once 200+ during pregnancy so 180 was not such a big deal … My treatment ended in July; by September, I had an appointment with the integrative medicine doctor at Sloan to find out what supplements and basically what I had to do to limit recurrence and other risk factors.

I had already been blogging and built some of my tribe and knew that no matter what I did, the risk would be unknown — on paper, I had no risk factors, and yet had stage 3 breast cancer.

Our appointment went well; he explained to me the accepted supplements and then examined me. His first response upon feeling my stomach was that I had too much belly fat. I did not kick him, though I wanted to — at this point, I was down to 160 pounds, which was around what I was at diagnosis — he said having hormone-positive cancer means that having belly fat is the worst thing to have, as fat stores hormones.

He told me that my goal weight should be 147 or lower. I was flabbergasted. I had not seen a “1” and a “4” on my scale in a decade and change, and here I was eating less, exercising more and struggling to get down to 160 … was he insane?

His advice to me was to do the smoothie challenge and I thought he was insane. I thought this type of thing was a scam, but when Sloan tells me to do something, I do it.

I began the “cleanse” and realized how much food I was eating that I just did not need. I did 2

juices a day, one meal (dinner) and snacks of nuts and apples through the day. The weight began to just fall off — my physical activity remained at about 10k steps a day but I was losing weight and fat like crazy.

I now wear a 28-inch waist jean with a weight of 128-135 pounds. It is incredible. I did not think I would EVER weigh less than 150 again. I feel better and cannot believe how much weight I dropped and have kept off for over a year. I am stable at my current weight and learned vital lessons in nutrition, activity and the delicate balance of being in menopause and having to keep belly fat low.

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