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PROFILES IN FITNESS



LONNIE TIMMONS III | THE PLAIN DEALER

Trainer Dave Liberman has helped Deborah Freeman, shown here on the seated cable row at Titan's Gym in Mentor, become a champion, but he says it is her work ethic that created the results. Besides being a personal trainer, Liberman co-produces local bodybuilding and figure competitions.

A woman redefined



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DEBORAH FREEMAN
This is how Deborah Freeman used to look, before she uncovered the buff athlete inside when she was in her early 50s.

A routine physical scared this doctor into reshaping her life and her body

EVELYN THEISS
Plain Dealer Reporter

In 26 years as a gynecologist, Dr. Deborah Freeman had seen hundreds of medical charts with these words on them.

"Obese. Female."

But this time, it was on her own chart.

Freeman knew she was heavy. Family photos showed it; so did the size 18 tags on her clothes. People always told her she was big-boned; then again, she'd had high blood pressure since she was

LIVING WELL

A close look at Dr. Deborah Freeman's nutrition and workout routine. **E5**

in medical school in her 20s and eventually developed Type II diabetes as well.

But in September 2003, a colleague performed a routine physical and e-mailed Freeman her own medical chart.

"Obese."

The word stung, then turned into a body blow.

"I was scared," she said. "I knew what that meant — I realized I could have a stroke or a heart attack. That moment, I made a decision — I would never see that on my medical chart again."

The next day, she became more rigorous about her diet. She began amping up a casual lunchtime walking routine and added resistance training to her workouts.

Twenty-five months later, Freeman was in a very different place — scared again, but for a different reason.

SEE SHAPE | **E5**