

THE PLAIN DEALER

BREAKING NEWS: CLEVELAND.COM ★ ★ ★ 41¢ HOME DELIVERY | 50¢ NEWSSTAND

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2007

A doctor's orders for her own fitness

EVELYN THEISS
Plain Dealer Reporter

Here are some of the details of Dr. Deborah Freeman's nutrition and workout routine, as well as some inspirational tips.

Freeman eats five or six small meals a day, about three hours apart. It keeps her energy and blood sugar levels on an even keel. (Note: This is her food plan when she's not preparing for a bodybuilding competition; when she is, she increases her protein intake and further decreases carbohydrates.)

- A half-cup of oatmeal or whole-grain cereal, plus five egg whites, scrambled.

- A 4-ounce serving of baked chicken breast with a salad.

- A cup or more of vegetables with 4 ounces of chicken, fish or lean beef, plus half of a yam or a half-cup brown rice.

- A protein shake, perhaps with some fruit.

- Five egg whites scrambled with green peppers or another vegetable, plus a half-cup of oatmeal.

If she needs another snack, it might be a second low-carb, high-protein shake, which is convenient and easy to digest before or during a workout. For beverages, she drinks green tea as well as up to a gallon of water a day.

Freeman's workout routine:

She works out six days a week: 30 minutes of cardio on the elliptical, which is easy on her joints, plus one hour to 90 minutes of weight training each day. Note that Freeman's routine is rigorous because she competes in figure contests.

She also knows that some people, including many she sees as patients, can't afford to join a gym or hire a trainer. She tells them about local recreation centers, the tracks at local schools and other safe places to walk, free fitness classes offered by churches and schools, and so on. The most important thing is buying a good pair of athletic shoes with the proper arch support,

which don't have to cost a fortune.

Here are some other tips from Freeman:

- Prepare your food in batches — she cooks ahead on Sunday nights — so you always have something healthful to eat. She carries a cooler of her meals and snacks with her. Also, always weigh and measure portions.

- Find a fitness activity you love that keeps you motivated and aspiring to future goals. For Freeman, it's figure contests. For

other people, it might be swimming or tennis or dancing. For Freeman's brother, Dr. Kenneth Lane, 65, it's running marathon races, which he's done since he was a teen.

- Finally, and most important: "It is never too late to change your body, your fitness level and your health. I've seen people do it in their 70s, their 80s — they inspire me," said Freeman.

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter:
etheiss@plained.com, 216-999-4542