

{ I DID IT! }

“I went from couch potato to triathlete”

Rachael Heitman traded her TV habit for a pair of running shoes and lost 73 pounds.

Don't think Rachael Heitman looks like a triathlete? Think again. The 29-year-old mom has competed in eight races since July 2006—even a Half Ironman, which involves swimming 1.2 miles, biking 56 miles, and running 13.1 miles. “You picture triathletes as tall, muscular. But they come in every shape, size, age, ability. It's very motivating,” she says. It's hard to believe that three years ago, in 2004, Rachael had gone to a doctor for thyroid trouble and weighed 238 pounds. “He said, ‘At that weight, you're at risk for high blood pressure, diabetes. Your thyroid's the least of your problems.’” So she cut back to 1,200 calories a day and started walking. Then, while watching the Half Ironman Florida, she caught the triathlon bug. She started running, swimming, and cycling, reaching her goal of 165 pounds in the process. —Shaun Chavis



Rachael Heitman now

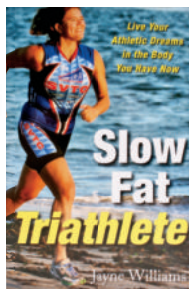
Age: 29
Height: 5' 7"
Weight: 165 lbs.
Size: 10
BMI: 25

Total weight lost: 73 lbs.



Favorite gear

Rachael loves Asics Nimbus socks so much, she buys a new pair for every race she runs. “I'm kinda superstitious about it,” she says. “If I didn't do as well as I wanted in the last race, it gives me a fresh start for the next.”



Her inspiration

“I put books all over my house—books on training plans, running, and sports nutrition. Having them out where I see them often keeps my goals on my mind. It drives my husband nuts, but they're there for a purpose.” Her favorite? *Slow Fat Triathlete* by Jayne Williams.

Her passion

Rachael says she's addicted to racing events and plans vacations around triathlons now. To cheer her on, we arranged for her to get a pair of Sidi T2 Women's Triathlon Shoes and a Speedplay Light Action Titanium Pedal System.

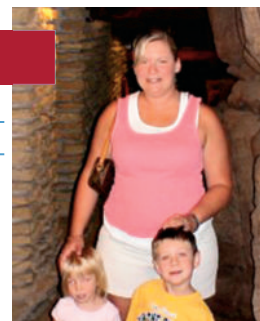


How she stays on track

Training for three sports means loads of workout time. Rachael's husband, Andy, takes care of the kids when she's exercising. He also clears the table so she doesn't graze on the leftovers.

Before

238 lbs.
Size: 22
BMI: 38



Top photo: Lisa Romerein; Photos of Rachael and her husband: Courtesy of Rachael Heitman; Product photos: Jamie Rowland