



CHALLENGE #6

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

THE AVAGLIANOS AND THE LEHMANS LOST NEARLY 100 POUNDS FOLLOWING THE LIFE-CHANGING ADVICE OUR EXPERTS GAVE THEM. LEARN FROM THEM THE DIFFERENCE SIX MONTHS CAN MAKE.

BY MICHELE BENDER



With the help of nutritionists, personal trainers, a motivational coach and a sleep expert, our **HEALTHY FAMILY CHALLENGE** participants revamped their lifestyles. Both groups had ups—they won Epic home cardio machines—and downs—one family lost their Fitbit activity tracker in the washing machine...twice. But today the Avaglianos and the Lehmans look and feel like different people and are eager to share their insights to help transform you and your crew. Read on!



From left: The Avaglianos started walking more (Challenge #3), improved their sleep habits (Challenge #4) and toned up (Challenge #5).

» THE AVAGLIANOS

THE BEST HEALTH ADVICE WE EVER GOT

THE PARENTS

PEGGY, 46, radiologist
PETER, 46, set designer

THE KIDS

MICHAEL, 18
AMANDA, 16
(**CHRISTINA**, 21, and **KATIE**, 19, aren't participating because they're away at college.)

THE PETS

Nicki (a Siberian husky), Krammer (a golden retriever training to be a seeing-eye dog), Minnie (a cat) and an unnamed goldfish

HOME

Egg Harbor City, New Jersey

CURRENT STATS

Peggy, 175 lbs and 5'4"
lost 16 pounds
Peter, 276 lbs and 6'
lost 9 pounds

GOAL FOR MICHAEL

Lose the weight he's gained since quitting football
lost 12 pounds

GOAL FOR AMANDA

Drop extra pounds and increase flexibility
lost 9 pounds

"WE'D BEEN TALKING ABOUT EATING BETTER AND EXERCISING FOR YEARS, BUT ALWAYS CAME UP WITH EXCUSES NOT TO," says Peter.

Thanks to the motivating challenges, the Avaglianos have shed 46 pounds and made lasting changes. The perfect example: "The program helped our son prepare for his freshman year of college, where he's eating on his own for the first time," says Peter. "Just the other day, Michael told me that he grabs yogurt or an apple at the student center before class rather than skipping breakfast. He *never* would have done that without this experience." Their DIY advice:

① GO FOR THE (SPECIFIC) GOALS.

The kids needed to learn how to make smart food choices before heading off to college (check!). Peggy wanted to whittle her middle (guess who dropped three pants sizes?). And Peter, a diabetic who hates injecting his insulin, was determined to slim down so he could reduce his medication. "After six months, my average blood sugar levels went from 320 to 180, which is huge," says Peter. "My endocrinologist was really impressed and said that if I lose a few more pounds, I'll be able to cut back on insulin."

② PLAN TO MOVE AS ONE.

The New Jerseyans needed help finding physical activities they could enjoy together and entertainment that didn't revolve around food. Now, at least once a week, they go on an hour-long post-dinner walk—a suggestion from their trainer Ann Erik at Tilton Fitness. "We'd tell the kids on Friday that we want to bike ride at the boardwalk Sunday morning," explains Peggy, who suggests giving children advance warning.

③ EAT RIGHT ON THE GO.

When the family embarked on a seven-day, 2,800-mile car trip to drop three of their children off at college, they didn't succumb to fattening roadside fare. "We went online every night and found a list of food options for the next day available at every exit," says Peter. "And rather than bring potato chips or M&M's for snacks, we packed grapes and apples."

④ DON'T QUIT ON VACATION.

Despite driving 10 hours a day during their road trip, Peggy and Peter found time to work out as trainer Ann Erik suggested. "In the morning, we'd head to the hotel's fitness center to do cardio and free weights—again something that we never would have done before," says Peter. "It also really helped my legs loosen up after all that driving!"

PROGRESS REPORT

GET YOUR FAMILY HEALTHY IN 2013 BY FOLLOWING THESE DO'S AND DON'TS.

✓ DO Create a diet democracy.

Discuss—don't declare—your intentions with your family. "Share your wellness goals, but ask them for ways to get there," says Stephanie Karpinske, R.D., who worked with the Lehmans.

x DON'T Go overboard. "Slow modifications over time usually last longer than radical ones," explains Elizabeth Fassberg, a registered dietitian who worked with the Avaglianos.

✓ DO Find a fitness goal. "Explore local events where your family can participate as a team," suggests Larry Soler, president and CEO of the Partnership for a Healthier America. Try a bikeathon, 5K, adventure race or hike.

WELCOME TO NEW YORK! The Avaglianos visited the Big Apple for a wellness getaway where they tried the latest craze at Crunch gym: Zumba Sentao. (Think Zumba with a chair for strength-training moves.) Another highlight: a lunchtime tasting menu at the innovative restaurant **Rouge Tomate** (left), which promotes healthy eating with locally grown foods.





From left: The Lehmans upped their water intake (Challenge #2), took 10,000 steps a day (Challenge #3) and increased their fitness levels (Challenge #5) this year.

③ **CATCH YOUR 40 WINKS.**

"The most shocking weight loss advice I got was to sleep more," says Tiffany, who learned this from Robert Oexman, D.C., director of the Sleep to Live Institute in Joplin, Missouri. "I didn't realize how much sleep is required to lose weight and how the quality and quantity can help me make wiser food choices. It also gives me energy to get through the day and kill it in the gym!"

④ **SWEAT TOGETHER.**

Both Andy and Tiffany began to fill their weekends with activities everyone could enjoy: playing outside, going to the park, running while the kids ride their bikes. "Before, Tiffany and I wouldn't participate in these things. We'd just watch the kids have fun," says Andy. Anna and Tiffany also followed a workout program designed by trainer Lass Lassiter of Gold's Gym. "It got us both sweating and having a blast together," says Tiffany.



WHAT THEY WON!

We asked Reebok to reward both our families for the hard work they've done slimming down with new—and smaller—workout gear. How's that for motivation to keep moving?



» **THE LEHMANS**
THE BEST HEALTH ADVICE WE EVER GOT

THE PARENTS

TIFFANY, 39, mortgage underwriter

ANDY, 45, building engineer

THE KIDS

ANNA, 10
JACK, 7

HOME

Des Moines, Iowa

CURRENT STATS

Tiffany, 231 lbs and 5'3"
lost 19 pounds
Andy, 238 lbs and 6'2"
lost 19 pounds

GOAL FOR ANNA

Stop looking to food as comfort and reward
lost 6 pounds

GOAL FOR JACK

Eat more veggies and less fast food

"YO-YO DIETING WAS THE STORY OF OUR LIVES," says Tiffany, who was determined that her children avoid the weight loss struggles she and Andy experienced.

"I could see Anna adopting some of our bad eating patterns and wanted to change that." Soon enough their daughter was eagerly following their new habits and loving it. "Eating healthy every day is hard when there's a lot of tempting junk food at school and on field trips," says Anna. "But I have more energy when I make good choices. And I don't feel gross like you do after eating a hamburger." Most important, the Lehmans (who dropped 44 pounds) permanently overhauled their diet. "This is a lifestyle change—not temporary," adds Tiffany. Their top tools:

① **STRIKE UP SOME FRIENDLY COMPETITION.**

"The smartest tip was from trainer Wesley Keith at Gold's Gym. He told us the best way to make fitness a family thing was keeping it fun so that it doesn't seem like work," says Andy. "We learned to turn it into a game." For instance, each family member used his or her Fitbit activity tracker to see who could log the most steps each day.

② **CREATE FAT-FREE INCENTIVES.**

One bad habit the Lehmans previously had was rewarding their kids with unhealthy fare like fast food or ice cream. But registered dietitian Stephanie Karpinske suggested they come up with other ways to acknowledge accomplishments. "Instead, we treat them to a family activity, like going to Sky Zone trampoline park or the playground," says Tiffany. "We lead very busy lives, so having quality time with each other is actually a great reward for all of us."

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