

**CHALLENGE #3**

# STEP IT UP!

WALKING 10,000 STEPS A DAY CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT, LOWER YOUR RISK OF DIABETES AND EVEN GIVE YOU MORE ENERGY. SEE HOW TWO FAMILIES FARED WHEN WE ASKED THEM TO CLIP ON FITBIT ULTRA WIRELESS ACTIVITY TRACKERS AND GET MOVING!

**BY MICHELE BENDER**



Photo: Kathryn Gambie Lozier.

Eating right? Check. Drinking enough water? Got it. Moving more? That was this month's task for the Lehmans and the Avaglianos, our Healthy Challenge families. We urged them to get off the couch and get active. To do so, they used Fitbit activity trackers to count their daily steps, met with personal trainers and committed to breaking a sweat more often, whether they were shaking their hips in Zumba, mowing the lawn or swapping dessert for an after-dinner walk. Only one family walked away with a prize this month, but both reaped the benefits of putting one foot in front of the other and hitting the gym. Read on to learn how they worked it out.



★★ CHALLENGE #3 WINNERS! ★★

# THE LEHMANS



## THE PARENTS

**TIFFANY**, 39, mortgage underwriter

**ANDY**, 45, building engineer

## THE KIDS

**ANNA**, 10  
**JACK**, 6

## HOME

Des Moines, Iowa

## CURRENT STATS

Tiffany, 239 lbs and 5'3"  
Andy, 244 lbs and 6'2"

## GOAL FOR ANNA

Quit looking to food as her comfort and reward

## GOAL FOR JACK

Eat more veggies and less fast food

**BEFORE THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGE, TIFFANY EXERCISED FOUR TIMES A WEEK BY RUNNING, PEDALING ON A STATIONARY BIKE, WEIGHT TRAINING, AND TAKING KICKBOXING, CIRCUIT AND BOOT CAMP CLASSES.** But her trainer elevated her sessions to the next level by having her push a weighted milk crate across the floor or do a continuous treadmill push (that's where you unplug the treadmill and use your own body weight to move the belt in 30-second intervals). "This builds muscle and gets her heart rate up," says her Gold's Gym trainer, Lass Lassiter.

Andy thought he was getting enough cardio because his job as a building engineer requires a lot of walking. He averaged the most daily steps of all participants, with 13,362. "But your body gets used to the same activity day after day and eventually doesn't have to put in as much effort to burn calories," says Andy's trainer, Wesley Keith of Gold's Gym, who showed him cardio and strength moves that would help build muscle and trim fat.

Anna, 10, and Jack, 6, are too young for the gym but logged about 10,240 and 11,680 steps a day, respectively. Their parents' trainers suggested the family play kickball and dodgeball and do simple calisthenics (like jumping jacks and squats) in the park. All that sweating paid off. "I'm wearing shorts I haven't been able to wear in three years!" says Andy. Here, the advice that helped these winners take all.

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★ **Become unstoppable.** Tiffany's trainer taught her that it's important to live a physical life and to look for exercise opportunities everywhere—even things like laundry and cleaning count as mini workouts. "I actually wanted to mow the lawn so that I could burn more calories and get more steps in," says Tiffany. "One Saturday I ran in the morning and mowed in the early evening and I loved it!"

★ **Focus on form.** You may exercise often, but without proper technique you increase your risk of

**WHAT THEY WON!** The Lehmans averaged 11,783 steps per day each. After all that walking, we thought they deserved a little relaxation. So SpaFinder.com sent them a \$1,000 gift certificate.

## ON THE MOVE

Three things that helped our families sweat it out this month

» **Fitbit Ultra Wireless Activity Tracker** does more than count our steps, calories and distance. It also has a sleep tracker, stair counter and stopwatch, plus it wirelessly uploads your info to the Fitbit site, where you can compare your stepping with other users'. Seeing how the competition was doing on Fitbit.com was great motivation for our families.



» **What gets you moving better than a brand new pair of kicks?** The kids and adults in our families sent in their shoe sizes and got to lace up the most popular running styles of **Asics sneakers**, all of which offered gel cushioning, support and stability.



» **Active.com**, a site where you can find and register for races such as 5K and 10K walks and runs, team sports and recreational activities, invited our families to participate in an event for free. The site also lets you connect with others who share your fitness interests and start an online training program to prep for an event.

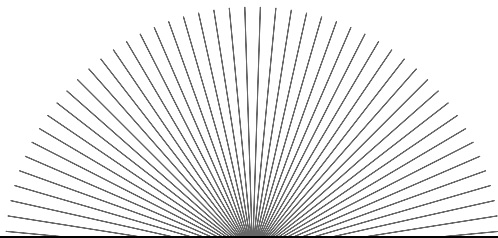
injury and won't reap the desired results. "Good technique leads to strength, which leads to more muscle and less fat," says Lassiter. To focus on quality, Tiffany cut back on quantity, doing just five sets of five reps of each exercise. "Before, I wasn't feeling the impact, but since being shown the correct form I feel it and am seeing results," says Tiffany. "For example, I'm getting some nice biceps!"

★ **Make fitness family fun.** "Kids don't even have to know they're exercising. Just get them outside and play," says Keith. Tiffany and Andy heeded this advice but went beyond a simple stroll to the same-old playground. "We took the kids to a trampoline park called Sky Zone. Talk about fun and a workout!" says Tiffany.

HOT STUFF







★★ CHALLENGE #3 ★★

# THE AVAGLIANOS



### THE PARENTS

**PEGGY**, 46, radiologist  
**PETER**, 45, set designer

### THE KIDS

**MICHAEL**, 17,  
**AMANDA**, 15  
(**CHRISTINA**, 20, 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, 181 lbs and 5'4"  
Peter, 271 lbs and 6'

### GOAL FOR MICHAEL

Lose the weight he's  
gained since quitting  
football due to an injury

### GOAL FOR AMANDA

Drop those extra  
pounds and increase  
her flexibility

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WASN'T HIGH ON THE AVAGLIANOS' PRIORITY LIST BEFORE THE CHALLENGE.

Walking their dogs and cleaning their pool were about all the exercise that parents Peggy and Peter got. For their teens, Amanda and Michael, it was daily gym class at school and marching band three times per week. "When the choice was flopping down and watching TV or exercising, we'd always choose TV," Peggy said. While that all changed, the transition was a process.

First, we teamed up the family with trainers at Tilton Fitness. Then we asked them to slip on their Fitbit trackers to see how active they were. Peggy and Peter both walked more than before—often hitting their goal of 10,000 steps a day. Mom and Dad also headed to the gym for spin classes, weight training and exercise on cardio machines four times a week.

In addition to racking up steps and stairs climbed on their activity trackers, Amanda fell in love with BodyPump, a weight-lifting class set to music, and Zumba, and Michael liked his sessions with their trainer, TJ Loos. "Being an older brother, I know the power of sibling rivalry," says Loos. "Michael and Amanda tried to support each other, but they were also motivated to outperform each other." Today the whole family has more energy, so they flop on the couch for TV time about twice per week rather than daily—a new habit that has reaped results. "Since we started the challenge, I went down one pants size and Pete says his pants fit better," says Peggy, who got in about 7,000 steps per day.

★ **Make it a contest.** Although Peggy found it hard to squeeze additional steps into her busy workday, counting them did motivate her. "The Fitbit was a little reminder to move more and outdo myself," she says. Peter and the kids competed against one another, comparing their daily steps at dinner each night. "We even got Fitbits for our two daughters who are away at school [and not part of this challenge], and created a family group on the Fitbit website so that we could see how we were doing compared to one another," says Peter.



Michael, Peggy, Peter, Amanda and Krammer

★ **Find your perfect gym fit.** For the first time ever, the Avaglianos joined a gym as a family—and they made sure it was the right one for them. "We know so many people at Tilton Fitness, which is a plus," says Peggy, who likes the social aspect of the place. Adds her trainer, Ann Erik, "I believe this is helping them stay motivated and makes them feel like they belong." The right facility combined with encouragement from their trainers has made gym time something the Avaglianos enjoy rather than a chore they dread.

★ **Just do something.** Erik suggested that the Avaglianos take a walk after dinner three to four nights a week. "We can't do this as much as we would like, but the suggestion made us more conscious of trying to do things as a family," says Peter, who averaged more than 8,000 steps per day. For example, Peggy and Michael go on bike rides together, and all four try to spend weekend afternoons strolling through a neighboring town or on the boardwalk. "Finding fun activities makes the lifestyle change more likely to stick," says Loos.



**CHALLENGE #4** Take back the night: We asked our families to put down the remote control and go to sleep. Here's what happened when bedtime was enforced.

# » COACHES' CORNER



## 8 WAYS TO GET YOUR FAMILY MOVING

Need ideas for sneaking in exercise? Follow our expert trainers' advice for more action-packed days.



TJ Loos  
Tilton Fitness,  
New Jersey

**1 » Get everyone on board.** "While the kids may be a little unwilling to make a change to their lifestyle, the example set by Mom and Dad can go a long way toward adjusting their mind-set (and sometimes vice versa)," says the Avagliano kids' coach, TJ Loos, a certified personal trainer at Tilton Fitness in Galloway, New Jersey, who specializes in youth and senior fitness as well as sport-specific training. "Any process is easier when you have a support system."



Lass Lassiter  
Gold's Gym,  
Iowa

**2 » Go back to basics.** "Do simple, traditional moves that use your own body weight," suggests Tiffany's coach, Lass Lassiter, a certified fitness trainer and former staff sergeant in the U.S. Army who helps whip clients into shape at Gold's Gym in West Des Moines, Iowa. "Try exercises like squats and push-ups at home and you'll get an excellent sweat session."



Ann Erik  
Tilton Fitness,  
New Jersey

**3 » Make every errand count.** "Park far from your destination so that you and the kids have to walk, and take the stairs instead of the elevator," says Ann Erik, personal training director at Tilton Fitness in Galloway, New Jersey, who coached the Avagliano parents.

**4 » Do what you love.** "Find activities that are fun for the whole family," says Lassiter. "Maybe it's dodgeball or kickball; maybe it's hiking or bike rides. If everyone enjoys it, you'll make time to add it to your schedule."



Wesley Keith  
Gold's Gym,  
Iowa

**5 » Model behavior.** "Kids look up to you," explains Andy's coach, Wesley Keith, a certified personal trainer at Gold's Gym in West Des Moines, Iowa. "They're going to see that Dad had a big objective, he set out to achieve it and he did it. This will teach and motivate them."

**6 » Make a smart swap.** "Skip dessert and instead go for an after-dinner family walk three to four times a week," suggests Erik.

**7 » Set goals.** "They help. Not only do they keep people and families focused on the mission, but they also provide a measuring stick for your progress," says Loos.

**8 » Make the switch.** "If you hit a plateau, think FITT and change one of these things: the frequency, intensity, type or time of your routine," suggests Keith.