



Monica Romero
before surgery



Monica Romero recently had
the Lap-Band procedure
and has already lost 60 pounds

My Slimmer Self

Cy-Fair Residents Explore Weight Loss Options

Monica Romero has plenty of reasons to celebrate these days. Once considered morbidly obese, the mother of two has drastically reduced her weight by 60 pounds. Although she has not reached her goal weight yet, she has made a commitment to herself and is on track to becoming a healthier mom, wife, and daughter. Romero is not alone in her weight loss pursuits. Obesity is now one of the biggest health issues in the United States. It's no secret that the dietary habits of Americans are spinning out-of-control. Luckily, there are solutions for everyone.

Surgical Solutions

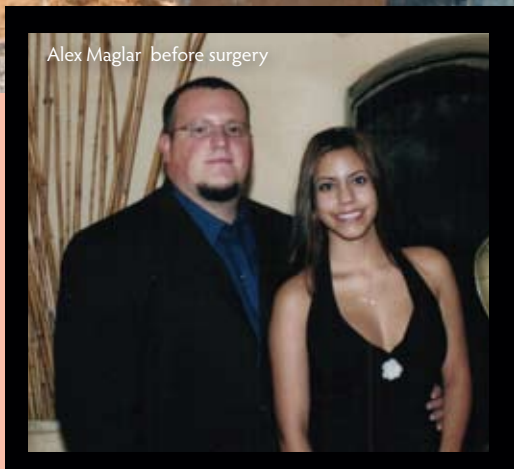
Romero's success is a result of the Lap-Band procedure. Laparoscopic adjustable banding and gastric bypass are the two most popular surgical options available for the morbidly obese, which includes those with a BMI of 40 or higher, or a BMI above 35 with an obesity-related disease such as diabetes, hypertension, or sleep apnea. "Studies have shown that diets and exercise alone fail up to 98% of the time in the morbidly obese population," states Dr. Bradley Waggoner, of Cypress Bariatric and General Surgery. "My interest in weight loss surgery is not primarily cosmetic, but is for the patient to lose the appropriate amount of weight so that they may live a longer and healthier life."

By Holly
Garcia

*Photography by
Deb Colson*

“I’ve learned that weight loss must be a lifestyle change. The way you eat has to change for the rest of your life, not just until you reach your goal weight.”

- S. Schroeder, Weight Watchers Member



Learning New Habits

Gyms now provide extra programs focusing specifically on losing weight. Lifetime Fitness of Willowbrook offers Team Weight Loss. Team Weight Loss focuses on behavioral modification so that its members can continue their good habits after they’ve finished the program. Members have to log what they eat daily and exercise three times a week with a personal trainer. Hope Sampson, coordinator of Team Weight Loss, says, “If you can walk on a treadmill, you can do it. Working out is the easy part. It’s going to the gym that’s hard. You have to change a learned pattern you’ve had for a while.” Jason Atkinson has lost 20 pounds so far through the program. A former NFL player, Atkinson gained 50 pounds after being involved in a car accident and being unable to exercise for three years. He turned to Team Weight Loss. “I wanted someone to hold me accountable, and I liked the combination of diet and exercise.” Atkinson continues, “It’s some of the most intense workouts I’ve ever done. There’s no way I could’ve gotten the results I’ve gotten without this program.”

Weight Loss Support

Groups such as Weight Watchers provide not only dieting tools and information, but a place where you can get support and encouragement from others. “I had tried to lose weight on my own, and it just didn’t work very well for me,” says Susan Schroder, a Weight Watchers member. Weight Watchers members attend weekly group meetings until they reach their goal weight. Group meetings provide members the chance to learn about healthy eating, share recipes and tips, and recognize weight loss achievements.

They are taught appropriate portion sizes and are encouraged to make better food choices. Once members attain their goal weight, they go through a maintenance program, after which they become lifetime members. “I’ve learned that weight loss must be a lifestyle change. The way you eat has to change for the rest of your life, not just until you reach your goal weight,” notes Schroder.

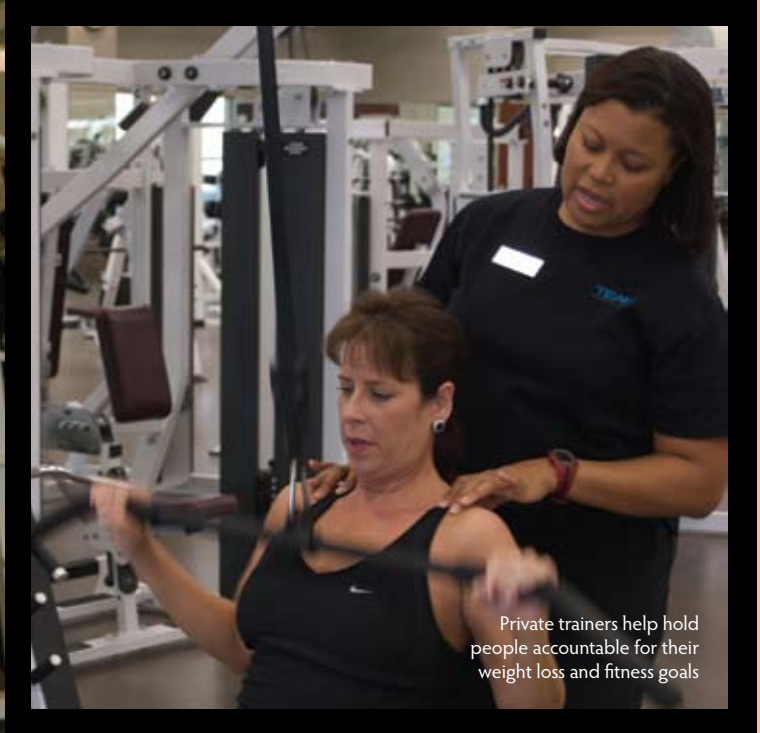
Change for the Better

Weight loss is a journey toward good health that has tremendous rewards for all those involved. It is a very personal matter, and to begin, you must find a program that works for you. There are other options out there, from hypnosis to Bible-based programs. But what matters most is being mentally ready. As Sampson advises, “If you haven’t made up your mind to lose weight, no weight loss program will work for you.” **CFM**

HOLLY GARCIA understands what it’s like to struggle with one’s weight and applauds the efforts of all those working to improve their health.



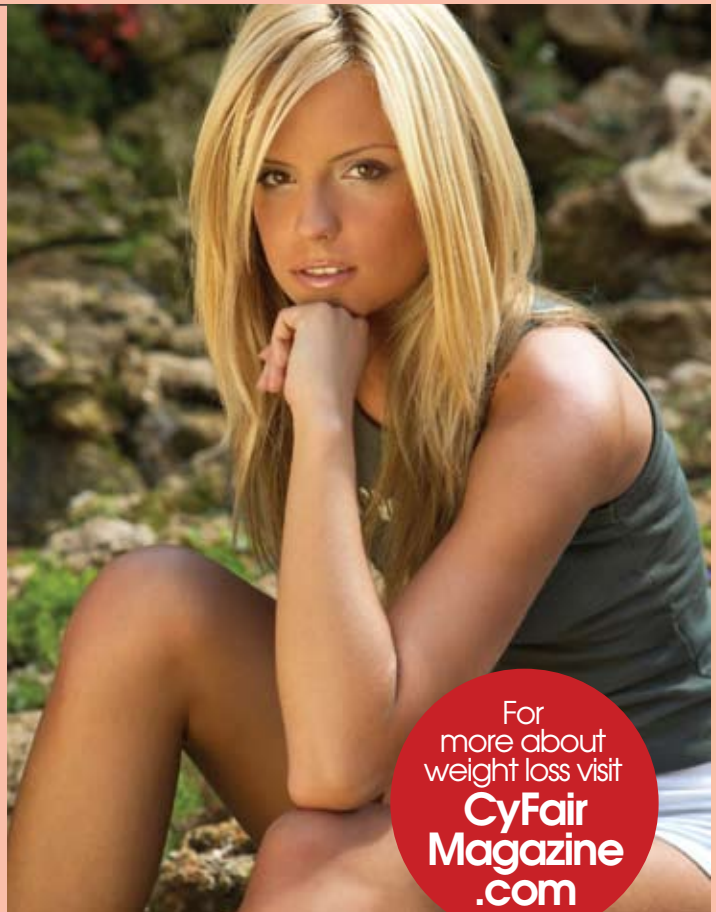
Team Weight Loss is a program at Lifetime Fitness that teaches participants healthy lifestyle habits



Private trainers help hold people accountable for their weight loss and fitness goals

5 Easy Ways To *Get Started!*

- ***Shop the perimeter***
The freshest food is always on the perimeter of the grocery store.
- ***Read labels***
Avoid high fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils, and saturated fats.
- ***Take a walk***
Park further away or walk to a friend's house. Walk at least 30 minutes a day.
- ***Be strong***
Add strength training to your day.
- ***Laugh or smile***
A positive attitude is everything.



For more about weight loss visit
CyFair Magazine
.com