

M'll fix it...

'Help me change my pear shape'

Do we have to put up with the body type we're born with or can we actually alter genetics? As our reader proves, with the right advice and lots of determination, you can lose weight in all the right places

Most of us can look at our mums and see where we get those classic English ample thighs and bum. And with the evidence right there it's tempting to sit back with the biccies and let nature take its course. After all, it's scientifically proven that our body shapes are predetermined by genetics. But increasing numbers of experts now claim you can fool your genes into giving you a different body. So *M* threw down the gauntlet to Zoe Lawrence, 27, from London, who's always been frustrated by her pear shape. As Zoe said, 'I'm not unhealthy, I eat well and

exercise regularly, but I just can't seem to shift the weight from my bum and thighs.' Could *M* rise to the challenge by providing Zoe with a posse of experts dedicated to making that difference?

Matt Roberts, diet and fitness expert Matt is the trainer behind Mel C's transformation. We gave him eight weeks to get Zoe into shape.

What he did: Matt has done a lot of research into body types and assesses his clients through a test that measures body mass index – the most accurate measure of the ratio of fat to muscle. He combined this with



Swapping bread for pulses, brown rice and more veg helped Zoe shift flab from her lower half. Meanwhile trainer Matt Roberts gave her a series of bottom-busting exercises (above and right) to do four times a week

an assessment of Zoe's fitness, then devised two one-hour workouts for her, varying in difficulty as her fitness levels increased. She had to do them both at least twice a week and they included cardio, cross-training, treadmill, resistance and exercise repetitions. He also included a diet sheet that gave her four options for each meal. He asked her to vary her diet with oats, wholegrains, fish, fruits, vegetables and salads. She had to eat three meals a day and up to two snacks and to replace starchy carbs with brown rice, corn pasta, lentils and pulses. He also asked her to cut out red meat and dairy products and to avoid alcohol, caffeine, chocolate and processed foods.

Zoe's opinion: 'I think Matt's work was the foundation of the whole thing. He believes in keeping your heart rate up throughout a session so you switch between cardio and resistance all the time, which means you never get tired by one exercise. His nutritional advice was also easy to follow – if you eat healthily already you only have to adapt a few things, like

replacing white rice with brown and wheat pasta with corn pasta.' *Matt's new book Thin Thighs is (£5.99, Dorling Kindersley) is out on 1 May. A session at Matt Roberts Personal Training Centre in London W1 costs £50. Call 020-7439 8800 or see www.mattroberts.co.uk.*

Jeff Archer, lifestyle and exercise guru Jeff runs a health centre called The Tonic and is the man who kept Zoe's motivation going during her rigorous new regime. He believes emotional well-being and a positive mental attitude are as important in getting fit as actually doing the exercise. He offers a service called 'Fitness By Phone' where he calls you once a week to motivate you into training. **What he did:** First off Jeff got Zoe to fill in a questionnaire, quizzing her on how she saw herself. Jeff says although Zoe was really committed to the programme she had quite a low self-image and was worried about how to keep going after they had stopped speaking. Jeff got her to reassess what she was expecting of herself. He also delved into what would

BEFORE



AFTER



At 5ft 6in and 12st 4lb, Zoe has a size 14 bottom and 12 top. Eight weeks later, she's 10st 6lb and size 12 all over, having lost 3.5in from her thighs, 3.5in from her waist and 4% body fat



Posture expert Merry Graham (above) helped Zoe lengthen her body with a series of dance exercises 'to free any emotional blockages'. Right: Zoe's new healthy eating regime involved lots of vegetables and masses of water, but no dairy, caffeine or alcohol... Bottom right: a super-svelte Zoe – walking proof that diet and exercise really can change your shape



make her happy – in Zoe's case it was getting a full-time job, which she managed to do halfway through the programme. **Zoe's opinion:** 'I was sceptical about this. Before starting, Jeff sent a questionnaire that seemed to have nothing to do with what I wanted to achieve. But after the first phone session I was converted. Jeff challenges your

beliefs and so finds out why you're eating too much or avoiding getting fit. It does mean delving into more personal stuff than just fitness and health, but it's worth it. It made me feel good about myself and it helped my training.' Call Jeff on 0700 4 FITNESS (0700-434 8637) or see www.the-tonic.com. Fitness By Phone is £240 for six sessions.

Merry Graham, posture and motivational advisor

Merry works at the Joshi Clinic in London where she gives advice on lifestyle, posture and emotional well-being to help elongate the body and free any emotional blockages that may cause you to have an unhealthy relationship with food or exercise. **What she did:** Merry said that Zoe has naturally good posture when she is standing still, but as soon as she starts to walk or talk her body goes slightly off balance and her shoulders hunch. She told Zoe to stretch out her shoulders and to sing as loudly

as she could as often as possible to open out her shoulders and help her to breathe deeper. She also said Zoe should concentrate on balancing exercises at the gym and try standing on one leg. **Zoe's opinion:** 'Merry doesn't so much teach you how to hold your body as look at your inner energy levels which translate into how you hold yourself. Her approach has worked and I do feel like I'm using my body more efficiently. I've enjoyed it and I think that a sustained programme would work well.' An hour's session with Merry is around £60; call 020-7487 5456.

STYLIST'S ADVICE

What's the point of having a fab new body if you can't treat yourself to a new wardrobe? We asked celebrity stylist Phill for his tips on dressing Zoe's new shape...

- Don't be a slave to the rules – a good bias-cut dress or shirt with hipster trousers can look great if you don't try to hide your voluptuousness.
- Think about your overall silhouette to make yourself appear slimmer. Do this by keeping colours the same and wearing fabrics that skim your body rather than cling to it.
- Jazz up outfits with great accessories instead of loud patterns.
- Heels always work wonders to elongate the leg, which makes them look thinner.
- Remember horizontal stripes, pleating, gathering or drawstrings are your enemy. For more advice contact Phill at phill@philltarling.com.

