

# Community Health

## Losing weight is only half the battle

by Kate Myerson, RD

The National Weight Control Registry is the largest study of successful weight loss, tracking more than 10,000 people who lost at least 30 pounds and kept it off for 1 year or more. The average participant age is around 50 years old, but the majority of participants were overweight before the age of 18 and have at least one parent who is overweight, suggesting possible genetic susceptibility.

The key findings may surprise you. What made the participants successful wasn't a particular food, or diet plan, or exercise regimen. What made participants successful were their daily habits. Of the people who lost at least 30 pounds and kept it off for over a year:

- 78% eat breakfast every day.
- 62% watch fewer than 10 hours of TV per week.
- 90% exercise, on average 11,000–12,000 steps a day or about 6 miles.

### Why are these strategies so successful?

- Eating breakfast increases the metabolic rate. Having breakfast also yields fewer episodes of imbalanced, impulsive, or excessive eating later in the day.
- The average American watches 28 hours of television a week. Participants who were successful losing and keeping weight off watched less than an hour and a half of TV a day, freeing up time to

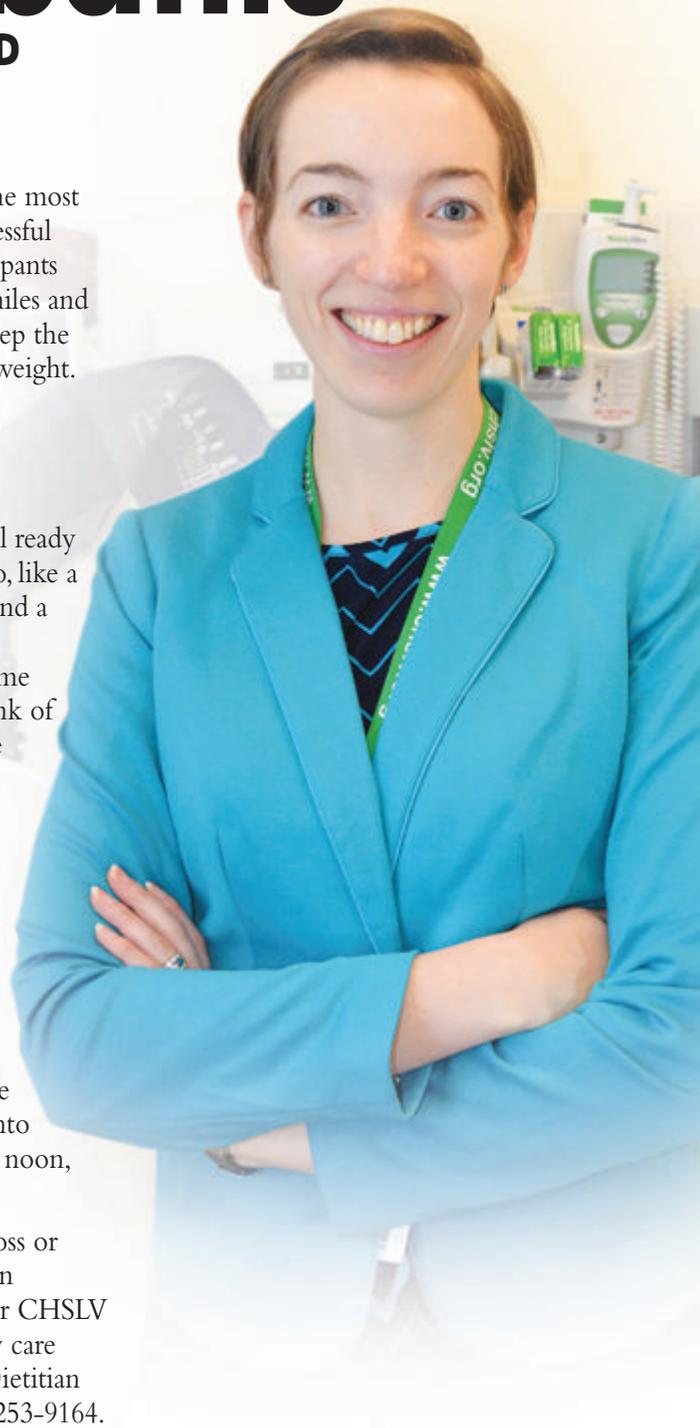
exercise and less time to mindlessly snack.

- Physical activity is one of the most important elements of successful weight management. Participants worked up to walking six miles and in fact exercised more to keep the weight off than to lose the weight.

### How can you incorporate these strategies?

- Start with breakfast. If you don't have time or don't feel ready to eat, pack a breakfast to go, like a granola bar, a cheese stick, and a piece of fruit.
- Keep track of how much time you watch TV now, and think of a few activities that could replace some of that time. It could be going for a walk, reading, or working on a hobby.
- Finally, get moving! Any activity that gets your heart rate up for at least 10 minutes counts. So, if walking bothers your joints or you simply don't have the time, break your walks up into 10 minutes in the morning, noon, and evening.

If you struggle with weight loss or weight management, nutrition counseling is a free service for CHSLV patients. Talk to your primary care provider or call Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Kate Myerson at 253-9164.



# Dominique Couture

## giving back to her community

CHSLV's Medical Social Worker Dominique Couture enjoys volunteering and giving back to her community. Dominique is a member of the Community Health Team and works from the emergency department at Copley Hospital. "I love my community. Volunteering is just a part of who I am. I get up in the morning wanting to do it," she says. Dominique was born in Copley Hospital and grew up in Morrisville where she attended Peoples Academy. She graduated cum laude from Johnson State College in 2007, and in the same year she won the volunteer of the year award from the Lamoille Valley Chamber of Commerce for the work she did at Clarina Howard Center. One of the non-profits Dominique is most passionate about is Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, a year-round pediatric oncology camp located in South Hero for children ages 7 to 17, who currently have cancer or are in remission, and for their families. CHSLV is a sponsor of Camp Ta-Kum-Ta.



### *How did you get involved with Camp Ta-Kum-Ta?*

I was the executive assistant at PAR Springer-Miller Systems (PSMS) and I was in charge of organizing the yearly "Give Back Day." Every year the past president of PSMS, Larry Hall, shut down our Stowe office for the day and the employees would do eight hours of volunteer work at Camp TKT for what PSMS called "Give Back Day." While there I met Grace, a camper with cancer who said that for the rest of my life I should work with kids like her. Grace and other Camp TKT campers have inspired me to continue to volunteer and give back whenever I can. I started volunteering for Camp TKT Winter Weekends and did my first summer camp

in 2012. I am there several weekends throughout the year for different sessions and also for the week-long camp in July.

### *Why are you so passionate about volunteer work?*

When I was growing up giving a large check wasn't an option, so I gave time. I believe that if everybody gave back some of their time our world would be a better place. I love being able to lend a helping hand when people are in need. It's such an amazing feeling to help people. I've met some of the most special people by lending a hand.

### *Why is Camp TKT so special for you?*

Everyone knows someone who has been affected by a cancer diagnosis. When you hear the word cancer it is usually negative. But at Camp TKT we don't focus on the negatives of cancer, we celebrate life and create special memories we will never forget. Camp TKT allows kids to check their cancer at the door and just be kids, and the volunteers can be kids with them. Some kids have never experienced things like our ropes course or going to prom. We have a prom each year at summer camp and our campers get all dressed up, just like they are truly going to prom. The minute the kids get to camp, they are already talking about prom, their dresses, and their dates!

### *What have you learned from volunteering at Camp TKT?*

The campers have taught me to live every day to the fullest. Everyone thinks it must be so depressing to volunteer there, but it's exactly the opposite. It's the happiest place I've ever experienced. We rarely talk about cancer unless a camper wants to. We hug, sing, laugh, and create

memories. When I get home from summer camp I'm exhausted, and the re-entry back into "real life" is so hard. Camp TKT is like another world I can't explain. It is perfect.

### *What are you known for at camp?*

My first year there I was in a skit and had to wear a tutu. Doreen Noyes, who also lives in Lamoille County and has volunteered at Camp TKT for years, told me I should wear the tutu for the rest of the week, so I did. Now I have about 30 tutus and that's what I wear every day at Camp. Kids think it's totally normal, that I wear a tutu all the time. It makes people smile, and that's my main goal in life: to make people smile.

### *Does one child stick out in your mind?*

All of our campers have touched my heart, however, one camper who has graduated, I still meet on a regular basis. We have developed a very special bond. She calls me the Big Dipper and she's the Little Dipper. She's in remission now and doing well and is now a camp counselor in training at Camp TKT.

### *Where else have you volunteered?*

I'm a committee member for Stowe Weekend of Hope, and I am a Lamoille Home Health & Hospice volunteer. I also help co-run Chris' Challenge Turkey Drive for Lamoille Valley with Roland LaJoie from WLVB radio. We are on the air every week starting at the end of October, asking people to donate turkeys for others in need in our community.

### *What do you tell others about volunteering?*

I tell them a quote by Ghandi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

