

## “It’s important to think about your food choices and your motivation for eating.”

**B**efore hitting the treadmill or starting any sort of a diet, Shannon Westgate, 35, decided to do a little research. “After the birth of my second son, I just started gaining weight,” she said. “I was exhausted all the time. My life became more about getting through a day.” Circumstances in her social life weren’t helping either. She went through a divorce and found herself carrying a full time job, raising two young sons and leading a very inactive lifestyle. Last June, a visit from a former client (she was an interior designer) and new employer, Dr. David Pawsat, led her to an epiphany and down the path to a better lifestyle. “I remember seeing Dr. Pawsat at a retail job I was working and he hadn’t seen me in four years,” she explained. “In not so many words, he asked me what happened. I had gained a tremendous amount of weight since he last saw me. Together we learned about different diets, read diet books and discussed theories, breaking down the best parts of each program.”

**SUPPORT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.** That was when she tipped the scales at 243 pounds. After a consultation with Dr. Pawsat, Westgate decided to turn her life around. Since that time, she’s gotten a tremendous amount of support from



her new husband, Tom, and a new determination to eat right, exercise and learn as much as she possibly can about the types of food she puts into her body. “I used to get home from work, take care of my kids, eat a bowl of cereal or something else with high carbs and go to bed,” she said. “Now I’m active again, eating well and just enjoying life so much more. I’ve become interested in golfing again.” She said, to lose her weight she went on a liquid diet, corrected the imbalance

in her hormones and weaned herself off medications she was taking. During that time she lost 55 pounds.

**A NEW OUTLOOK** She’s currently at 178, but not done yet. Her plan is to drop to 150 pounds and play as much golf as possible. To help her, she wakes early and walks 3.5 miles on her treadmill and owns a pedometer—doing what she can to take 10,000 steps per day. “Dealing with losing weight and getting into the right mindset is hard to explain,” she said. “Your body never had to go through losing weight before, so it’s important to think about your food choices and your motivation for eating.” What’s her advice for others who are currently striving to find the way to a healthier lifestyle? “You have to do it for yourself,” she said.

