Those are the laments I hear every day from overscheduled, stressed-out women around the country: women who think that unless they go to the gym for hours a day, they’ll never lose weight; who think that exercise must be arduous and time-consuming for it to count.

That mind-set isn’t only misguided, it’s making us fat.

Consider two typical busy modern women. One desperately tries to make it to step aerobics class 3 days a week but is otherwise chained to her desk or stuck in her car. The other never steps foot in the gym but takes two or three 10-minute walks a day and performs a few easy dumbbell exercises in the evening. Who do you think gets fitter faster?

You might be surprised to learn that the fitter woman is the second one, by a long shot. She stays saner and happier, too!

Long before there were gyms, health clubs, and celebrity trainers, people didn’t carve out 60 minutes to climb flight after flight of steps on a StairMaster. They got fit and stayed fit 1 minute at a time just by moving their bodies. And that’s the only way we’re going to turn our crazy, busy, yet all-too-sedentary lives into crazy, busy, active lives. I’m going to show you exactly how, with a totally fresh—yet
amazingly commonsense—approach to fitness: Prevention’s Shortcuts to Big Weight Loss.

Prevention’s Shortcuts are workouts that I’ve specially designed to give you the maximum fat-burning, body-toning power possible in just 10 minutes. But this program isn’t just about convenience. Prevention’s Shortcuts deliver better results in less time than the traditional 30- to 40-minute workout approach that has been drilled into our heads. That’s right, my 10-minute Prevention’s Shortcuts workouts actually work better than longer exercise sessions. I see it with the hundreds of women I train—and it’s 100 percent scientifically proven.

By committing yourself to Prevention’s Shortcuts to Big Weight Loss, I promise you can

- Drop up to two dress sizes in 8 weeks.
- Lose 30 percent more weight with these 10-minute workouts than with 40-minute walking workouts.
- Burn an extra 200 calories a day. (That means you’ll be zapping the equivalent of a pack of M&M’S every single day.)
- Increase your cardiovascular fitness more than twice as quickly as you would doing traditional 30- to 40-minute workouts.
- Reduce your heart disease risk and key risk factors like triglycerides, dropping them lower and faster than you would by following a more traditional workout system.
- Maybe most important, you’ll keep your weight off better, too!

And that’s not all! You’ll have more energy, feel happier, build strong bones, improve your posture, and—here’s the best part—still have time for your family, friends, and everything else in your life that you love.

THE SECRET OF MY OWN SUCCESS

Hi. I’m Chris Freytag, and I live your life. I’m not a rich celebrity with a live-in trainer, chef, and personal assistant. I’m a working mother of three from Minnesota. I’m emptying the dishwasher, folding laundry, driving carpools, and correcting
homework just like you. I'm over 40, and I'm a realist. I know that as we age, our
obligations become more time-consuming, and spending time with those we care
about gets harder to do. So free time is more precious than gold. I know that all those
crazy post-35 hormone changes can make your hips widen and waistline expand,
even if you're eating less. I know that as time passes, there are more chances for
health issues to surface. But here's what else I know: Once you acknowledge your
life—cherish it for all its beauty and goodness—and take charge of the life you're
living, instead of hoping it somehow changes on its own (or worse, trying to live
someone else's life), that's when the really good stuff happens. That's when you get fit,
lose weight, and look and feel great.

Like you (unless you're really enlightened), I wasn't as concerned with any of this
stuff 20 years ago, even though I was already in the fitness industry. I breezed through
my twenties, eating desserts, enjoying after-work wine with friends, and never wor-
rying about my weight. But my body started to change in my thirties. I had three
kids, and I noticed the toll it took on my time, emotions, and appearance. It forced
me to take a more active role in my health.

Now that I'm in my forties, I feel like I'm in the best shape of my life, mentally,
spiritually, and physically. Everyone always asks, “What’s your secret?” I practice
what I preach! I do longer workouts when I can, because I love to move my body. But
when I have less time on my hands (as is so often the case these days), I just seize
every opportunity to squeeze in a little Prevention's Shortcuts activity. I’ll do
Prevention’s Shortcuts core-strengthening moves, featured in Chapter 8, while
watching the news. If I’m traveling, I’ll do Chapter 12’s yoga workouts in my hotel
room. Some days, all I can manage is one of Chapter 4’s cardio walking workouts on
the treadmill. But I do it. And it works.

That is the heart and soul of the Prevention's Shortcuts to Big Weight Loss program.
It's a program that gets you fit on your own time, working with your specific limita-
tions and needs. So it fits seamlessly into your life whether you’re a stay-at-home
mother of four or a working single woman who’s a desk jockey. I’ve seen it transform
hundreds of women's lives. Now it can transform yours. You’ll learn how to identify
workout opportunities—I call them Shortcut Slots—you never knew existed. And I’ll
tell you exactly what moves to do to make the most of those free moments. You’ll find
48 safe, efficient, 10-minute workouts you can do every day without missing a beat—
or your book club meeting!
LOSE FAT, KEEP IT OFF, AND MORE

I can hear you now. You’re thinking, “No way will I ever lose these saddlebags or tighten this tummy with a 10-minute workout. Everything I read says I need at least 30 minutes of exercise.” Well, here’s the thing: No one ever said you had to do all 30 of those minutes at one time! In fact, there’s very compelling scientific evidence that spreading out activity over the course of the day may not only be easier to do, but may also work faster and be better for you, too.

Over the past few years, numerous studies have shown that women can lose weight, lower their heart disease risk, and improve their aerobic fitness by adopting the Prevention’s Shortcuts approach to exercise. Without bogging you down with science, here are a few standouts.

**Fat loss.** In a 20-week study of 56 overweight, sedentary women, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh found that those who were advised to perform multiple 10-minute bouts of exercise throughout the day were better able to stick to the program and lost more weight than those who had been told to get their exercise in one 30- to 40-minute chunk three times a week. Specifically, the short-bouters worked out an average of 4 days a week, versus 3 days for the long-bout group; they were active about 32 minutes a day, versus 27 minutes for the long-bouters; and by the end of the study, they shed an average of 20 pounds, 6 more than those who tried to squeeze in all their exercise in one shot. That’s 30 percent more weight loss from short bouts of exercise like Prevention’s Shortcuts than from a traditional exercise program. One woman in the study even lost more than 30 pounds!

In a similar study from Singapore, researchers divided a group of 30 overweight women into two groups. Twice a week, one group walked or cycled on exercise machines until they burned 1,000 calories. The other worked out 5 days a week, on the same machines, burning 400 calories each time. None of the women changed what they ate. After 8 weeks, both groups had lost nearly identical amounts of weight, body fat, and inches off their waists.

Some researchers theorize that multiple short bursts of activity burn fat as well as, if not better than, a single long bout because they keep your metabolism revved
throughout the day. Your calorie burn stays elevated for up to an hour after you finish exercising. So you get more total after-exercise calorie burn throughout the day with several *Prevention*'s Shortcuts than you do with one long workout. That means you actually burn more calories for the same total exercise time.

**Heart health.** Physical activity is like a Roto-Rooter for your arteries, flushing them clean and keeping them clear and supple. A study published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that accumulated 10-minute bursts of exercise (like *Prevention*'s Shortcuts) throughout the day were actually more effective at lowering triglycerides—a type of blood fat that raises your heart attack risk—than one continuous 30-minute jog on the treadmill. Why? Because, like I mentioned above, short bouts have a more positive effect on metabolism, so your body burns more fat, including the fat floating through your bloodstream, all day long. Thomas Altena, EdD, the author of this study, was quoted as saying, “People who cannot exercise for long durations due to low fitness levels or busy lifestyles don’t have to sit still and wait for a heart attack.” I couldn’t agree more! A strong, healthy heart is just one more reason why I recommend you do at least three *Prevention*'s Shortcuts a day.

**Cardio fitness.** Challenging your body with a few high-energy bouts of exercise—like 30- to 120-second fast-paced intervals on a treadmill or stationary bike—can improve your endurance as much as slogging along at a slower pace for hours each week. In one Canadian study, researchers found that men and women who cranked out four 30-second sprints (with 4 minutes of rest between efforts) on exercise bikes three times a week reaped fitness gains identical to those who pedaled for 2 hours at a moderate pace three times a week! I love this approach, because it’s much easier to psych yourself into doing something—even if it’s a little hard—for just 30 seconds or a minute or two than it is to rally your energy for an hour-long haul. The Quick Calorie Burners, Fat-Sizzling Walking Workouts, and Bun Burners in Chapter 4 are great interval workouts for building cardiovascular fitness.

Furthermore, the *Prevention*'s Shortcuts program may improve your cardio health twice as quickly as other programs. In another study, University of New Hampshire researchers asked 37 men and women to perform either two short-bout workouts (15 minutes each) or one continuous 30-minute exercise bout 4 days a week for 12 weeks. Though both groups enjoyed improved fitness, short bouts consistently worked better. The short-bouters boosted their maximal oxygen consumption (a measure of how strong their heart, lungs, and muscles became) by 8.7 percent—
nearly twice as much as the increase in the 30-minute exercisers (who improved just 4.5 percent). Short-bout exercisers also improved the amount of time they could go full out on a treadmill test by more than a minute (71 seconds), compared with a 41-second improvement in their peers doing longer bouts. Finally, only short-bout exercises raised levels of healthy HDL cholesterol. On Prevention's Shortcuts plan, you'll do two short cardio workouts 3 to 5 days a week instead of conventional, longer aerobic workouts.

**Sustained weight loss.** How many people do you know who go on an “exercise kick,” drop a bunch of weight, burn out, and gain it all back? They do this because their programs aren't sustainable. It's common sense: If exercise is easy to stick to, your results will stick, too. Research proves it. In a 2-year study of more than 230 overweight and inactive men and women, researchers at the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas found that those who sneaked 30 minutes of activity into their day by taking the stairs at the office, walking around the field during their kids’ soccer practice, or pulling weeds around the yard shed as much body fat (and improved their fitness and heart health) as those who went to the gym to vigorously exercise for 20 to 60 minutes, 5 days a week. A Johns Hopkins University study echoed these findings, reporting that people who added just 30 minutes of lifestyle activity to their day lost almost 10 pounds during a 16-week study period—more than a comparable group that did step aerobics 3 days a week. What’s more, the lifestyle exercisers did a better job of keeping the weight off.

So in addition to the 10-minute Prevention's Shortcuts workouts that I've specially designed to be convenient, quick, and addictive, throughout the book you'll find Lifestyle Shortcuts, ways to make fat-burning activity a natural part of your life. You'll also learn 1-Minute Wonder workouts, 60 seconds of exercise that burns 10 extra calories—an effort that, made daily, can add up to an extra pound of weight loss each year. And in Chapter 3, we'll help you identify Shortcut Slots, the gaps in your busy schedule that can be filled with all this weight-maintaining movement.

**Muscle tone.** It hasn't been extensively studied, but you don't need expensive research to tell you that your butt won't get any less toned if you work it on a different day than your biceps. Breaking up your strength training routine beats the boredom of spending a half hour with your dumbbells, and you're less likely to shortchange your workout by skipping sets or reps because you're running low on time. So while Prevention's Shortcuts to losing 25 pounds or more, in Chapter 5, are specially
designed to work your whole body in just 10 minutes, I’ve also included other chapters with workouts to specifically tone individual body parts. Even when your main goal is weight loss, I give you permission—encouragement, even—to peek at Part 3, Prevention’s Shortcuts to Shaping and Sculpting, and deviously try one of the more narrowly targeted workouts. I happen to be one of those creative, change-it-up girls. Join me—let your hair down and go wild for 10 minutes. It’ll keep you interested in and compliant with the Prevention’s Shortcuts program, because—here comes the common sense—the bottom line is, you must comply with the program to see results.

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Even more important than what science says is the fact that Prevention’s Shortcuts just make sense. Before “aerobics” and fancy exercise classes, people rarely “worked out,” but very few people were overweight. They didn’t have to block out huge chunks of time to jog 6 miles and lift weights for an hour; they were simply running around, living active lives. Even though almost every modern woman could use more exercise, for millions of us, it feels uncomfortable and downright unnatural to run, jog, or even walk for 30 minutes or an hour nonstop. But almost everyone enjoys the instant lift from a walk around the block, like the cardio walking workouts in Chapter 4, or a nice 10-minute stretch break, like the flexibility shortcuts in Chapter 12. It’s easy. And it’s what your body craves. So we need to put aside this mind-set of needing a grueling 2-hour workout to whip ourselves into shape.

Here’s just one example of how the approach you’ll learn in this book will make a dramatic difference in your weight—and fast. My client Meghan, 32, gained 60 pounds while pregnant with her daughter, now 2, and just couldn’t seem to shake the 35 she still had left to lose. Making things a little more complicated was the fact that she also had three teenage stepsons. Meghan had just about thrown in the towel when I convinced her to try Prevention’s Shortcuts. Here’s what she had to say, in her own words.

I used to think that in order for exercise to count, I had to have an hour or two of free time, which is virtually impossible with four kids in the house. When Chris encouraged me to think about the program as simply being
more active, it all started to fall into place. I found ways to fit in those 10-minute workouts. I was actually enjoying it. The first couple of days I felt more tired, but then I turned a corner and had more energy. Before long, I started feeling so good that running on the treadmill didn’t seem like a chore, just more activity.

It worked! I was really amazed that in just under 2 months, I lost 15 pounds. I wish I had realized years ago that a few minutes of increased activity a few times a day could have such a big impact. I have gone down almost two dress sizes and am wearing clothes I haven’t worn for years.

Now I’m continuing to work on resistance training. I’d never done much of that in the past, but the more I do, the stronger I feel, the more energy I have, and the easier it is to be active. I just fit in small segments of strength training here and there. I’ve lost over 20 pounds so far, and it’s never felt easier.

That’s right, Meghan dropped two dress sizes in less than 2 months. For a step-by-step look at how Meghan fit Prevention’s Shortcuts into her busy schedule, check out her makeover on page 46.

You, too, can experience results like Meghan’s using the Prevention’s Shortcuts workout system. The program is carefully crafted to maximize every active minute for optimum calorie burn and metabolism revving all day long. Studies prove it, but more important, women who try it see results. You’ll find more Prevention’s Shortcuts success stories throughout the book. Try the program and soon you’ll have one of your own.

TIME PASSES—DON’T LET IT PASS YOU BY!

What are you waiting for? Today will pass. This month will go by. The year will come and go whether or not you decide to make the commitment to the Prevention’s Shortcuts lifestyle. The choice is 100 percent yours. You can wake up in 30 days and be slimmer, more toned, happier, and healthier because you’ve finally devoted the few minutes it takes to take care of yourself. Or you can wake up with the same old worries and body woes, wondering when you’re ever going to find the time to get going.
Making exercise a habit starts with a decision that you’ve already made by buying this book. That decision is followed by an action—doing just one of the Prevention’s Shortcuts workouts. That action, repeated over time, becomes a habit. And that habit becomes a way of life. That’s how those women you envy, who look great and always seem to find time to exercise, do it: one step at a time.

So here you go. I’m passionate about helping people move toward better mental and physical health. I believe in you, and I’m going to spend the next 350 pages getting you motivated and moving. You see, passion means that you really care about something and want to make a difference. So I ask you: How much do you really care? Deep down, we all want to be healthy. So let’s do this together. Those of us who’ve raised kids have already learned that it’s not always easy to get things right. We screw up and make mistakes, but we don’t give up, because we’re passionate about our children. I have gone to bed feeling defeated as a parent only to awake the next day with a new attitude and the spirit to take it all on again. I want to help you apply that same passion to yourself and your health. I’m all about reality and telling it like it is. And I’m telling you, you can do it. Don’t give up. Tackle your fears, embrace your desires, and create the body you’ve always wanted.

Albert Einstein once said, “Nothing happens until something moves.” He was speaking of science, but he might just as well have been referring to our lives—and our bodies. Most people are imprisoned by inertia. The only way to break free is to do something. Turn the page and get started today!

10-SECOND WISDOM

“Health and fitness isn’t a destination. It’s a journey we travel through our whole life. There’s no place we reach where we say, ‘Yes! I’m done!’ We just continue on and change with age and lifestyle. The way I stay in shape at 41 is different than what I did at 21. You will hit detours and delays and potholes along the way. Just steer around them and keep going. Consider this book your map. You would never take a road trip without a planned course. Treat your fitness journey the same way.”