

BRITAIN'S No 1 WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

# GLAMOUR

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# Alex's body makeover: "How I lost a stone in four weeks"

Four months ago, GLAMOUR's Beauty Director, **Alessandra Steinherr**, vowed to reach a healthy weight by overhauling her diet and exercise regime. She reveals the secrets of her success so far

**T**his past month, I've lost a stone, which seems unbelievable. Because of my insulin resistance\*, weight loss is slower for me than for others, since insulin is responsible for fat storage and thus impedes weight loss. I think my success is due to finding a balance in my eating, discovering what type of exercise suits me and finally 'clicking' mentally. Here's what I've been doing:

## I found my food comfort zone

- **NO SNACKING** Some experts say you should graze all day, but eating frequently makes me hungrier and makes it harder to keep track of what I eat. I like three good meals per day. If I get hungry, I squeeze a lemon into a cup of hot water and add a teaspoon of agave nectar (it has a low glycaemic index – or GI – so it doesn't spike my insulin levels too much). That usually does the trick.
- **FRUIT IN THE MORNING** Fruit provides vitamins but it's also high in sugar, which is not good for anyone with an insulin problem, so I try to have it at breakfast only and so my body uses up the sugar during the day. And I stick to low-GI fruits like berries, apples and pears.
- **BRINGING MY LUNCH TO WORK** To ensure I get exactly the food I want, I bring a packed lunch to work when I can. I love the fact that it stops any impulse buying and it's turning out to be cheaper, too.
- **ADDING GOOD FATS** At first, I thought it was counterproductive adding fats to my diet, but I feel this has made a major difference to my body and mood. When I say fat, though, I'm talking about high-quality, cold-pressed monounsaturated plant oils. I add two tablespoons of flax, hemp, extra virgin olive oil or Udo's Choice (a blend of oils available at most health food shops) to my vegetables at lunch and dinner, or I have some avocado. These fats help me feel fuller, aid digestion, balance my mood and keep my skin ▶



March 2010  
12st 2lbs

September 2009  
14st 8.8lbs

## My body stats

**GOAL:** to lose 3st 2.8lbs and reach a healthy weight  
**BUST** Start 40.25ins  
 Now 36.7ins  
**WAIST** Start 38ins  
 Now 29ins  
**HIPS** Start 44.5ins  
 Now 38.6ins  
**BODY FAT MASS**  
 Start 5st 11.6lbs  
 Now 4st 2lbs  
**BODY MASS INDEX**  
 Start 29.7  
 Now 24.6  
**WEIGHT** Start 14st 8.8lbs  
 Now 12st 2lbs

supple (there's nothing worse than losing weight and then getting dried-out 'dieter's skin').

● **LIGHTEN UP AT NIGHT** I don't like going to bed with a heavy tummy – it prevents me from sleeping – and I feel lighter the next morning if I've had a small dinner the night before.

## What I eat during the week

**ON WAKING** Two glasses of water.

**BREAKFAST** Two boiled eggs with a slice of buttered wholegrain bread.

**LUNCH** Chicken fricassee with crème fraîche, sautéed mushrooms and grilled courgettes.

**DINNER** Grilled salmon with ¼ avocado and a Greek salad.

**DURING THE DAY** I drink another 1½ litres of water and lots of herbal teas, such as green tea and fennel.

## What I eat at the weekend

**ON WAKING** Two glasses of water.

**BREAKFAST** One squeezed grapefruit. A full English: two poached eggs, a grilled tomato,



Alex models the Hypoxi pressure suit

a small portion of baked beans, grilled bacon, mushrooms and a buttered wholegrain English muffin.

**LUNCH** Steak with a green salad, sautéed mushrooms and spinach.

**DINNER** Steamed cod with garlic broccoli.

**MY TROUBLE-SHOOTING TRICK**

If I do overindulge, I make my next meal a high-protein energy one by mixing 150g full-fat bio yoghurt (the fat-free version has a higher sugar

content) with 250g fat-free fromage frais and 100g berries (you can add two teaspoons of agave nectar if you like it sweeter). It's delicious – it tastes like a dessert – and quite filling. This really helps me to get back on track when I've eaten too much.

## What really changed my body shape

As I said earlier, a combination of several elements has contributed to my rapid weight loss this month. But the thing that has made the biggest difference is a high-tech exercise called Hypoxi therapy.

Let me be honest, when I first embarked on this I thought, 'There is no way this is going to work, but I'll give it a go anyway.'

The Hypoxi method encourages fat loss specifically on the lower body (hips/thighs/bum/legs) through a two-step approach. Each session begins with a 20-minute 'massage' in a pressure suit and is followed by a 30-minute stint on a vacuum-sealed exercise bike. It's all really easy and non-strenuous, as the idea is that a lower-intensity workout burns more fat.

After going three times a week for four weeks, I have lost 16 inches all over my body (I even asked to be measured twice just to be sure!). While the numbers shock me, the result doesn't, seeing as I went down one dress size. I am completely thrilled – I've lost inches and my skin looks firmer too.

I am always hesitant in recommending pricey treatments, but this is well worth the investment. Though I will add that you can't rely on it to work on its own – it needs to be in conjunction with a good diet.

**Hypoxi therapy costs £500 for 12 sessions at the Body Clinic at Urban Retreat, Harrods (020 7893 8333) and nationwide – visit Hypoxi.co.uk to find your nearest salon. @**

## The dreaded C word: Cellulite

I'm so happy to have shifted this much excess weight, but I'm getting a bit concerned about the state of my skin. As a beauty editor, I get to try all the cellulite-busting, body-toning products and treatments. I have yet to find anything that completely gets rid of

cellulite and firms skin – though I have seen an improvement with some products. The most important thing, though – and I can't stress this enough – is that you need to be consistent and do this daily to see results. Here is my routine:



I body brush every morning, starting at my feet and working upwards – always brushing towards the heart. It helps eliminate toxins and excess fluids. I use **Body Brush** £18 Elemis.

**Cellu-Pro** £104 Sisley is the only product that's had any positive effect on the state of my butt. It's expensive, so I just use it on my dimpled bits, to make it last.

I massage **Tonic Body Treatment Oil** £32.50 Clarins.co.uk into damp skin after showering and then do a quick cold shower blast. It's kept my skin firm and elastic.

**High Maintenance Firming & Hydrating Body Crème** £60 Dr Sebagn is packed with the best firming ingredients on the market. I rub it into my arms, chest and tummy twice a day.

Follow Alessandra's progress at [GLAMOUR.com](http://GLAMOUR.com)

**NEXT MONTH: Alex tries to stay positive despite some frustrating news**