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# HEALTHY LIVING

taking care of your mind, body, spirit

## 30 Day Body Challenge

Drop up to two pounds a week with this cardio-strength workout designed by New York Sports Club fitness pro **Lisa Priestly**

BY LYNNA FLOYD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY COLIN WILLIAMS

### 1. Leg Lift With Squat & Twist

Place a fitness band around your ankles and stand with feet hip width apart, holding a medicine ball. Now extend your right leg as high as you can to the right while raising the ball up to your left ear. Keep back straight, shoulder blades down and core tight. Next descend into a squat, keeping your weight in your heels and bringing the ball down just outside right knee. Do ten reps on each side.

#### WHAT TO DO:

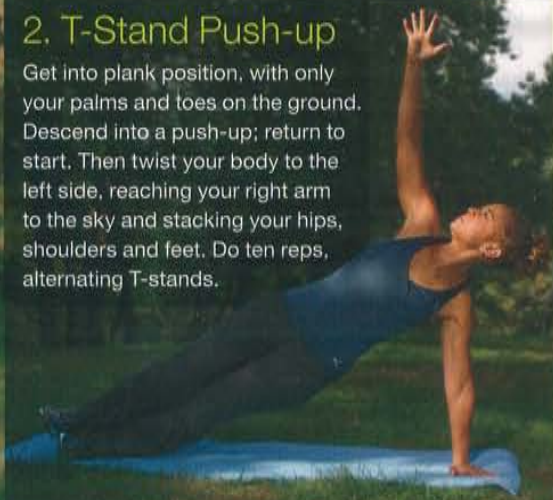
Repeat this series of moves two to three times to make one full workout. After each move, keep your heart rate up with two minutes of cardio, like marching, dancing or doing step-ups onto a riser. Do the workout up to six days a week and stretch before and after.

### PART 1:

## lose 8 pounds

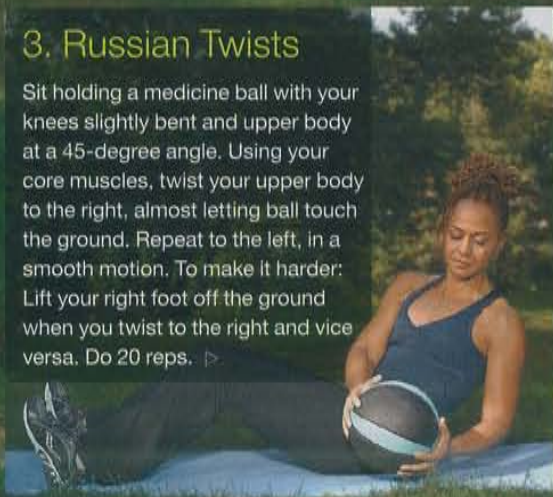
### 2. T-Stand Push-up

Get into plank position, with only your palms and toes on the ground. Descend into a push-up; return to start. Then twist your body to the left side, reaching your right arm to the sky and stacking your hips, shoulders and feet. Do ten reps, alternating T-stands.

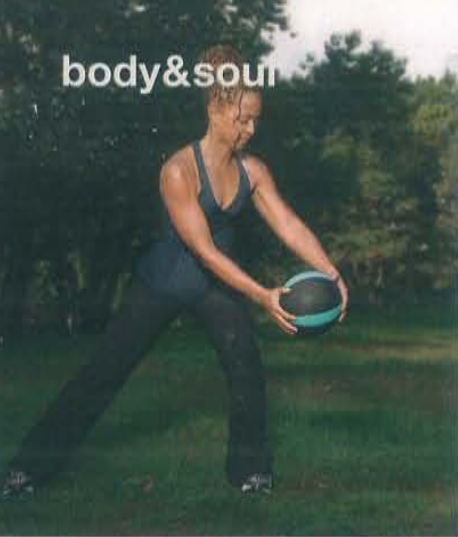


### 3. Russian Twists

Sit holding a medicine ball with your knees slightly bent and upper body at a 45-degree angle. Using your core muscles, twist your upper body to the right, almost letting ball touch the ground. Repeat to the left, in a smooth motion. To make it harder: Lift your right foot off the ground when you twist to the right and vice versa. Do 20 reps. ▶







#### 4. Wood Chop & Twist

With feet parallel in a wide stance, bend your right knee, keeping your left leg straight. Extend your arms up to the right by your head while holding a medicine ball. Keep your weight in your heels. With a smooth motion, shift weight to your left, bending left knee, straightening right leg, and doing a diagonal chop with your hands to bring the medicine ball to the outside of your left knee. Keep back straight, shoulder blades down and core in. Return to center and repeat on the left. Do 15 reps.

#### 5. Single Leg Press

Anchor one end of your band to a doorknob, bench or tree making sure it is at chest level. Face away from the anchor, and hold the other end of the band in your left hand at chest level. Your left arm should be bent at the elbow, and there should be slight tension on the band. Focus on pulling in your core muscles and balancing on your right leg. Now, draw your shoulder blades down and extend your left arm until it's straight out in front of you. Then return to start. Do 15 reps for each arm.

#### 6. Single Leg Pull

Anchor one end of your workout band to a doorknob, bench or tree at chest level. Face the anchor and hold the other end of the band in your left hand. Your arm should be fully extended, and there should be slight tension on the band. Now pull in your core muscles and balance on your left leg, leaving your right leg slightly off the ground. Draw your shoulder blades together and down, then pull the band until your left fist meets your chest. Extend your arm back to start. Do 15 reps for each arm. ▷

### OUR TOP FIVE TIPS FOR SLIMMING DOWN

- 1 Be active all day—not just during your workout. Take the stairs, deliver the memo in person, dance during the commercial break.
- 2 Don't drink your calories. Opt for water instead of high-cal juices and sodas.
- 3 Make sure veggies take up half the space on your plate.
- 4 Find your motivator. Maybe wearing a pedometer inspires you to walk more. Or the competitive camaraderie of classes at the gym makes you work harder.
- 5 Visualize your success—if you can "see" it, you can achieve it.

### FACT VS. FICTION

**MYTH:** You shouldn't eat after 8:00 P.M.  
**TRUTH:** It's not when you eat, it's what you eat. "I've been known to have dinner after 10:00 P.M.," says Jackie Keller, founder of NutriFit ([nutrifitonline.com](http://nutrifitonline.com)), a nutrition company. "But I'm not eating heavy food. I'll eat veggies and protein by having a small piece of salmon and a salad."

### DON'T SKIP MEALS

Tune out that voice in your head that says, *I'm not hungry; I just won't have breakfast or I need to save calories, so I won't eat lunch.* Opting out of meals doesn't get you closer to your weight loss goals. It gets you further away from them. "You're slowing down your metabolism, plus you'll be hungrier for the next meal and likely to overeat," says Keller. Instead, try to eat a healthy meal or snack every three hours. You'll never be hungry again.

### YOUR SLIM-DOWN SECRET WEAPON: A HEALTH JOURNAL

Experts say that keeping track of what you eat, when you exercise and how you feel will keep you motivated, help you understand your habits better, and make you a weight loss success story. To get started, check out the journal in *ESSENCE's The Black Woman's Guide to Healthy Living* (Time Inc. Home Entertainment).

### NEVER CRAVE DESSERT AGAIN

Reach for a tea that tastes sweet like cake, instead of slicing a piece of the real thing.

Try Chocolate Mint or Vanilla Comoro from Harney & Sons (\$8, [harney.com](http://harney.com)).

