

# MOMS 2 MOMS



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# Feature

## On Time...

**Liz Martin**  
Moms2Moms

As most mothers will agree, TIME is the one commodity we find ourselves lacking—time for all the activities that make up our day. Working mothers often find that there just isn't enough time in a day to do it all.

According to our February Moms2Moms feature, Amy Huntington, being on time is something that she works to achieve with the help of her friend, and fellow Gate of Heaven mom, Jane Brennan, of Dallas.

Jane is a working mom, with a husband and four children: Chester, age 10; Joseph, age 9; Jacob, age 8; and Anna, age 4. Her husband, Joe, works in management for Guardian Warranty Corp, in Avoca. Jane works part-time as business development coordinator for John Heinz Rehab, in Wilkes-Barre. "My schedule is flexible which makes it great with four kids!"

In addition to her work, Jane volunteers when she can at her children's school. She is also a Tiger Den leader for her youngest son, Jacob, and 13 other 2<sup>nd</sup> graders; and entertains the entire Cub Scout Pack 232 for their monthly pack meeting.

On a daily basis, Jane performs the customary motherly duties of dinner, laundry and homework, but then also juggles three boys with football, soccer, basketball and baseball practices, depending on the season. "I try to work out (I emphasize try), so when I am off from work I try to go to Step class at Shapes or do the treadmill."

Jane will acknowledge that the busiest aspect of her lifestyle is,

"4 kids, 4 kids, 4 kids, definitely!"

"I love being a mother and wife, but this stage- right here and now- has to be the busiest. There aren't really any significant challenges other than just trying to keep the home running well, keep everyone happy, and most of all enjoy this part of our lives. According to everyone, it goes by so fast. I just wonder why I don't lose more weight, since once I wake up I never sit down again until bedtime."

Time management is Jane's forte, and she feels it is the key to motherhood. "I have calendars in the kitchen for this month and next, and each child has a color and their activity that goes with them that day. It has helped to keep things organized. My husband will call me during the day and ask me what the schedule is for today / tonight. When I can say, 'nothing', we both breathe a sigh of relief!"

So, how does she do it? How does Jane manage to be everywhere she needs to be? She explained, I learned earlier in life to be 'on time', but mostly early. I learned that from my parents. My parents, brother and I are never late—it is what I grew up knowing, and it makes me crazy to be late. I know what time I need to leave the house and will cushion time into getting ready to make sure we can get out the door on time."

"Even when the kids were young, I would prepare their outfits the night before and make sure whatever I needed for the next day would be done ahead of time. I think it shows a certain respect for the event you are attending to be on time. It tells you something about the person, based on when they arrive. I just know I start to sweat when I am late, and that I rarely ever am."

So, what sage advice does Jane offer our readers? "I guess my best



advice would be to prioritize your affairs and make time for the kids. If you don't have the best ability to manage your time (or your family time), decide what is most important on the list and go from there to get it done. If it's a dirty bathroom or house to clean, it will eventually get clean- a walk with the kids is more important. And when its time to clean the bathroom, have the kids help, because anything they can do with you is more fun than nothing at all, especially when they are young."

**NOTE:** If you know of a special mom, from the greater Back Mountain area, that would make an interesting feature for a future issue of Moms2Moms, email Liz Martin at [lizmartbiz@hotmail.com](mailto:lizmartbiz@hotmail.com). Include her name, number and ages of children, email address, and a reason for consideration.

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## 10 Ways to Enjoy a Green Pregnancy

Many mothers-to-be would like to adopt a greener lifestyle so their child will be born into a more environmentally friendly world. However, going green doesn't have to begin after the baby is born; making some changes beforehand will benefit you and baby.

1. Start a garden: It's important to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables during pregnancy. What better place to find those important foods than right in your own backyard? Use all-natural fertilizers and pesticides on your garden to ensure eco-friendly, organic food. If you don't have the space for a garden, shop organic at a local farmer's market.
2. Do some spring cleaning: Go through your cabinets and properly discard of any harsh cleaning chemical products. Replace them with all-natural, biodegradable cleaning products. You'll promote a safer environment in which your child can grow.
3. Bring more plants into the home: The EPA says that indoor air is often more polluted than the outdoor air we breathe. Plants help promote cleaner indoor air by filtering out toxins and purifying your home.
4. Investigate cloth diapers and a cleaning service: Cloth diapers that are reused over and over present less of an environmental impact than disposable diapers, say experts. Proponents also say they help children eventually learn to potty train faster because they do not hide the sensation of wetness or soiling as disposable diapers can. Cleaning services can pick up and deliver cloth diapers right to the home.
5. Install a water purifier: Reduce the number of disposable plastic water bottles that need to be recycled or end up in landfills by drinking more tap water. Ensure that the tap water is clean to your standards by installing a water purifier at home.
6. Choose organic cotton for baby: When you shop for baby clothes and bedding, go with all-natural organic cotton, which will limit the amount of chemicals and pesticides with which your baby will come in contact.
7. Seek out slightly-used baby gear: Find out if friends or family members have any baby gear they can lend to you. Just don't use cribs or other equipment that is several years old, as the safety requirements for these pieces may have changed over the years. Not only will you save money using recycled items, there will be less baby-related trash going to landfills. You may be surprised to find how many moms are eager to rid their homes of baby gear that is now collecting dust since their infants have grown.
8. Shop secondhand maternity wear: If you don't plan on having any other children, there's no point in spending a fortune on maternity clothing you'll only wear once. Online swap sites, garage sales and friends may be able to provide all the clothes you need to make it through the season. Also, if you are buying new, see if you can find some "regular" clothing that is roomy enough to accommodate your growing belly. Maternity clothes tend to be expensive. So if you can make due with a standard clothing line, you'll save.
9. Use no-VOC paint in the nursery: Many paint manufacturers now offer no-VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paint, which doesn't release toxins and fumes into the air.
10. Invest in a quality stroller and baby carrier: Walking is great exercise to get you back to your pre-baby weight and also is more eco-friendly than taking the car from here to there. Fresh air can also calm a fussy baby.

## Information for expectant parents

The appearance of a plus sign, two lines, or whatever pregnancy test indicator informs a woman that she is expecting can signal a time of change and excitement. Many people look forward to having a baby and are anxious to experience the changes and joys that lie ahead.

During the first few weeks of a pregnancy, the body is transforming at a rapid pace and many things are taking place. If this is a first pregnancy, you may be unaware of what to expect. While no one wants to think of complications arising early on in the pregnancy, it's important to be aware of certain warning signs and consult with your doctor if you experience any odd conditions.

A situation that may occur in the first trimester of pregnancy of which many women are unaware is a subchorionic hemorrhage. Also known as a subchorionic hematoma, subchorionic bleed or clot, a subchorionic hemorrhage (SCH) is the most common sonographic abnormality in the presence of a live embryo. It is estimated that 25 to 40 percent of all women will experience some sort of bleeding during the first trimester of pregnancy. An SCH is often the cause.

An SCH is a collection of fluid and blood that forms between the uterine wall and the chorionic membrane. While there is no concrete cause, some surmise it occurs during egg implantation. The egg slightly separates or tears from the uterus causing a bleed. There is nothing a woman did or could have done to cause or prevent them.

An SCH occurs to pregnant women of all ages and races. Depending upon the severity of the hemorrhage, a woman could experience mild to moderate bleeding, cramping and other symptoms -- or no symptoms at all. An SCH is a risk early in pregnancy because the blood clot itself can cause a miscarriage. The clot can release completely from the uterus and cause the fetus and placenta to miscarry.

An ultrasound can shed light on whether you are experiencing a subchorionic hemorrhage and help determine the course of action. Treatment for an SCH varies among doctors and there is no definitive cure for the condition.

With frequent doctor check-ups and care on the part of the mother, many pregnancies go on to full term despite an SCH. Consult with your obstetrician to learn more about the condition and to discuss any concerns if you experience any bleeding or abnormalities during the pregnancy. It is preferable to err on the side of caution if you find anything that goes against the norm. Do not hesitate to call your doctor and assuage your fears. That is what he or she is there for.



# Health

## Little-Known Symptom of Diabetes

The symptoms of diabetes, including unquenchable thirst, fatigue, frequent visits to the bathroom, and tingling or numbness in the hands and feet, are generally well known. But did you know that diabetes can cause low libido in women?

According to some studies, more than 40 percent of women complain of low sexual desire at some point. A woman's desires fluctuate naturally through the years and are based on life changes, including illness, pregnancy or menopause. However, low libido could be a signal of diabetes and is worth further investigation by a doctor. But why?



Diabetes is known to reduce blood flow to the vagina, causing dryness and impaired sensation, according to the American Diabetes Association. In addition, dehydration, a common side effect among diabetics, can reduce natural lubrication and make intercourse painful. Therefore intimacy becomes less appealing.

A recent study from Belgium reported that women with type 1 diabetes have experienced some sexual difficulty. Findings also suggest depression as a key factor linked to problems with sexuality for women.

If you do have low libido as a result of diabetes, just treating the disease by maintaining proper blood sugar levels may go a long way toward improving sex drive. There are other things you can do as well. Exercise in any form is known to increase libido. Therefore, get active. Eat a healthy variety of foods. Foods can keep the body in top form and fuel the neurological connections that make sex pleasurable.

Intimacy is also reciprocally beneficial if you suffer a disease. Studies show that regular intimacy increases immunity from viruses, relieves stress and triggers the release of chemicals to improve mood and ease pain.

**Always talk to your doctor before starting an exercise or diet regimen to improve diabetes symptoms or side effects.**

## Diagnosed With Fibroids?

Uterine fibroid tumors are commonly found in women in their 30s and 40s. Although they are usually benign (not cancerous), and generally cause no symptoms, some fibroids can be troublesome for women.

Fibroids are solid, fibrous tumors that are found inside the uterus. These masses can form in a number of places and are classified according to their location.

- \* **Intramural:** Round fibroids inside of the uterine wall that can cause the uterus to enlarge as it grows.

- \* **Submucous:** Fibroids that occur just below the lining of the uterus. They can cause menstrual problems and pain as they grow and move around in the pelvic area.

- \* **Subserous:** These fibroids grow on the outer wall of the uterus and generally cause no symptoms unless they interfere with other pelvic organs.

- \* **Interligamentous:** Fibroids that grow sideways between the ligaments that encompass the abdominal region. These can be very difficult to remove because of their close proximity to other organs.

- \* **Parasitic:** A fibroid that attaches to another organ.

Fibroids are generally discovered during routine gynecological exams. A physician will feel a mass on occasion and order a follow-up ultrasound to determine what is going on internally. Many times women do not even know they have fibroids until a doctor discovers them.

While fibroids can be singular or minute in size, they generally grow in bunches and may get to be quite large. Fibroids the size of grapefruits have been removed, and the largest fibroid ever detected weighed over 100 pounds.

Although most fibroids do not cause symptoms, about a quarter of women with the condition report abnormal bleeding, pain and enlargement of the uterus. Backaches may also occur if the fibroid extends toward the backbone.

Treatment for fibroids is generally not done unless the fibroids cause severe pain or unusual bleeding. In that case, surgery to remove the tumors (myomectomy) or the uterus itself (hysterectomy) is the course of treatment. In most cases, however, fibroids will grow back even after being removed. The only permanent way for a woman to rid herself of fibroids is the eventual hysterectomy. This should be considered if fibroids are continually troublesome and after a woman has completed her family, as a hysterectomy eliminates the possibility of future conception.

For more information on uterine fibroids, consult with your gynecologist or family practitioner.



# Health

## Trimming Down in Time for Summer

For many people, summer is all about bathing suits, shorts and flip-flops. If you do your weekend beach getaways, spend time at a nearby pool or lake, you probably have one thing on your mind when you hit the sand, lake or pool: soaking up some sun, and looking good while you do it.

A big part of looking good in your suit is shedding those few extra and stubborn pounds you might have gained during the winter months. Nearly everyone has gone through the trials and tribulations of attempting to lose weight, but there is a way to successful weight loss that will not only leave you looking good, but looking, and feeling, good throughout the year as well.

\* Exercise is important. Dieting and taking supplements can help the weight loss process, but those aren't enough to ensure long term weight loss. Exercise is essential to losing weight and keeping that weight off. Research has indicated that 30 minutes of exercise five days per week could be sufficient for successful weight loss. Of course, each individual is different, and 30 minutes is the minimum recommended daily exercise. Increased exercise can be more helpful, but those new to exercise should take things slowly at first, and then gradually add more to their routine as their body grows accustomed to daily exercise.

It's also important to note that any successful exercise regimen is one that individuals enjoy. Exercise doesn't have to mean running five miles each morning or vigorously lifting weights. Tailor your exercise routine to things you enjoy, be it jogging in the park, going for hikes with a local hiking club, or enrolling in fitness classes at a nearby gym. The more you enjoy your routine, the easier it will be to maintain.

\* Consider weight training. Weight training doesn't mean you need to end up looking like the famed weightlifters, lifting weights can be very beneficial, particularly for those interested in burning fat. In her book "Strong Women Stay Slim" (Bantam), Tufts University researcher Miriam Nelson found that women who combined a diet and weight training regimen lost 44 percent more fat than women who solely followed the diet portion of the regimen. That's because muscle burns a significant number of calories each day, giving your metabolism a boost even when your body is at rest. While this doesn't mean men and women should hit the weights like professional football players, it does highlight the importance of a regimen that combines both diet and weight training.

\* Shift your focus. Losing weight isn't easy. Where many people stumble is their quest to be thin, as opposed to their quest to be healthy. Shifting focus from being thin, which is arbitrary, to being healthy, which can be much more tangible if you involve your doctor, can be a boon to your weight loss goals. Being healthy involves making a lifestyle change, wherein you adjust your eating habits to align them more with lowering cholesterol and blood pressure than simply skipping meals to shed a pound here and there.

\* Educate yourself. Goals are great and can be especially beneficial when attempting to lose weight. But long term goals are often better tailored to successful and lasting weight loss than short term goals. For example, telling yourself you want to drop 10 pounds in two weeks might be attainable, but it's not necessarily beneficial. That's because such rapid weight loss is most likely coming from the loss of water and muscle, and not fat. Losing muscle is not good, as you'll need muscle to maintain an elevated metabolism. Long term goals, such as losing 10 pounds in 4 to 6 weeks, could be a much healthier target than losing weight fast.

**Always consult with your health care professional or physician before starting a diet plan and exercise program.**

## Maintaining Healthy Weight

Arguably the most difficult thing about losing weight isn't losing the weight itself, but keeping it off once it's been lost. Those who have struggled with their weight often admit their weight fluctuates regularly, illustrating the struggle that maintaining a healthy weight can present.

While every person is different, there are ways to keep weight off, and many of them are relatively minor. What these methods all have in common is the commitment level they require. Making a long-term commitment to each of the following changes can not only help lose weight, but keep that weight off as well.

Closely monitor fat and sugar intake. Reduce consumption of foods high in fat and sugar, or substitute with reduced-calorie and reduced-fat foods and beverages. The fat in your diet should be limited to 30 percent or less of total calories each day.

Get daily exercise. Exercise comes in many forms, and it's best to determine what type of physical activity best suits each individual and each lifestyle. Initially, you should work your way up to regular exercise, such as brisk walking, jogging or swimming, since it is a key factor in achieving permanent weight loss and improving health. For maximum benefits, most health experts recommend exercising 30 minutes or more on most, and preferably all, days of the week.

Be aware of your eating habits. Negative eating habits can include overindulging, eating when bored or looking to food for comfort. Many times people don't even realize they are routinely treating food in these ways. Keeping a food diary, in which you write down when you eat, what you're eating and why you're eating is a good means to discovering just what your eating habits are and determining if they are healthy or not.

Remember the value of balance when planning a diet. Don't forget the five good groups (milk, meat, fruit, vegetable, bread) when planning a diet. If you have a specialty diet, due to an existing condition (i.e., diabetes) or lifestyle (i.e., vegetarian), consult with a physician as to how to best balance your diet, as there will no doubt be certain foods that are off limits.



# Beauty

## Swimwear Tips for Every Body

Few shopping excursions are wrought with such anxiety as shopping for swimsuits. Because swimsuits are some of the most revealing pieces of clothing most people will wear in public, it's easy to see why the process of finding one that flatters is often a struggle. One simply cannot hide behind layers of clothing to camouflage perceived imperfections - swimsuits lay it all out on the line.

**Know your body:** Know your proportions - be honest and true to yourself. Fit the largest part of your body and don't try to squeeze into a suit that is too small. It will be less flattering.

**If you have a tendency to gain weight in your mid section:** Try a higher leg and do not opt for any boy shorts. Also a little higher bottom that will cover the tummy area a little is a good choice. Think about tankinis as well.

**If you have a larger chest:** Try a swimsuit where you will fill up supportive cups but not fall out of them. Look for adequate straps, but don't choose straps that are too wide or large. This will make you look more proportional. Also think about drawing the eye away from the chest with a solid color on the top and a pattern on the bottom of the swimsuit.

**If you have a smaller chest, less is more:** Don't draw attention to what you haven't got. If you are looking to enhance, jelly cups are always a good alternative, or think about some ruffling detail around the chest area to give the illusion of a larger bust.

**Select a one-piece swimsuit if you are self-conscious:** Shirring and other details can add a little visual interest and always work well.

**If you like prints but don't feel comfortable with an all-over one piece print:** Go for a trendy print as an accent detail. For example, some designers offer a leopard print on trim or straps, which is more subtle than an all-over print.

## Banishing Unwanted Hair

Ironically, as a woman ages the hair on the top of her head may thin, while the hair that grows on other parts of her body may become coarser and more apparent. This is due to the declining amount of estrogen in her body. Other hormones may increase, contributing to hair formation on the face, chin, and other parts of the body.

Unwanted hair can be a nemesis to women. While in certain cultures body hair is perfectly acceptable, most women desire to remove hair from their bodies in a number of ways. In fact, in North America alone, it is estimated that consumers spend 1 billion dollars a year on electrolysis.

If unwanted hair is a problem or grows quickly, women can consider permanent removal methods, such as laser treatments, electrolysis or prescription topical treatments. However, if the hair is minimal or not troublesome, temporary methods, such as shaving, tweezing, waxing and depilatory creams, can be effective.

Body hair also can be camouflaged by having it bleached. Lighter hair will not stand out as much as darker hair, so this is another option.

## Women's Guide to Younger Looking Skin

There are many natural components of aging and wrinkles are no exception. As we age the skin becomes less elastic, thinner and drier. The skin is also less able to protect itself from damage. As a result, wrinkles and fine lines can begin forming.

Some women experience deep wrinkles, while others have less visible lines. Genetics can play a major role in determining the wrinkling factor of the skin. Take a look at your mother's or grandmother's skin. If they weren't prone to spending long hours in the sun and refrained from smoking cigarettes (sun exposure and smoking can contribute to wrinkling), chances are your skin will be somewhat similar as you age.

Because many times people are judged first by outward appearances, women can become self-conscious of their wrinkles as they get into their 40s and 50s. Today, a number of procedures aimed at reducing the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines exist. The key is finding one that works for you and your budget. Here are some options to consider.

**Gain a little weight if you are under-weight:** No one is advocating going on an eating binge. However, a new study published in the journal *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* analyzed pictures of the faces of 186 pairs of identical twins, along with extensive questionnaires each twin filled out about lifestyle and skin care. The study found that for twin pairs under 40, the heavier one (a four-point difference in the Body Mass Index, or BMI) looked significantly older. But surprisingly, after 40, that same four-point difference in BMI made the heavier twin look significantly younger. Once you reach 40, it may pay to increase your weight by a few pounds, which can fill out your face and reduce the appearance of wrinkling.

**Explore wrinkle creams:** Wrinkle creams are found in department stores and drug stores across the country. Most promise dramatic results. It is unlikely that you'll get the same results from creams and lotions as you would from going under the knife. But depending upon the ingredients in the products, you could see improvements in the skin over time. Most ingredients are antioxidants that help reverse cell damage caused by free radicals. Fruit acids are another popular ingredient, which exfoliate the skin to reveal newer skin underneath.

**Skin resurfacing:** There are a number of treatments that "damage" the outer layer of the skin to promote newer, younger skin to grow in its place. Chemical peels, dermabrasion, or laser resurfacing are just some of these techniques. According to the Mayo Clinic, laser resurfacing is an effective treatment for minor facial flaws. It can wipe out fine to moderate wrinkles, liver or age spots, correct uneven skin tones, and even reduce the appearance of acne or chickenpox scars. Because the epidermis, or outer layer of skin, is removed, it's common to experience some irritation, redness or itching on areas treated. It could take up to two weeks before new skin forms and you can remove bandages.

**Medicinal botulinum toxin type A:** This is the same bacteria that causes food poisoning, marketed under the popular name Botox(R). However, in the medicinal version, a much lower concentration is purified and injected into muscles to prevent contraction. When muscles aren't contracted, the skin on top of them flattens and appears less wrinkled. These types of injections are not good for all types of facial wrinkles and cannot reverse the ones caused by sun damage. It is also discouraged to use Botox around the mouth because these muscles are needed for eating and talking.

**Injection fillers:** Collagen fillers and other products are injected under the skin to smooth out wrinkles. They can be effective when done correctly. However, in certain cases the injection can appear uneven or bumpy.

**Surgery:** Surgery is one of the most expensive options for treating wrinkles. Face and eye lifts can pull the skin taut and smooth out wrinkles.