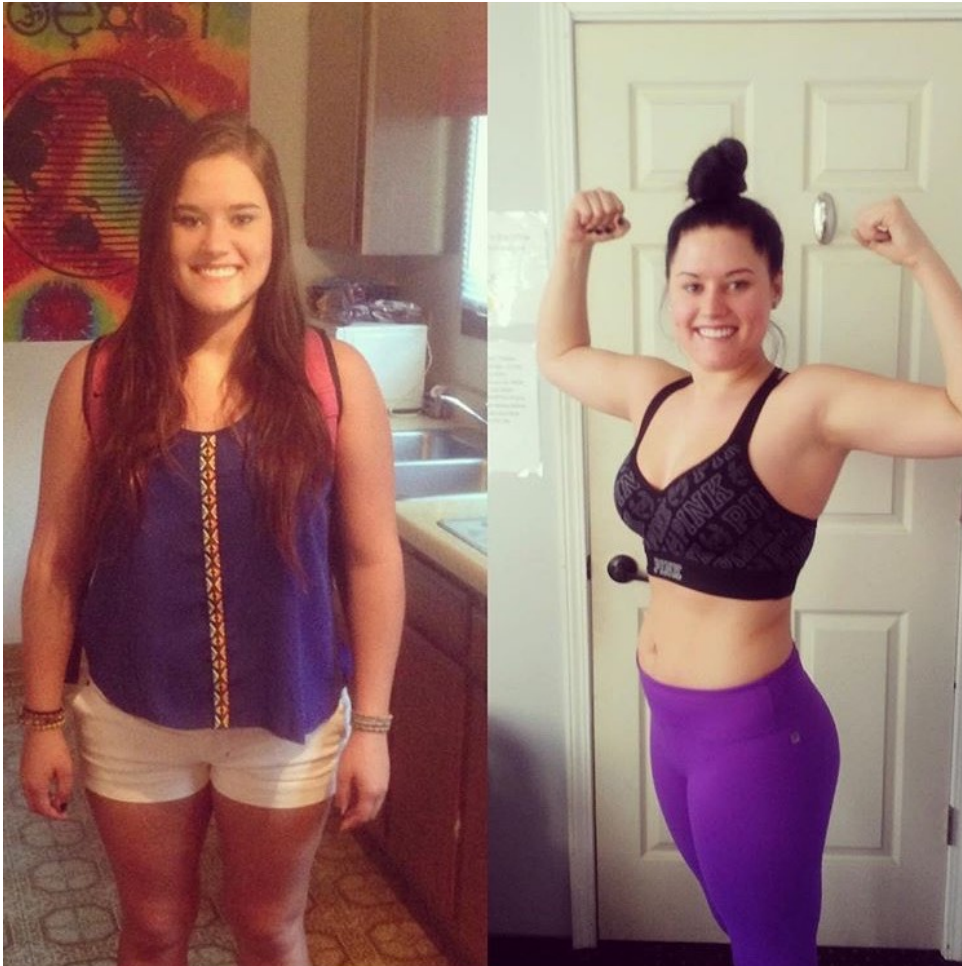


GYM MEMBER'S KEY RECIPE FOR SUCCESS: CHANGE IN DIET



EMILY BAKER

In the first four weeks of a six-week challenge at Fit4Lincoln, Emily Baker had already reached her goals for weight loss and body-fat percentage. Her recipe for success: Food consumption.

The nutritional assistance she received from the fitness center north of 33 rd and A St has become a way of life.

When the 24-year-old Lincoln woman first entered the Lincoln gym in December 2017, she wanted to lose more than weight. The former high school volleyball player and pole vaulter wanted to change her sedentary lifestyle, quit smoking and boost her self-esteem.

From the minute she entered the gym at 1359 S. 33 rd St., she liked what she saw. She hit the gym most weekdays and followed its nutritional plan to the letter. Preparing meals loaded with veggies and high on protein soon became a habit.

She found herself avoiding grocery store aisles dominated by high-fat, calorie-laden items and processed foods. Even the gym's weekly "cheat meal" - a reward to members for staying on

course - suddenly lost some of its appeal. The big "cheeseburger reward" Emily had planned for sticking to her new meal plan didn't have the type of appeal it did during her junk-food years.

"For my weekly 'cheat meal' I ordered a cheeseburger, ate half of it and actually added a side salad," Emily reflected. "The cravings I had for junk food went away and have stayed away."

It wasn't long before Emily's new eating habits began to show at her gym's weekly weigh-ins. Four weeks into her gym's six-week challenge, the 5-foot-4 woman who once weighed 170 pounds had already attained her weight-loss goal (25 pounds) and her body-fat-reduction goal (6%). Today, after eight months at Fit4Lincoln, she's lost 30 pounds and has decreased her body fat by 8%.

Emily looks back at the beginning of her fitness journey and thanks the Fit4Lincoln staff for their approach of working with each member individually.

"In the beginning, I looked around and was discouraged by people who were really rockin' it at the gym," Emily reflected, "but I soon discovered that each member's workout there is modified ... everyone is challenged but they're not pushed beyond what they can handle. The goals they set for each member are realistic and attainable."

After working her daytime shift at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, where she is assistant banquet manager, she catches a 30-minute Boot Camp session at Fit4Lincoln. When time allows, she follows that up with a second 30-minute class.

Emily moved to Lincoln in 2011 to enroll at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she would go on to earn a degree in hospitality, restaurant and tourism management. When she goes home to visit family and friends in Kansas, the comments she hears most often are: "You look great. What's your secret?"

Eat sensibly and exercise, she replies.

"In my case, eighty percent of my progress can be attributed to the change in the way I eat. Working out at the gym just makes it that much better."

Fit4Lincoln has been a life-changer, she added. "The experience at Fit4Lincoln has turned my life upside-down."

**Written by Dennis Buckley/ for Neighborhood Extra - Jul 28, 2018*