

# FIT TO COMPETE:

## DIET AND EXERCISE ARE A WINNING COMBO FOR NANCY WAKI

**Nancy Waki**, executive secretary, is tall and trim: At 5'8" she tips the scales at 137 lbs. To look at her you might think, "It comes natural, she's got genetics on her side." Not true.

What is true: At 61, Nancy is in the best shape of her life. She credits diet and exercise — plus her willingness to set, and achieve, a unique goal:

Nancy is a figure competitor. This means she follows a strict diet and exercise regimen, and then competes — onstage, in front of large cheering crowds — with other women who share a similar passion. Figure competitors are judged on muscle tone and overall physique. Rather than feeling intimidated, Nancy takes pride in the fact that she is usually the oldest woman in her age group.

At her first event in 2009, Nancy placed second. She found the experience exhilarating. "I didn't have enough muscle at competition, but my husband told me I did get a standing ovation. The crowd should have voted instead of the judges," she says with a laugh.

"It was an exciting and liberating experience. More than fun, it takes me out of my comfort zone. It's challenging, and gives me goals to strive for." To date she has been in three competitions, and plans to compete twice more this spring.

---

**"It was an exciting and liberating experience ..."**

---

### FOOD FUELS FITNESS

While not everyone shares her goals, Nancy wants her co-workers to understand that following a healthy diet — even while working a 12-hour shift — is possible. One suggestion: Eat a small, protein-packed snack during each break. Try boiled eggs, or a brown rice wrap filled with turkey slices and vegetables. Save time by preparing meals a week in advance.

Nancy is no stranger to yo-yo dieting or the frustrations of working full-time, raising a family, *and* following a healthy,

balanced lifestyle. At one point she weighed 194 lbs. At another she won an office pool for most weight lost — and then promptly gained it back.

Today Nancy eats fresh vegetables and fruit, protein, and whole grains. She works with fitness coach and nutritionist Kristi Tauti to make sure she is losing weight and building muscle. Such balance is critical for her success in competition, but also important to anyone starting a diet and exercise program.

"Kristi has me on this strict meal plan that includes supplements. It's broken out step-by-step by what to eat, how much, and at what time of day," Nancy says. "I'm never hungry, because I'm always eating."

Therein lies the secret to consistent weight loss. It doesn't matter what approach people choose, what matters is diet, exercise, and consistency. "The first thing I would tell people is to eat, and to eat (healthy) food every two to three hours," she says.

Weight Watchers — Nancy's own starting point more than a decade ago — is a terrific resource for anyone just getting started. And so are the diet programs offered by Aetna, *see page 14 to learn more.*

