



## Tara Christian's weight loss journey

Standing at only 5 feet tall, I've struggled with weight issues most of my life. About a year and a half ago my diet consisted of Taco Bell, McDonalds, Wendys and anything else that had a drive thru window. I didn't even know how to cook. I became very lazy and had zero desire to exercise. As I packed on the pounds, my health began to deteriorate and I felt as if my life was falling apart. After going to countless specialists and having nearly \$20,000 in medical bills, I thought I would never feel like "me" again. It was during this time in my life that I realized how overweight I actually was. I remember looking at a picture of myself and thinking, "Is that really me!?" It was like a light bulb had gone off in my head and from that moment on I was 100% determined to lose weight. I started off with a small, realistic goal of 20 pounds. I started eating better along with going to the gym and doing cardio 4 to 5 times a week. I lost some weight and started feeling much better about myself but I still didn't know how to operate some of the equipment and how to eat properly. I couldn't afford a trainer every week so I started asking LVAC employees questions and taking advantage of my LVAC premier membership which included one free personal training session per month. My first session changed my life! I was put on a meal plan and taught how to use many pieces of equipment. I was dropping the weight faster than I could believe! Within three months of strictly following the meal plan and dedicating myself to the gym, the pounds melted away. The thing that helped me most was preparing all of my meals in advance. I would cook my meals for the entire week on Sunday.

After losing some weight I became more confident and decided to try some of the group fitness classes that LVAC offers. I had been too nervous to try them before because I thought everyone would be staring at me thinking, "What is that girl doing?" But it was quite the opposite! I never once felt out of place, the instructors were great

### Before

**Weight: 240 lbs.**  
**Body Fat: 46.8%**  
**Waist: 49 inches**

### After

**Weight: 135 lbs.**  
**Body Fat: 29%**  
**Waist 34 inches**

and made me feel very comfortable. I never knew burning calories could be so much fun! I've learned that the best form of exercise is the one you enjoy doing. My favorite classes are BodyCombat, Kick-box, Bodyjam, Dance with Me, and Sh'Bam. Those classes along with strict diet and exercise helped me to lose 105 pounds and an entire foot of fat around my stomach! Just remember, any goal is achievable with determination and dedication. My weight loss journey has been a blessing in my life. I have a different outlook on health now and I owe a huge thank you to Kati Stevens, Teena Gurtler, Erin Magers, Sarah Ingmanson, and Lauren Gerrish for being amazing instructors. You have all inspired me in so many ways!