

# THE BIGGEST LOSER



## CHALLENGE With Bob Harper

tremendous success of the "Biggest Loser" and get weight loss tips for women who are not on the show.

**FitnessRx for Women (FRXW):** Most large weight loss studies have not achieved your success. Typically, people lose about 15 pounds after a year of diet and exercise and regain the weight by the second year. Why has your program been so successful?

**Bob Harper:** You have to remember that we are in a very extreme situation on campus (i.e., the "Biggest Loser" training center). The contestants live, eat, and breathe diet and exercise on a daily basis. They have been taken out of their routine at home with work, school, or family responsibilities. With that said, our show has become an inspiration to millions of people out there who tune in every Tuesday. They see people who they might relate to, doing things that they want to be able to do, and it gets the ball rolling for their own goals.

**FRXW:** Few people will become contestants on the show. Money and fame undoubtedly motivate many of these contestants. What techniques can help average women lose 20 to 200 pounds when they are on their own?

**Bob:** I tell people all the time, "Believe in yourself." Trust the process. Change forever. You have to take it one day at a time and make sure that in that day, you find time to move your body and make healthier food choices. The key is to break the unhealthy routines and start new, fresh and, most importantly, healthy ones.

**FRXW:** Personal trainers are central to your success. Should overweight women employ personal trainers, and what should they look for when choosing one?

**Bob:** If you can afford a personal trainer I say GO FOR IT!! Trainers will be able to get you on the right track with a helpful workout routine and a good diet program. If you can't afford a personal trainer, try taking some group fitness classes at your gym to start an exercise regimen and go online to find some healthful diet tips.

The most important thing to look for in a trainer is not only their credentials, but also how you interact with them. You want to be able to get along with them and enjoy being

around them. You don't want to dread going to the gym.

**FRXW:** I liked the way you work with clients on the show—you combine a tough, no-nonsense approach in the gym, while empathizing with them. Do you use the same approach with each of your clients, or do you use different combinations of toughness and coddling to help them achieve success?

**Bob:** When I work with a client, I treat them with respect and approach them with a feeling of compassion and firmness. It is important to show them that I am here to help them in any way I can. You have to be able to meet me halfway, so we are on the same page. It is a formula that I have used since the very beginning.

**FRXW:** Can any overweight woman lose weight and keep it off? Do you encounter people who do not have the physical or emotional stamina to succeed?

**Bob:** I have met all kinds of people who have started and stopped when trying to get on board to a healthy lifestyle. I always tell people that it is difficult, challenging, and at times boring. But, let me tell you that the good outweighs the bad. You have to realize that you are making a lifestyle change, and this is not a quick fix. This is something that you will be doing forever, and you will have good days and not-so-good days. The main thing is to just stay on course and it will all work out.

**FRXW:** The Heritage Family study (more than 200 papers published on genetics, diet, and exercise) showed that there are responders and non-responders to weight loss and fitness programs. Do you think that these findings are based on casual programs that do not push the clients hard enough? Can anyone achieve a healthy weight if they work hard enough?

**Bob:** Of course, I am not a doctor and have never claimed to be, but in my work, I have found that people who consistently manage the food they eat and stick to an exercise routine have been able to achieve great results.

**FRXW:** There is a large controversy in the scientific community regarding exercise and dietary prescriptions for weight loss. A report from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (2005) recommended that people who want to lose weight should exercise for one or more hours per day. A recent report from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (Oct. 2008) and a joint recommendation from the American Heart Association and American College of Sports Medicine (2007) recommended 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. Most studies show that a minimum of one hour per day of intense exercise is necessary for significant weight loss. Given your extraordinary success, are these organizations and government agencies contributing to the obesity epidemic?

**Bob:** I think that it is very difficult to lose weight and yes, you absolutely need to find a challenging workout that will

push you beyond limits. But, let's not forget how important a healthy eating program is. You can always eat your way out of any exercise so your diet is crucial. I know it gets very discouraging at times hearing about all these studies that come out all the time, but if you try to stick to the basics of watching the calories that you consume and make sure you create a calorie deficit with exercise and portion control, you will be right on track.

**FRXW:** I was impressed by your training techniques. You emphasize whole-body, functional training and high-intensity aerobics and interval training. Describe an effective exercise training program for women who are not on the show.

**Bob:** I like pushing the whole body when I work out, and when I work out my clients. The key is to start off with 15 minutes of cardio to get your heart rate going, and now try to keep it going with intervals switching from upper-body exercises to lower-body exercises and then back to cardio. If I'm working out someone with the goal of losing weight and we have 45 minutes to work out, you better believe that I'm going to hit all major muscle groups and I'm gonna make them SWEAT for 40 of those minutes!!

**FRXW:** You train your clients hard. What problems have you had with overuse injuries, immune system depression, recovery, and serious events (e.g., rhabdomyolysis, glycemic problems, arrhythmias, gout, acidosis, etc.)?

**Bob:** We have definitely had our fair share of injuries on campus, and we have a great doctor and physical therapist who tackles anything that comes up. It is up to me to be able to still train people around their injuries, and this job has definitely made me a master at that.

**FRXW:** Diet is critical to any weight loss program. What type of diet should women follow who want to lose weight?

**Bob:** The first thing to watch for is portion control. People tend to eat too much. Next, you must read the nutrition facts on food labels so you know exactly what you are eating. I recommend eating small meals every four hours that consist of a little protein, a little fat, and a little complex carbohydrate.

**FRXW:** What is the importance of hydration during weight loss?

**Bob:** Staying hydrated keeps your body running on all cylinders so you need to make sure you are drinking plenty of water to help increase metabolism and promote digestion. A lot of times when you feel hungry it could mean that you haven't had enough to drink... so drink up. Filtered water is the best because it tastes better. I work with Brita because I wholeheartedly believe in the importance of proper hydration.

**FRXW:** What mental strategies can women use to help them lose weight successfully?

By Thomas Fahey, Ed.D.

Michael, the winner of last season's "Biggest Loser" television reality show, lost 227 pounds in five months. When he began the program, he weighed 530 pounds, had trouble getting out of bed or walking short distances, and was a heart attack waiting to happen. By the end of the show, he could run, climb stairs, do plyometrics, and lift weights.

Weight loss was nearly as impressive in other contestants: Andrea lost 76 pounds; Sherry lost 55 pounds; Sunshine lost 99 pounds; and Daris lost 149 pounds. The contestants went from fat to phat (pretty hot and tempting) in front of our eyes. Results like these have made the show an international sensation that has spawned 14 similar programs in countries such as Great Britain, Germany, Australia, Brunei, and Slovakia.

While the show has been criticized for presenting unrealistic diet and exercise programs, it has given fat and grossly obese people hope where there was no hope. Most people on diets lose 10 to 15 pounds in a year; Biggest Loser contestants lose that much in a week. The show is beginning its 10<sup>th</sup> year. It is a huge hit, and people can't get enough of it.

Much of the show's success and popularity are due to its trainers, Bob Harper and Jillian Michaels. Both possess a blend of drill sergeant, cheerleader, psychologist, best friend, and parent. They have inspired millions of Americans to lose weight, exercise, eat better diets, and live healthier lifestyles. These days, it's difficult to pick up any publication without seeing one of their photos.

Bob Harper is a dynamo. He studied exercise science at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee, and is a certified personal trainer. He has been a featured trainer on the "Biggest Loser" since 2005 and worked previously on the Australian version of the show for two years. He is a popular personal trainer and yoga instructor in Los Angeles and runs a subscriber website called mytrainerbob.com. He is author of the bestselling book, *Are You Ready: To Take Charge, Lose Weight, Get in Shape, and Change Your Life Forever* (Random House, 2009) and a new 4-disk DVD series entitled "My Trainer Bob: Inside Out Method."

FitnessRx for Women interviewed Bob to gain insight on the

**Bob:** I believe in the laws of attraction and the power of positive thinking. The more you believe that you can achieve success, the more likely you will be to make it happen. We are all so good at ripping ourselves down. I challenge people to find the inner dialogue that will boost them up. If you believe it, you can make it happen.

**FRXW:** Congratulations on your success, and thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to speak with us.

Bob's book (*Are You Ready*) separates the hype of the show from the reality of weight loss for the average person. His advice is the same that we present every month in *FitnessRx* for Women: Believe in yourself, set goals, eat small portions of healthy foods, and exercise regularly. His plan is sensible, healthy, and consistent with scientific principles of nutrition and exercise.

He emphasizes the psychology of weight loss using a technique that he calls the "Inner Compass." He tries to teach his clients how to take charge of their bodies and minds so they can achieve health and happiness. He emphasizes the "Three Rs": relax, respect, and reinforce. Start by loving yourself and appreciating your uniqueness. Don't dwell on the negative. Instead, add positive habits to your life. Make changes slowly and incrementally. If you are 20 pounds overweight, ask yourself when you are going to be 19 pounds overweight. Losing large amounts of weight seems impossible. It is much easier to achieve a series of small goals.

People get fat because they won't take responsibility for their lives. Respect the body and treat it with care. Be kind to yourself. Even the most dedicated person will backslide. It's OK to indulge in ice cream or chocolate once in a while, but do so in moderation. Instead of drinking five sodas, drink one. Eat smaller portions and think about the food you are putting into your body.

Reinforcement is an important part of his program. Weigh yourself on the scale regularly. Look in the mirror and keep track of how your clothes fit. If you put on a few pounds, examine your lifestyle and moderate your food intake or get more exercise. Maintain a nutrition and exercise diary so that you can quantify your program.

He emphasizes whole-body exercises combining moderate-intensity aerobics, high-intensity interval training, and resistive exercise (e.g., weight training). The training programs on the show are highly innovative. His clients start off slowly and build up. Weight maintenance is a lifelong pursuit. According to the National Weight Registry—a database of people who lost at least 50 pounds—successful "losers" watch what they eat and exercise about one hour per day. That, in a nutshell, is Bob's philosophy.

The show has had a tremendous impact on ordinary people. Approximately 66 percent of Americans are obese or

overweight. Last year, for the first time in decades, obesity rates leveled off. Perhaps the "Biggest Loser" had something to do with it.

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## "THE BIGGEST LOSER" CHOOSES THE CYBEX® ARC TRAINER AS THEIR #1 CROSS-TRAINER!

By Shoshana Pritzker

This season, the ranch on NBC's hit reality series "The Biggest Loser" is outfitted with CYBEX® cardio and strength-training equipment, which helps contestants reach their goals faster and with greater ease. The ranch features more than 60 pieces of CYBEX® equipment that will be showcased in various episodes throughout the season. Contestants on "The Biggest Loser" train exclusively on the CYBEX® Arc Trainer, which replaces the show's elliptical equipment.

With the support of "The Biggest Loser," the CYBEX® Arc Trainer is sure to gain popularity. Already in homes and gyms all over the world, the Arc Trainer's ease of use and "gentle on the joints" workout makes it the perfect cross-trainer for every age and fitness level.

CYBEX® is so serious about their prod-

ucts that they're one of the first manufacturers of workout equipment in their equipment's development process. The Arc Trainer was the subject of numerous scientific studies, which revealed

that it enables users to burn more calories and train with more intensity, while experiencing less exertion.

In a recent study at the University of Wisconsin, the Arc Trainer was compared to the Precor Motion elliptical trainer and the EFX elliptical trainer. Data was collected from 30-minute bouts of exercise performed on each trainer by 16

subjects. Perceived exertion on all three machines was identical—meaning that subjects believed they were training at the same intensity on each piece of equipment. However, the Arc Trainer was found to burn 16 percent more total calories than the EFX elliptical trainer, and 9 percent more calories than the Precor Motion elliptical trainer at the same workout intensity. Comparing these three machines, you'll burn more calories on the Arc Trainer—although it'll feel like you're exercising at the same intensity level as you would using either of the other two trainers.

Other studies reached similar conclusions. A study by K. Hendrickson et al., which compared the Arc Trainer to the EFX elliptical and the Precor Motion trainer, found that the Arc Trainer provides the best overall workout and would result in the greatest increase in aerobic capacity and reduction in bodyweight, in the shortest period of time. You can burn more calories in less time!

Based on this data, you can understand why "The Biggest Loser" chose to replace all of its elliptical equipment with the CYBEX® Arc Trainer this season. The Arc Trainer isn't just for "The Biggest Loser" contestants, because CYBEX® has introduced a new consumer version of The Biggest Loser Arc Trainer that's available at [www.cybexintl.com](http://www.cybexintl.com).

### CYBEX® Arc Trainer Turns Pink!

This year, CYBEX® is holding its second-annual Pink Ribbon Run to raise awareness about breast cancer throughout the month of October. The Pink Ribbon Run is a national program benefiting the Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF), which CYBEX® donates \$0.10 to for each mile logged on its custom-made pink treadmills during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Log your miles on your home treadmill or at your local gym, then enter them online at the CYBEX® website. What's even better is that this year, CYBEX® has decided to turn the Arc Trainer 'pink' as well!

The Pink Arc Project is a program that any gym or club can get behind. It doesn't matter whether you're a member of a participating gym, because you can use the Pink Arcs for free.

All you have to do is log your calories burned on the easy-to-spot Pink Arc and CYBEX® will donate \$1 per calorie burned—it's that easy! CYBEX® will also be donating \$1 for every calorie "The Biggest Loser" contestants burn on the Arc Trainer throughout the duration of the season. If you can't find a Pink Arc, you can still help out the Breast Cancer Research Fund by making a donation on the CYBEX® website.



Log online to [cybexintl.com](http://cybexintl.com) to find out how you can purchase your Pink Treadmill or Pink Arc Trainer, and learn how you can get involved in the 2010 Pink Ribbon Run and Pink Arc Project today.