

Want to Get Slim? Use Your Phone!

A sleeker, stronger body could be a tweet or Facebook post away.

By *Jamie Beckman*

ONE OF THE BEST TOOLS FOR PEELING OFF POUNDS is already in your bag: It's your smartphone or iPad. In fact, all that texting, tweeting, and posting—the average woman spends more than 80 minutes a day on her phone, according to a recent report from the mobile apps analytics firm Flurry—can tip the scales in your favor. And one in three of us are already using social sites like Facebook to get slender, reports research from the University of Arizona. So go ahead and steal these suggestions from women who took their shape-up viral.

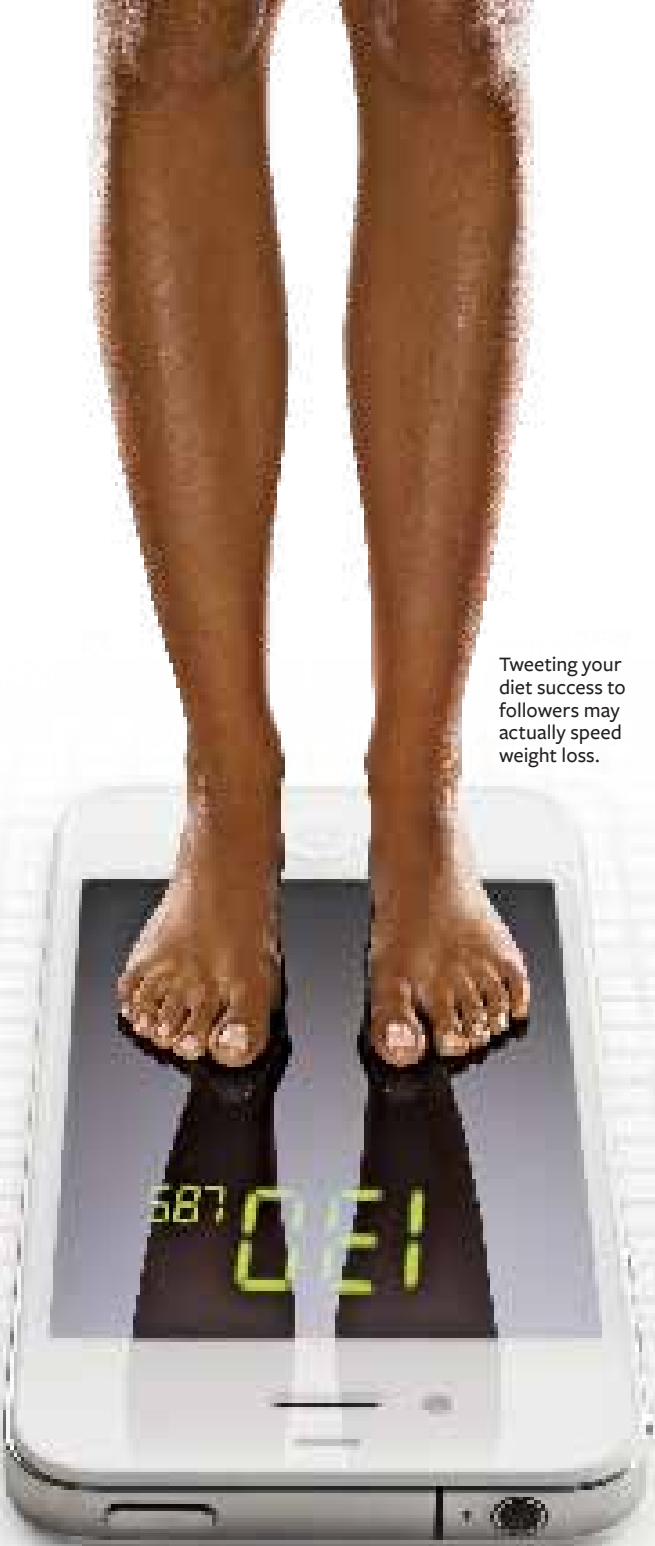
Tweet your way thin

Nancy Tessier, 50, of Windsor, Ontario, whittled away 28 pounds 140 characters at a time by posting all her meals and snacks to Tweet What You Eat (@twye), an online food journal that lets others eyeball your noshes. "Sometimes it was a lot easier to decide not to eat something than to have to tweet it for the world to see," she says. Posting your weight-loss numbers can help, too. The University of Arizona research suggests that women who reveal shape-up victories

("dropped 3 pounds!") on a weekly basis trim down faster than those who update less frequently. If you're feeling shy, think up a Twitter handle and upload a cartoon character as your avatar so you can share the skinny without feeling self-conscious.

Gain a following

Get some virtual support pronto by following Twitter hash tags like #fitblog. Carla Shorts, 27, of Clemson, South Carolina, started chiming in on #fitblog's weekly live chats—and dropped from a size 12 to a size 6 in just a



Tweeting your diet success to followers may actually speed weight loss.

year. "When my weight loss reached a plateau, having women point out that my 30-minute elliptical routine wasn't going to cut it anymore was key," she says. "I started running and began to lose again." You

can also start your own hash tag, like Sherry Pagoto, 38, of Natick, Massachusetts, did with #plankaday, a challenge to spend at least a minute in plank pose each day. "It was something I meant to do with just one friend,

but hundreds joined in,” she says. “I had no idea it was going to turn into something so huge!”

Go post-al

When Shareen Newman, 43, of Niles, California, needed advice on how to enjoy parties and dinners out without gaining back the 75 pounds she had just lost, she knew where to turn: Facebook.

“One friend suggested I bring a healthy dish as my go-to food,” says Newman. “I do that now with every party—I make a mean taco-less Mexican salad.” Poll your online brain trust anytime you need real-world wisdom, from how to resist office cupcakes to where to find a good trainer. You’ll get road-tested advice, plus a reminder that you’re not the only one trying to healthy up.

Get your group on


Scorching off 85 pounds is no easy feat, but Deborah Collins-Rapp, 50, of Kinderhook, New York, did it with help from her 20-member “100-Pound Bootcamp” Facebook group. “These people were strangers, but we bonded over losing weight,” she says. “When I had trouble cutting down on bread, one woman had me write down everything I ate and send it to her. She kept me accountable.”

Find your own trim-down team through groups like “Give Up the Booze to Lose” on sparkpeople.com.

Or start your own on Facebook or Google+. First, make it invisible to nonmembers by setting it to “secret” on Facebook or by putting your friends in a circle on Google+. Then, nail down a day each week for everyone to share their pounds lost. Folks can post on the group’s wall or use a free video-conferencing site like oovoo.com or the “hangout” feature on Google+ to check in en masse.

Don’t worry, get app-y

There are, at last count, more than 11,000 apps dedicated to helping you get back into your skinny jeans. Some are truly innovative: Snap a photo of your grub and send it to Diet Snaps (\$2; dietsnaps.com) to store the shots in a visual food journal. Or use My Fitness Pal (free; myfitnesspal.com) to scan a food’s barcode; the calories instantly upload to a food log you can share with friends on Facebook and Twitter.

Sienna Farris, 37, knows the power of apps: Soon after visiting her New York City gym for the first time, she set her sights on getting a Mayor title on Foursquare (free; foursquare.com), a prize awarded to whomever checks into a locale most often. She scored the crown—and lost 60 pounds in the process. “My account shows I’ve been to that gym 411 times,” Farris says. “I’m so proud of myself!” 

Look Who’s Tweeting

Need inspiration? Follow these famous folks to get star-level slim.



1. JILLIAN MICHAELS (@JillianMichaels), co-host of *The Doctors* and author of *Unlimited: How to Build an Exceptional Life*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Here’s a challenge for the coming week! Try not to eat out more than 2 times. Bring your lunch to work.”



2. JOY BAUER, RD (@joybauer), nutritionist for NBC’s *Today* show

SAMPLE TWEET: “Avoid the mid-afternoon slump with a protein-rich snack. New research shows protein activates cells that keep you awake and alert.”



3. LISA MASTERSON, MD (@drLisaM), co-host of *The Doctors*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Don’t forget about heart health both physical and emotional. Go out and do something physical like tennis with someone you love!”



4. KRISTIN MCGEE (@thebendigirl), celeb yoga and Pilates instructor and *Health* columnist

SAMPLE TWEET: “Achy back? Tight shoulders? Stiff neck? Try Cobra pose to alleviate any tension...”



5. PADMA LAKSHMI (@PadmaLakshmi), host of Bravo’s *Top Chef* and author of *Tangy, Tart, Hot and Sweet*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Went back to boxing after a

hiatus and feeling very very sore!”



6. MEHMET OZ, MD (@DrOz), host of *The Dr. Oz Show* and coauthor of *You: On a Diet*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Get your ZZZ’s or pack on the Lbs. Those who are sleep deprived consume 300 extra calories a day.”



7. CARA CASTONUOVA (@CaraCastonuova), former trainer on NBC’s *The Biggest Loser*

SAMPLE TWEET: “The number one reason people don’t work out? EXCUSES! No more excuses, get moving people! Starting is the hardest part!”



8. ART SMITH (@chefartsmith), author of *Back to the Table*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Just ordered Grilled Tuna Salad after a big run down Peachtree.”



9. GWYNETH PALTROW (@GwynethPaltrow), actress and author of *Notes from My Kitchen Table*

SAMPLE TWEET: “Vegetarian paella for dinner. Aye, que rico!”



10. ELLIE KRIEGER (@Ellie_Krieger), host of Cooking Channel’s *Healthy Appetite*

SAMPLE TWEET: “BAKE BETTER: sub in half white flour in recipe w/ whole grain pastry flr. It has mild flavor, soft texture & adds fiber & antioxidants.”