

“Lani Muelrath’s wonderful book is filled with heart and joy. This is one exercise book that understands that you don’t have to exercise like a maniac once you get the food right. Highly recommended.”

—John Robbins, author, *The Food Revolution*,  
*Diet for a New America*, and many other best-sellers



# FIT QUICKIES

5-Minute Targeted  
Body-Shaping Workouts

Lani Muelrath



# INTRODUCTION

What if I were to hand you several simple, focused, quick exercises specifically designed to target your body's "challenged" spots?

What if I told you you can do these exercises in the privacy of your own home or take them with you on the road anywhere, anytime, with no pricey special equipment or bulky fitness machines necessary?

What if I told you you can say good-bye to obsessive, unhealthy dieting and habits that keep sabotaging your success and finally have the health, shape, energy, and physical confidence you've always dreamed of?

And what if I told you all you had to do to get there was follow a simple, proven plan, without white-knuckle hunger or grueling, disheartening, excessively time-consuming workouts?

And what if I told you I'm inviting you to fall in love with carbs all over again? I'm not going to keep you apart. You were born to be together.

Now do I have your attention?

If you think eating, weight loss, and healthy fitness shouldn't be a constant, confusing struggle, you're right. They shouldn't be, and they aren't, even if it seems you—like me—have spent years trying to prove otherwise. Be confident that radiant health can be yours, no matter what your age or how many times you may have "failed" in the past. You have every reason to feel hope. Perhaps by the time you've read about my journey, you'll see why. And maybe you'll even see a little of yourself in my story.

I know you may feel frustrated. You might even have spent hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars trying to find a "magic bullet" to make your fitness and weight-loss dreams come true. I understand how you feel.

Or maybe you're simply stuck, frustrated with your health and body-shaping plan, floundering around short of your ever-elusive weight-loss goals.

I can help. In the following pages, I help you understand why you haven't succeeded in your previous weight-loss efforts. And more importantly, I show you how to nudge yourself healthfully and happily into that winner's circle. All it may take is a tweak or two to what

you're already doing. Along the way, I'm going to share my own diet, exercise, and weight-loss journey.

I've traveled a wearisome, winding road to get to where I am today, where weight management is easy, exercise is fun, and eating is a joy. There's nothing like being fit, trim, energetic, healthy, and well fed. There's nothing like having strength and vitality to make it possible to live large—and I don't mean in size.

## My Story

I have a long and colorful diet and exercise history—30 years of constantly battling my weight, being at war with food and with my body, and not having the lasting success or real results I craved, no matter what I did. My weight eventually climbed to a high of almost 200 pounds. Unfortunately, I'm one of those people with a genetic code preset to gain weight easily. The good news, I found, is that with diet and exercise, you can alter the expression of those genes.

But for a long time I couldn't seem to realize the dream I was determined to find: lasting weight loss, resilient energy, great shape, *and* a fully satisfying amount of food on my plate. I couldn't shake the deep conviction that this should be my birthright and that I shouldn't have to be a slave to a diet that kept me hungry or to devote ever-expanding chunks of time to exercise.

And one never came along with the other. If I dieted to lose weight, I didn't have the energy to exercise, and it all fell apart in short order because hunger overcame my dietary resolve. I could exercise, exercise, exercise, running miles every day, yet as I learned—over and over again, despite all my attempts to the contrary—you can't out-train a bad diet.

For decades, I craved a simple solution, but lasting success was always lost in empty diet and exercise promises. Sound familiar?

## My Defining Moment

My turning point came more than 17 years ago, when I became exhausted and disheartened from the constant battle. To be honest, I felt like I was at war with my body. I was working full-time during the day, teaching fitness at night, and squeezing in my own workouts while meticulously trying to manage my diet, with intermittent and hard-won results. It had to be my genes or my thyroid—or both—I decided. That must be it!

I even toyed with the idea of resigning myself to being a “fit at any size” person. This wasn’t my first choice, but somehow it seemed to be choosing me. Maybe you’ve even thought the same thing.

Finally, the whole thing reached a tipping point. I walked in the door after a long day at work, zonked from yet another 1½-hour workout at the gym. My gym bag was digging into one shoulder while my case of papers from work carved into the other. I was tired and hungry, and I just wanted to eat, lie down, and sleep.

Here I was, working out hard, but as carefully as I was managing my diet, I was getting diminishing returns. I was essentially eating less, exercising more, and slowly gaining weight anyway. Talk about not fair! What’s more, none of it was giving me what I really wanted, which was the pleasure of a fit body with the freedom to *eat*.

At this point, I decided there must be a way to be slim and energetic, enjoy what I ate, exercise a little, and get on with it. I never stopped believing in this possibility. (Perhaps you haven’t either. Good.) I had been chronically playing around with diet and exercise and pretty much ending up where I started. I stopped and asked myself, *What am I missing here?*

## My 50-Pound Weight Loss

Finally, I achieved success—and on my own terms. My hunger was satisfied, and I developed an approach to exercise that required just reasonable “workout” time. I eventually lost 50 pounds and have kept that weight off for more than a dozen years—at a time in life when everyone else seems to be packing on the fat and racking up the numbers on the scale. And it keeps getting easier for me.

What made the difference? Why success after so many years? What had changed?

## The Three Pillars of Successful Body Transformation

I discovered that healthy weight and fitness success has three essential pillars:

- **Exercise:** How you move (or don’t move) your body
- **Diet:** What you eat
- **Mind-set:** Your mastery of your psychology

When you get all three in alignment, you're unstoppable. But to get what you want, you have to go three for three, or your success will be limited, lopsided, and easily abandoned.

In this book, we take a closer look at the important fundamentals of each pillar. I share specific details on exactly what to do for healthy fitness in each arena—exercise, diet, and mind-set.

And that's exactly what changed, for me, after so many years. Was it my diet? Yes. Was it my exercise? With the right food in place? Yes. Was it thinking differently? First and foremost, yes.

Perhaps, like me, you've had it with exercise programs with inflated and exaggerated claims. The simple truth is, you have to move your body, challenge it in a variety of ways, and keep doing it. Not only that, but you need to *not sit too much*. The two are independent yet related. Each is so important that, whether you're looking for health and vitality, wanting to take a few inches off your waistline, or seeking to add a few extra years to your life, you need to address both. In the following chapters, I show you exactly what that means and give you simple strategies to make it easy. I share clear guidelines for activity that deliver the results I demand. I teach you 14 Fit Quickies in this book. These 5-minute workout gems make a brilliant addition to your body-shaping and energizing exercise arsenal. You can still do the workouts you enjoy; Fit Quickies add variety, focus, and fun to your usual routine and keep your body guessing—the hallmarks of a solid body-shaping program.

Fit Quickies are perfect for revolutionizing your workouts. These research-driven, physical therapist- and exercise physiologist-approved targeted exercises promise to change the shape of your muscles and restore your strength in a refreshing and innovative format.

Perhaps you, too, are suspicious of the dietary plans that encourage you to eat nutritionally challenged “food,” keeping you locked in weight-loss limbo and in total frustration when it comes to getting healthy. The compelling evidence is in: the optimal and easiest pathway to achieving exceptional health and your ideal weight is a whole-food, plant-based diet. This way of eating respects your body's need to be full and your desire to not be fat. In the following chapters, you learn exactly how I eat to easily stay trim, year after year, maintaining my 50-pound weight loss. I show you how you, too, can use these principles along with a simple, time-tested, doctor- and dietitian-approved food plan that won't leave you hungry. If your diet attempts have been focused on portion control or severely restricting carbs, you're doomed and you know it. Help is on the way!



To see a photo history of my weight loss, go to [lanimuelrath.com](http://lanimuelrath.com).

When you get the food right, the actions of losing weight, shaping your body, and getting fit and healthy are all so much easier. You carve your figure with your fork. And did you know that the leading cause of death in the United States is nutritionally controllable diseases like heart disease, obesity, certain cancers, and stroke—all diseases we can eat ourselves toward or away from? Undeniable research data show a whole-food, plant-based, low-fat diet is unprecedented in helping you live a healthy, energetic, longer life. At the same time, you reduce environmental impact and create a more compassionate kitchen. How sweet is that?

Plants provide all the proteins, calcium, iron, and other vitamins and minerals your body needs, without the drawbacks of animal products that can weaken your bones, promote cardiovascular or other diseases, or create chronic inflammation. You easily get the complex carbohydrates you need for sustained energy, plus healthy fats that don't clog your circulation, from plant-based sources. What's more, antioxidants and phytonutrients are yours in abundance. My goal is to keep it simple, stick to the basics, and not distract you with supplements, special foods, or concoctions and isolated nutrients.

Finally—and of ultimate importance—when I lost the weight, in addition to the exercise I practiced and the food I put on my plate, I discovered I had to pay attention to what I was thinking and feeling. When making changes, you need to have compassion for yourself and fully support your own endeavors. Without these inner shifts in thinking, the other two pillars of transformation—exercise and diet—are temporary and, at best, superficial. You have to keep in mind what you're looking for. Yes, a slim, energetic, healthy body is one goal, but physical confidence, productivity, fulfillment, and happiness should be, too.

Your fitness, health, and energy are a part of the bigger picture of your life. Your body is the means through which you experience your existence, fulfilling your passion or purpose, contribution, livelihood, avocations, and just plain joy of living. Don't discount the value of this. Don't excuse it away. It's huge and vital to your success.

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## Special Thanks to the Technical Reviewers

*Fit Quickies* was reviewed by two experts who double-checked the accuracy of what you'll learn here. Special thanks are extended to Steve Henderson and Susan Levin.

Dr. Henderson teaches human physiology, nutrition for sport and fitness, exercise testing, and prescription and principles of strength and conditioning at California State University, Chico. He also owns SportFit Sport Performance Training, where he works with patient rehab. He is also a national speaker on human movement assessment and kinetic chain dysfunction.

Susan Levin, MS, RD, is the director of nutrition education at the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, a nonprofit organization that advocates for the prevention of disease through a plant-based diet. She is a licensed registered dietitian in the State of New York and in the District of Columbia. She credits her health, love of running, and boundless energy to her 15+ years of practicing what she preaches.



Available at all booksellers

Check out [lanimuelrath.com](http://lanimuelrath.com)

## Transform your body— 5 minutes at a time!

Few people love absolutely everything about their body. Often there's a trouble spot or two—that muffin top that just won't go away, thighs you wish were just a little firmer, or a rear end you'd like to be a little higher off the ground. We all have them.

In *Fit Quickies*, health and fitness expert Lani Muelrath shares her collection of quick, easy-to-follow body-shaping exercises that zero in on those problem areas and give them a solid challenge. With these exercises, you'll lift and shape your body and soon see a flatter belly, shapelier thighs, firmer arms, a tighter tush, a whittled waist, a strong core, and so much more. Each illustrated step-by-step exercise helps you get motivated, stay focused, and avoid common errors.

Lani has helped thousands of people transform their bodies—and their lives—with her three pillars of healthy weight and fitness: a simple exercise plan, a whole-food plant-based diet, and mind-set mastery. In this book, she shares specific strategies on exactly what to do for success in each area.

The body you've always dreamed of *can* be yours. *Fit Quickies* gives you the tools to make it happen.

**Lani Muelrath** is a celebrity coach for PCRM's 21-Day Vegan Kickstart and VegRun programs, health and fitness expert for *Vegan Mainstream*, and fitness adviser for the Dr. John McDougall Health and Medical Center Discussion Boards. She has a Master's in physical education, is an associate professor at Butte College, and holds multiple fitness and nutrition certifications. Visit [lanimuelrath.com](http://lanimuelrath.com).



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"Lani Muelrath's *Fit Quickies* has the diet right. With simple, effective exercises, the powerful message to be less sedentary, and steps for positive change, Lani takes you forward on the path to a better body—and a healthier life."

—John McDougall, MD, author; founder, the McDougall Program

"*Fit Quickies* is everything you ever wanted in a fitness and health program all in one place!"

—Neal Barnard, MD, president, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

"With honesty, expertise, and inspiration, Lani Muelrath offers the perfect prescription for a healthier, happier you. *Fit Quickies* is comprehensive, easy, and sure to change your life."

—Rory Freedman, coauthor, #1 *New York Times* best-seller *Skinny Bitch*

"Looking for living life at its best—with resilience, vitality, and joy? Then dig in, embrace, and flourish! You are on your way to radiant health with Lani's easy-to-read and rock-solid book!"

—Hans Diehl, DrHSc, MPH, founder, CHIP and Lifestyle Medicine Institute

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