

**HEALTHY
INDULGENCE**

While you're still pregnant, pamper yourself with a little healthy luxury.

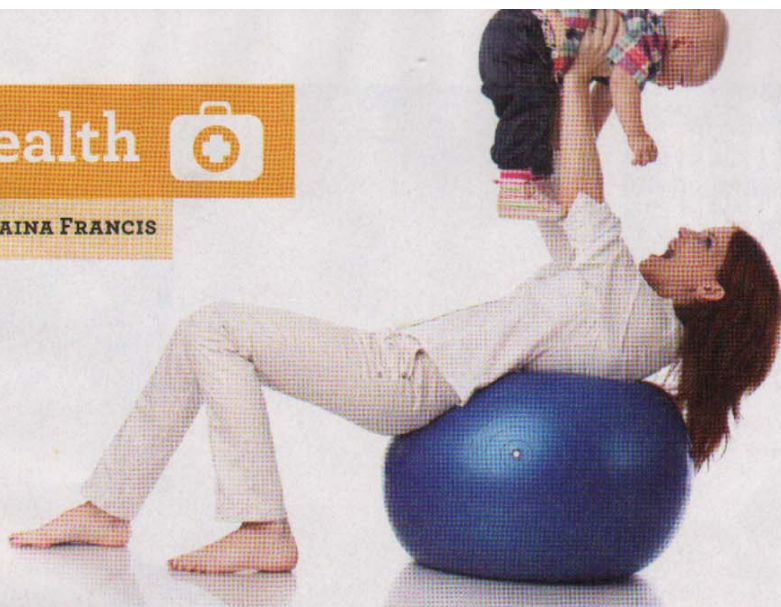
CocoPreggers is one of Xan Confections' new line of CocoXan "chocolates with benefits." It combines rich dark chocolate with 200 mcg of folic acid (50 percent daily value) and 50 mg of vegetarian life's DHA made by Martek Biosciences. Adequate folic acid in healthful diets may reduce a woman's risk of delivering a child with a brain or spinal cord birth defect. DHA, an omega-3 fatty acid, helps support the normal development of the brain for both mother and baby*. These all-natural, gluten-free truffles taste great and promote wellness, providing pre-natal essentials to benefit an expecting mother's "inner child."

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BY ELAINA FRANCIS



Post-pregnancy fitness

Here's how the wife of our 'New Dad' columnist got back into fighting shape.

I absolutely adored being pregnant.

I'm one of those lucky ladies who didn't experience too much discomfort, so I enjoyed the ride, including carte blanche to eat to my heart's desire!

Since my baby's health will always be my No. 1 priority, I never went too crazy; I ate organic when possible and tried to do a bit of light exercise (yoga or walking) every day. I did indulge in a few random cravings. Eat a bowl of Cap'n Crunch after dinner or a Klondike bar with my morning smoothie? Why not?

And so when my D-Day (Sept. 19, 2010) finally rolled around, I weighed 180 pounds. After my 7-pound, 10-ounce son, Otis, was born. I had a lot of work ahead. I allowed myself eight weeks to adjust to motherhood. I decided to exclusively breastfeed my son, which I believe helped me lose those first 25 pounds without too much effort. Once I felt that I (and my husband, New Dad columnist Kedric Francis

— see page 24) had gotten the initial hang of parenting, I leaped at the chance to get into shape.

Stark Fitness, a sleek gym in Irvine, offered to guide me back to my pre-pregnant self, complete with supplements, training and a strict diet.

I started with an initial evaluation by my new trainer, Zack Caspary. He measured skinfolds everywhere, from my cheek to my hamstring, to see where I needed work. Then he determined the supplements that would improve my hormonal balance — a key element. Diet-wise, I had to cut out all gluten and processed carbohydrates and focus on meals heavy in protein and good fats. Ground beef, chicken, avocado, nuts, spinach and broccoli became my best friends. Because of breastfeeding, I had more leeway on dairy than many Stark Fitness' clients. But I had to keep it to a minimum.

Stark designed a three-month program for me, with a focus on weightlifting and other forms of resistance training

three times a week. I never did the same routine two days in a row; every four weeks we moved on to a different set of activities. It took about three workouts for everything to click. It had been nearly 10 months since I'd done anything strenuous (other than giving birth!). To take the first difficult steps, I just needed a bit of encouragement, which I got. Zack was phenomenal, letting me set my pace but still pushing me for a bit more. He encouraged me to breathe through the difficult moments — not unlike childbirth.

As my program closed, I was thrilled, but not surprised, to find that my hard work, and Stark's program of diet and supplements, had put me back at my pre-baby weight. My body-fat fell from 23 percent to 17.

My days and nights are filled with the joys and responsibilities of child-raising. I truly feel that motherhood has helped me become my best self. So why not have a body that reflects that? starktraining.com **DCF**

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