

'I've lost a stone on the DNA diet!'

It's the next big thing in the weight loss world, and new mum Anna Williamson explains how a diet tailored to her genes has helped shift the baby weight

We last saw her in a swimsuit on reality diving show *Splash!* in 2014. Since then, Anna Williamson has had a baby, but despite admitting her body has changed, she's brimming with confidence as she poses on our shoot.

"There's a marked difference between my six-pack then and my not-so-six-pack now," she laughs. "In fact, this is the first time I've worn a swimming costume since *Splash!*. But I feel very proud of my body for what it's done – it's grown and given birth to a baby."

And Anna is feeling particularly body confident after losing a stone in just six weeks before Christmas.

"I feel so much better about my body," she says. "It's lovely to see my waist coming in and the baby weight starting to shift. I'm proud of the curves I've got since having the baby, but now everything is feeling a bit tighter and more drawn in. I feel like I've taken back control with my eating habits, too."

But for Anna – who is married to fitness guru Alex Di Pasquale – taking back control has been a hard process. The TV presenter, 36, who suffers from generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), said she really struggled mentally after having baby Enzo in October 2016.

BAD HABITS

"I had very bad birth trauma, postnatal depression and anxiety," she explains. "My appetite went so I couldn't eat and was on meal-replacement drinks. And then when I got that sorted, I was so grateful to be able to eat again I just ate whatever I wanted. I used all the excuses, like, 'I'm a new mum/I'm breastfeeding/I've been so poorly I deserve to eat' and would just grab cake, crisps, toast and anything else. I was picking at anything, but was also going for long periods without eating, so when the baby went to sleep, I'd gorge on dinner. Even if dinner was something healthy, I'd overeat and have a man-sized portion."

I would think, 'I haven't eaten all day so I'm allowed it'. My diet was erratic and full of sugar and carbs."

When Enzo's first birthday came and went and Anna was still using the same excuses, she decided to make a change. She says, "I was still struggling to get into clothes – and I'm not just talking



With husband Alex and baby Enzo

about pre-pregnancy clothes, but also post-pregnancy ones! I figured it was time and I would feel better in myself if I had a healthier diet and started to shape up a bit."

PERSONALISED PLAN

After doing some research, Anna stumbled across the What IF plan – a tailored diet based on your genetic make-up, provided after you send off a saliva sample – and, although Anna admits to being "skeptical at first", she has been astounded by the results and has dropped a dress size in just six weeks.

She says, "Interestingly, what came back in the report about my genes was that I'm lactose intolerant. It suggested I stop having milk and dairy products, which was really hard for me because I love milky lattes and I'm a huge cheese fan! The other interesting thing was that I carry a gene related to the coeliac gene, so, to improve my energy levels and digestion and, after speaking to my GP, I removed gluten from my diet as well."

"Straightaway, my bloating was vastly reduced and my bowel habits became healthier and more regular. My energy levels soared and I've got more energy now than I've ever had, even pre-baby. That really



BEFORE: 10ST
DRESS SIZE: 12
AFTER: 9ST
DRESS SIZE: 8-10
HEIGHT: 5FT 3

HOW IT WORKS...

- The What IF Plan is the world's first Intermittent Fasting Plan Weight Management Programme based on your DNA. It looks at 31 genetic variants most associated with weight loss, including sensitivity to carbs, alcohol metabolism and gluten intolerance, to determine your optimal diet.
- The plan consists of three, one-week phases. You then repeat the phases until you reach your goal weight, or pick your favourite phase and stick to that. Phase 1 – Time-restricted feeding (16 hours fast, eight-hour eating window). Phase 2 – Alternate-day fasting (500-700 calories for women, 600-800 for men, every other day). Phase 3 – Genetically Appropriate Phase – this is your break from your fasting. You can eat three meals and a snack a day, but as with phases 1 and 2, you must choose foods that are genetically appropriate, based on your DNA results.
- Ensure you do resistance exercise – like yoga, Pilates and weights – three times a week.

amazed me. The other thing I noticed from the diet was that my PMT has calmed down. It's almost like the weight loss has been a by-product, but I've lost a stone in six weeks, which is amazing."

The diet is also based around intermittent fasting, something which Anna found tough, but effective.

"I'd finish my last meal at 6pm, then not eat again until 16 hours later," she says. "The first four days were hell and those last couple of hours I was screaming for something to eat, but after five days my body got used to it. It was what I needed to break my bad habits."

A NEW LIFESTYLE

And Anna says she won't go back to her old eating ways. She says, "I felt saggy, bloated and sallow before losing weight, so I'm happy I did it. I have off days, but if I continue with the plan for 80 per cent of the time, it's better for me mentally and physically. I'm sleeping better, my energy levels are up and my anxiety has lessened. I'd be a fool not to carry this on. Being a mum is just amazing. Of course it's exhausting, but I am loving all my newfound energy."

By Jo Chapman

● The What IF Plan is giving readers £50 off. Sign up using the promo code CLOSER18 and get a personalised plan for just £249, (usual price £299). Visit Thewhatifplan.co.uk. Always consult your GP before starting a new diet plan.

'I've taken back control – and everything feels tighter'



She took part in reality show *Splash!* in 2014



The star in October