

GENERAL HOSPITAL's Genie Francis (ex-Laura) takes a weight-loss challenge!

Special Interview

I Know

What You're Doing

Know what GENERAL HOSPITAL's Genie Francis (ex-Laura) is doing for her summer vacation? She's getting fit and fabulous! "Medifast approached me about being their new spokesperson," says Francis, who readily accepted and is on her way to losing 30 pounds. "They wanted somebody to represent their product, and I was getting burnt out on what I was doing. I wanted a change and was interested in trying something that was a little bit more rapid. I know I will succeed this time with the help from a program like [this]."

Shaping Up

Weight is and always has been a big issue in Hollywood, especially when it comes to leading ladies and ingenues. Thin is still in, and it's still assumed that you can never be thin enough or rich enough. "Unfortunately, it's true," Francis says. "I've always thought of myself as a svelte size six, and I've been working to get back to that size since the birth of my second child. In my industry, there has always been tremendous pressure on me to stay the same size I was when I was 17. Like so many others,

I've tried different methods to lose weight for years, but I really never got the weight off. I was so focused on my family and the day-to-day of my busy life that at some point, I just gave up on making my own health a priority."

Losing an ounce or two a week after lots of hard work is just not fun, so a quick-paced plan is something Francis was looking for... and Medifast was the way to go. "That's the most disheartening thing," she says. "If I had come from a long line of (continues) ▶



This Summer!



Last year's reunion of Luke and Laura proved extremely popular with fans, who would have loved nothing more than for her to stick around a whole lot longer. Now, they're hoping that when Luke returns, he'll bring Laura home to stay.

naturally skinny people, it would have made it a lot easier for me. I'm fighting my gene pool. But when you get in your mid-40s, that's exactly what happens. If you're a results-oriented person like I am, you may need the results a little quicker." Medifast combined with a regular exercise program is doing the trick! "I love my exercise," she adds. "That's really important to me. It's built up my self-confidence an awful lot. I have a terrific trainer. She came out of retirement to train me. Yester-

day I did a 12-minute mile. It felt really good. I've gotten to the point now where I love the feeling of a runners' high. If I don't do it, I miss it."

Out And About

Summertime in upstate Maine is all about enjoying the great outdoors with the kids. This year, Francis, husband Jonathan Frakes and their two children, Jameson, 12, and Eliza, 9, are spending a lot of time at their camp on the lake, which has prov-

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"It's a great feeling," says Francis, who feels the love. "I'm very, very grateful that after all these years that [the fans] still support me. It's so nice."

en to be good for the body and the soul. "It's beautiful here in the summer," she says. "We just thawed out so it's gotten very pretty. Freshwater is actually a lot warmer and the kids can swim and fish. We're out on the lake a lot. We worked many years, 16-and-18 hour days, so I feel like I've earned this [time to relax]."

Although the family loves both burning energy and taking it easy in the country, their pet beagle, Mojo, recently got a taste of the wildlife being a little too wild. With Frakes on business in Italy, Francis and their daughter decided to celebrate their birthdays with a slumber party. "I had

nine little girls over for a sleepover. Around nine o'clock at night, my little beagle got quilled by a porcupine!" Francis knew she couldn't just yank them out of the poor pooch's face but she also couldn't leave them in. "You know what I did?" she laughs. "I couldn't get all of us into one car and I couldn't leave the little girls alone, so I actually called a car service in town that usually drives for my husband and for me. They took Mojo to the only open place on a Saturday night, which was an hour away. I packed up Mojo in his little kennel and he went on his midnight ride!"

— Rosemary A. Rossi ■