

# Bethenny's sunny new life

Hit show, new husband and daughter—even flat abs after baby. In an exclusive interview, reality star and *Health* columnist Bethenny Frankel shares her no-BS secrets to a healthy, happy life.

By Jancee Dunn • Photography by Perry Hagopian

**AS USUAL, THERE ARE 10 THINGS GOING** on inside Bethenny Frankel's New York City apartment. An assistant mans the phone. Bethenny's husband, Jason, rummages through the fridge. A hair-and-makeup team arrives for an evening event. And here is Bethenny, clad in a white robe, trying to catch a few minutes' rest. This is a multitasker extraordinaire: the natural-foods chef, former *Real Housewife*, and star of the hit spinoff *Bethenny Getting Married?* is also

the best-selling author of healthy-lifestyle books *Naturally Thin* and *The Skinnygirl Dish*. The 39-year-old is, as you'd expect, friendly and hilariously candid. (She nursed her 4-month-old daughter, Bryn, as we talked, joking about her breasts, "You're not special, everybody in the country has seen them by now.") Swigging Kombucha tea, bare feet propped on the coffee table, Bethenny dished on her diet history, post-baby sex life, and favorite guilty-pleasure reality show.



Hair: Julien Farel Salon/Ford Artists NYC; Makeup: Jessica Liebeskind/Ford Artists NYC (using Smashbox cosmetics); Fashion styling: Jenny Altman

Lilly Pulitzer cashmere wrap (\$228; lillypulitzer.com); Old Navy tank top (\$9; oldnavy.com); Old Navy skinny cargos (\$35; oldnavy.com); Viv & Ingrid chandelier earrings (\$221; vivandingrid.com)

## how she got her abs back

Bethenny swears by natural foods like cucumbers and asparagus—and the workout on page 146.

**Q| You look great! Was it hard to lose the baby weight?**

**A|** No. I gotta attribute it to being healthy before and healthy during [pregnancy]. I just weighed myself for the first time—I don't have a scale—but I'm probably three or four pounds more now. Maybe that will take a long time to come off, and I don't really know that I want to take it off. I'm just kind of not even concerned about it.

**Q| Many women who have struggled with body image in the past find having a baby triggers a relapse. How did you avoid that?**

**A|** The one thing a baby brings on is what's really important. I don't look the same in a bikini as I used to, but it's not like I'm running around in a bikini. You just need to look decent in your clothes! I think it's very selfish to be obsessing about your body when you have a new baby.

**Q| How did it feel to have people accusing you of losing the weight too fast?**

**A|** I definitely got crap for it, but if I had 80 pounds still on me, people would be showing fat pictures of me in magazines. You can't win for

**How did that affect your body image as a kid?**

**A|** I always was obsessed with wanting to be thin. I knew about every single diet—the five-day diet, the flight attendant's diet. I was obsessed with being thin. Obsessed.

**Q| Now you're anti-diet. You've said the low-carb diet is the "most absurd fad ever."**

**A|** It's moronic. The only reason it works is that you're eliminating 75 percent of what's going on in your diet! Any diet that says watermelon is bad and a protein bar made with 500 ingredients you can't pronounce is good is idiotic. I can't believe so many people bought into it.

**Q| What's your trick for revving up your sex life after baby?**

**A|** Well, a cocktail doesn't hurt. [Laughs.] I'd say exercise, because you feel better about yourself. I was really blobby for a while after. I have [to go] to a lot of events (I don't like it, but ...), so I have to look nice once in a while, but other times I'd be an animal. So you can really get into that rut. Take a bath, put on some

everything else go away and makes your relationship better. It's like working out—you should just do it.

**Q| Of all the reality stars on all the shows, you're one of the breakouts. What do you have that the others don't?**

**A|** I really know who I am, and I'm not afraid to be honest about who that person is. And I'm a businessperson first. I think a lot of reality shows are fool's gold. People think it's going to make them rich and famous, [but] the truth is, you have to have something to back you up. You can't just decide "Oh, I'm going to have a pillow company because I'm now on TV." Because the viewers are very smart. No one's mad at me for being successful, because I work like a dog, day and night.

**Q| In terms of the other Housewives, who is really a friend and who isn't?**

**A|** [We just had a] Skinnygirl Margarita party at the Montauk Yacht Club and Alex and Ramona and Mario and Simon were all there. That's normal. We're not best friends, it's not like I see them all the time, but if there's an event that



**Bethenny kicks back with her other baby, Cookie.** Banana Republic Heritage vest (\$80; bananarepublic.com); Old Navy tank top (\$9; oldnavy.com); Old Navy skinny cargos (\$35; oldnavy.com)

*my favorites right now*

**WORKOUT CLOTHES:** I like this company, Alo. It's the most comfortable clothing. And Fila has really functional, nice things.

**JEANS:** Levi's skinny jeans.

**SNACK FOODS:** Pretzels, black licorice, Kind bars, Lärabars.

**WEB SITES:** ebay.com, saks.com, target.com, ikea.com, oldnavy.com.

**PAJAMAS:** Oh, it's a bad scene. I wear Victoria's Secret, but they're several years old.

**MUSIC:** My iPod just sits there. I know nothing about anything new, but I know the words to every single song before 1998.

a lot of great things, and she'll be able to travel all over the world. Don't bite the hand that feeds you, for sure.

**Q| What is off limits for you?**

**A|** I didn't actually give birth on camera. That to me was off limits. Other people have done that. But my water broke, and that was not off limits. We didn't get engaged on camera because that was between the two of us. But we got married in front of people anyway, so did I care if another million people saw it? It was our own strange logic.

*"I'm making it happen*

losing, no pun intended. I've heard rumors of actresses who don't want to have kids because they're scared their body won't come back. But you know what? It's not that big of a deal! And I used to be 20 pounds heavier and could never get the weight off, so no one's going to say "she's just naturally thin."

**Q| You've said your mom took you to an obesity clinic when you were nine.**

lingerie. And go on a date once a week, even if you bring the baby.

**Q| Do you feel you have your sexual mojo back?**

**A|** I don't, but I'm not like a wild-and-crazy, over-the-top sexual person. [Pauses.] I don't want to say I'm not a sexual person. It's more that I move so quickly that it's hard for me to stop! So when we're in the moment, yes, I have my sexual mojo back. It really does relax me and makes

I'm doing I'll always include them. I'm always happy to see them. They support me, and did through a very rough, rough third season.

**Q| What reality shows do you watch?**

**A|** I like *The Hills*. Isn't that embarrassing? I don't like watching competition shows, I find them tedious and repetitive. I don't like *American Idol*. I don't even watch the other *Housewives* shows.

*and you can, too."*

**Q| What do you see yourself doing in three years?**

[Jason walks by and immediately says, "having a baby."]

**A|** Jason would like to. Let me make that clear.

**Q| How about you?**

**A|** I don't know. We're talking about it. I don't want to do it for the wrong reasons, but Jason gets focused on things. He was focused on having sex on the six-week point we were

allowed to. He was like Rain Man about it. Now he's Rain Man with baby number two. So that. And a cooking show. And a talk show.

**Q| Do you ever second-guess yourself about featuring your baby on a reality show?**

**A|** No. She's a tiny little peanut. Do I work so hard so I don't have to be on a reality show in a couple of years? Yeah. By the same token, it affords me

**Q| Have you ever regretted anything the cameras caught on your shows?**

**A|** No. A lot of women are helped by knowing it's OK to be in your 30s and not know exactly who you are or where you're going. You don't have to be married in your 20s or have kids in your 30s. You can meet your husband in a nightclub. It's about saying, "I'm no better than you and didn't have it any better than you as a child, and I'm making it happen, and you can, too."

Turn for Bethenny's Flat-Belly Workout →



# Steal Bethenny's flat-belly workout!

"This workout is so effective because it's about quality, not quantity," Bethenny says. Each move targets not only the abs but other muscles, too, adds trainer Kristin McGee, who helped create this regimen (and joins Bethenny on her *Body by*

*Bethenny* DVD): "With Bethenny's hectic schedule, it pays to have an ab workout she can do anywhere." Do the routine three to four times a week. But "don't think you have to do it all at once," Bethenny says. "When I'm crazed, I just do a set or two."

## PLANK

*"I'm all about this one-stop-shop move: It not only tones my entire core but also strengthens and sculpts my arms, butt, and thighs."*

Kneel on a mat on all fours with your hands directly under your shoulders. Stretch your legs back one at a time to come into plank position (the "up" part of a push-up); engage your ab muscles. Your body should be long and straight; don't let your hips sag or lift your butt too high. Imagine there's a seat belt tightening around your waist, drawing your lower-ab muscles inward. Press your hands firmly into the mat (as shown at right), and press strongly back through your heels. Hold for 1-2 minutes (or as long as you can), then drop back to all fours. Do 3 reps.



Get Bethenny's look: Lululemon Athletica tank top and pants (\$52 and \$98, respectively; Lululemon Athletica stores)

## BYE-BYE, INCHES

To drop up to 2 inches in just 4 weeks, McGee says, do these moves 3 times per week, plus 20-minute high-intensity intervals 3 times per week and 45 minutes of moderate intensity cardio 2 times per week.

## SIDE PLANK

*"This is an awesome way to tone my waist and tame love handles. Plus, it gets rid of dreaded bra bulge!"*

From plank position, press your right hand into a mat and turn your body so your weight is on the outer edge of your right foot; stack your left foot on top. Imagine you have a big beach ball under your right side; press your torso up and away from the ball, extending your left arm with fingers pointed toward the sky (as shown at left). Tighten your lower-ab muscles and brace your entire core. Hold for 60 seconds, then return to plank position and repeat on the left side; that's 1 rep. Do 3 reps.



## BOAT POSE

*"This is my go-to pose for fighting lower-belly pooch—an area that can be really hard to tone, especially after you've given birth."*

Sit with your knees bent, feet flat on a mat, and hands on the ground. Lean your upper body back and lift your legs so your body forms a V. Stretch your arms forward, palms facing in (as shown at left). Tighten your lower-ab muscles while keeping your shoulders relaxed, back straight, and chest lifted. Lengthen your legs and engage your inner thighs. Hold for 5 slow, deep breaths, then lower your legs. Do 3 reps.

## SWAYING WARRIOR 2

*"Love this killer tone-up! It works ALL your ab muscles."*

Stand in a wide straddle lengthwise on a mat. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees (so it points toward the front of your mat) and your left foot in 45 degrees. Bend your right knee (keep it over your ankle) so your thigh is parallel to the mat. Press firmly into your outer left foot and inner right foot, and use your inner thighs and lower abs to hold the pose. Stretch your arms out to the sides at shoulder height, then slide your left arm down the back of your left leg and reach your right arm overhead (as shown in inset photo), stretching the right side of your waist. Lift up and all the way over until your right elbow comes down to your right knee; stretch your left arm over your ear (as shown below). Repeat sequence 2 more times. On the last one, stay in the final position for 3-5 breaths before coming up and repeating on the other side.



## SCALE POSE

*"I'm a fan of this efficient move not only for its core (and arm!) strengthening but also because it's a great way to strengthen your pelvic floor—and that helps in everything from better sex to better posture."*

Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position with hands on a mat next to your hips. Tighten your pelvic floor (as if you have to pee and are holding it in), push into your hands, and lift your entire lower body off the mat (as shown above). Hold for 3 breaths, then lower back down. This is a pretty challenging move, so if you can't lift your whole lower half, keep your feet on the floor and just lift your butt. Do 3 reps.

Fitness trainer: Kristin McGee

