

Mimi's diet: My fast track to fabulousness

It's the diet everyone's talking about, but does Dr Michael Mosley's two-days-a-week fasting regime really work? For serial dieter Mimi Spencer, it was a revelation



I weighed eight-stone something on my wedding day. The 'something' happened to be 13lb – but who cared? It was the eight that mattered. For some reason, wedding-day weight is a critical milestone in any woman's life; we all remember it, just as we remember the precise shade of the lilies in the church, the exact table settings and how Janet wore that awful hat. Weddings do that: they stay, long after the last firework has disappeared.

Mind you, I was only eight-stone something for one, glorious 24-hour period. Then I went on honeymoon and we ate our way around San Francisco and New Orleans, dining on all manner of goodies and arriving home nicely rounded, like hamsters ready to hibernate. Over the next couple of years, I had two babies, and settled into a life of nine-, then ten-stone something.

Like countless women, I didn't much like having to breathe in to contain my tummy in photos. I hated catching sight of myself in changing-room mirrors. I wasn't fat. I was just slightly more padded than I might have wished, carrying a little extra cushion of weight around with me that forever meant I would prod a finger at pictures of myself and think, 'Are those really my upper arms? Why so flappy?'

So, I tried all the diets going – partly as a journalistic exercise (I've been writing about them for decades), but also as a personal crusade against the cushion. I was first in line for Atkins, GI and Dukan. I dabbled with cabbage and grapefruit, and had one hideous week when I convinced myself that drinking chilli-lemon water would do the trick. It didn't.

Every one of these regimes worked, but only ever momentarily. As soon as I got together again with my best friends – hot toast, butter, Dairy Milk, camembert, all the things that make life so sweet and comforting – the weight would creep back on, and the skinny jeans would be shuffled off to their usual residence deep in the back of the wardrobe. As anyone who reads my regular column knows, I became a committed diet sceptic