

Preventive Care

by Melissa Larsen, M.D. | *Ob-Gyn Associates of the Central Coast*

Women now have many contraceptive options.

In addition to barrier and hormonal birth control options, there is a new technique for female sterilization. Essure is a non-incisional approach to permanent birth control. Because it is intended to permanently prevent pregnancy, it is similar to other permanent birth control procedures, such as vasectomy or tubal ligation ("having your tubes tied"). All of these procedures are intended to prevent pregnancy for the rest of your life.

The Essure procedure is a non-incisional surgical procedure that involves placing a small, flexible device called a micro-insert into each of your fallopian tubes (the tubes your eggs travel through from your ovaries to your uterus). The micro-inserts are made from polyester fibers and metals (nickel-titanium and stainless steel), materials that have been studied and used in the heart and other parts of the human body for many years. Once the micro-inserts are in place, body tissue grows into the micro-inserts, blocking the fallopian tubes. Blocking the tubes is intended to

prevent sperm from reaching and fertilizing the egg, thereby preventing pregnancy. It is believed that the tissue response to the micro-insert that creates the blockage of your tubes will last for the rest of your reproductive life.

The procedure time to place the Essure micro-inserts averages about 35 minutes or less. It can be done under spinal or local anesthesia, and most women can return to usual activities within 24 hours. The Essure procedure is as effective as traditional sterilization with tubal ligation or vasectomy. The advantage for women is that the Essure procedure can be done without incisions or general anesthesia.

It takes at least 3 months before you can begin relying on Essure for contraception. At 3 months time post placement of the Essure microinserts, an evaluation of the fallopian tubes called a hysterosalpingogram is done to determine if the tubes are completely blocked. During this 3 month time an additional method of birth control should be used.

We are pleased to be offering the Essure procedure to our patients. It is part of our commitment to the women of this community to offer the most current advances in women's health care options. ■

NUTRITION IN A NUTSHELL

Superseeds For Superstars

Sunflower seeds are a big hit in the dugout. They not only taste good, they're good for your health.

If you've wondered why sunflower seeds are such a big hit in the dugout, the answer is that baseball players like their taste and know that they are packed with nutrients and heart-healthy fats.

Eating just a single, one-ounce portion of sunflower seeds a day significantly contributes to the amounts of protein, fiber, vitamin E, minerals and phytochemicals we need in our diets, and baseball players are gaining this nutrition.

Take the antioxidant vitamin E. Sunflower seeds contribute to your health and performance with their superhigh levels of the stuff. The United States Department of Agriculture says you can meet 84 percent of your daily requirement of vitamin E with that one ounce of sunflower seeds.

And, as excellent sources of essential fatty acids, sunflower seeds are high in "good" poly- and monounsaturated fats and low in "bad" saturated fats. They can actually

contribute to reducing heart disease risk. Who ever said you don't have to be smart to play baseball?

Putting sunflower seeds into your diet is easy. Add seeds to muffins, sprinkle them on a salad or coat your fish. Better yet, take it from the pros and chew on a mouthful. To learn more, visit www.sunflowernsa.com. ■

NAPSI

SWIMSUIT SEASON

It's Not Too Late To Look Great

Like many dieters, 34-year-old Celeste Roethel's weight-loss journey began with the realization that swimsuit season was drawing near.

The dental office manager vowed to get into a bikini, highly motivated by a Hawaiian vacation she had planned with her husband.

With less than four months and about 20 pounds to get to her goal of wearing a bikini, Celeste decided to turn directly to the experts. She searched the Internet for Weight Watchers and discovered she could follow their plan online.

"Weight Watchers Online was just right for my lifestyle," says Celeste. "I work and have a family, so I needed a flexible plan. With Weight Watchers Online, I could follow my progress, get tips and track my food whenever it was convenient for me—all on the computer."

Celeste found great motivation online, too. She searched WeightWatchers.com for success stories about women similar to her in height and weight and taped their pictures around her home for encouragement.

Celeste proudly wore her

bikini to Hawaii and has maintained her nearly 20-pound weight loss for about three years. She offers these tips for weight-loss success.

- Don't get overly hungry. Celeste keeps control during the day by snacking. She has a small, healthy snack, like string cheese or a few almonds, before leaving work so she isn't ravenous while preparing dinner.

- Keep track of what you eat. With over 27,000 food options, including brand-name groceries and restaurants, the Weight Watchers Online food tracker helps Celeste keep tabs on what she eats, so she can make smart choices throughout the day.

- Identify weaknesses and find solutions. Eating out and not binging on the weekends were Celeste's biggest challenges. She found ways to maintain control by breaking down tricky situations and finding alternate behaviors. For example, instead of eating a roll or two while perusing the menu, Celeste skips

the bread and strikes up a conversation with her husband.

- Renovate recipes. With a few ingredient substitutions, Celeste transforms once-fattening dishes into healthy meals. Celeste learned how to slim down one of her family's favorites, jambalaya, using the Recipe Builder on [Weight Watchers Online](http://WeightWatchersOnline.com).

- Shop smart. If it's not in your pantry, you won't eat it. Take advantage of quick wins at the grocery store by switching to low-fat and fat-free versions of favorite foods.

For more health tips, visit www.WeightWatchers.com.

Sharlene requested a thin border around the photo.

Celeste Roethel, 34, lost about 20 pounds in about four months, just in time for swimsuit season.

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HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Arthritis Advantage

There could be news for many of the more than 43 million Americans who suffer with arthritis.

In two clinical studies on Rheumatoid and Osteoarthritis, it was found that a drug-free arthritis treatment provided a substantial decrease in pain and inflammation. The treatment is a product that does not cause the side effects associated with many other products. In a clinical study on subjects with Rheumatoid arthritis, the treatment also reduced a blood protein called

C-reactive protein, which is a telltale marker for inflammation associated with diseases such as arthritis.

In the Osteoarthritis study, patients taking the new treatment, called Arthritis Advantage from Geneden Biotech, experienced a decrease in pain while twisting and pivoting their knees and while bending and fully straightening their legs. People who've tried it report

feeling a change in just weeks.

Arthritis Advantage is available at pharmacies and grocery stores. For information, visit www.ganedenbiotech.com or call (800) 456-0276.

Relief from the inflammation of arthritis can be found in a drug-free product. ■