

## Elisa Miller

### VT4

For the majority of VT4, I chugged along always under the assumption that, although I was making progress, it would not be enough to make a difference in the end. Until I took my final photos last week and took a good, hard look at my stats from the end of VT3 until now, I had no idea that I had made such good strides.

My weight is only about 4 pounds different from the end of VT3, but like you always say, weight does not tell the entire story, and photos do not lie.

I entered VT4 with the intention of just using it as a stepping stone, a tool to help motivate me and get me to where I needed to go, to provide accountability. I didn't even know if I would follow through and submit my final photos. But it is clear to me now that if I don't submit, I would be foolish. I may not place, but I am completely happy with how far I have come and am very proud of myself for sticking with it.

I took the Reverse Taper Diet to heart and followed it almost to the "t" for that first month. My weight and waist didn't change for that entire month and I was beginning to feel that old frustration and fear that my diet wasn't working any more. But then something happened. I finally did have a woosh: my weight finally went below 130 for good (buh bye 130's!) and my waist went down to 27". Around that same time, after reading some posts on the forums, it finally sunk in, and I truly realized, that my transformation was going to take time, a looong time, because the muscle building was going to be slow. And when I realized this, all of a sudden everything became clear, and I was able to loosen up and just go with the flow, so to speak. No more worrying about having to make an arbitrary deadline, no more fretting about how low the scale weight was. What did it matter if it took me next week or next month or the next three months to reach a mini goal, as long as I was making forward progress? I realized that I am in it for the long haul and because of that, time became somewhat arbitrary. It'll all come together at some point. So I just plodded along, having periods of up eating and periods of low, but always forward. My weight would go up a bit and then down again and then stabilize somewhere in the middle, and every time going through this, always stabilize a little lower.

The wonderful difference between the end of VT3 and the end of VT4 is the fact that aside from being 40 hours fasted at the end of VT4, what you see is the real, everyday me, unlike at the end of VT3, where I had attained an unsustainable low and then bounced right back up about 8 pounds and a full inch on my waist. My non-fasted weight right now is approximately 125 and my waist is 26.5".

I am eating more now, but still making progress. It is slow, but I've accepted it. I am happy with my look. If something happened that made it impossible for me to go any lower than I am right now, I would be ok with that. However, that is not the case, and even though I am happy, I still see room for improvement. It will be slow, but it will happen. This may possibly be the last contest for me. I will never say never, but I feel

like I am in a place right now where the contest is not so important. I would still like to take before and after pics and possibly use the contest in that regard, but to actually submit...I'll leave that for the newer Venuses!

*Elisa*