

JOE WEIDER'S

# SHAPE

SEPTEMBER 1990

\$2.00

## Super Fitness

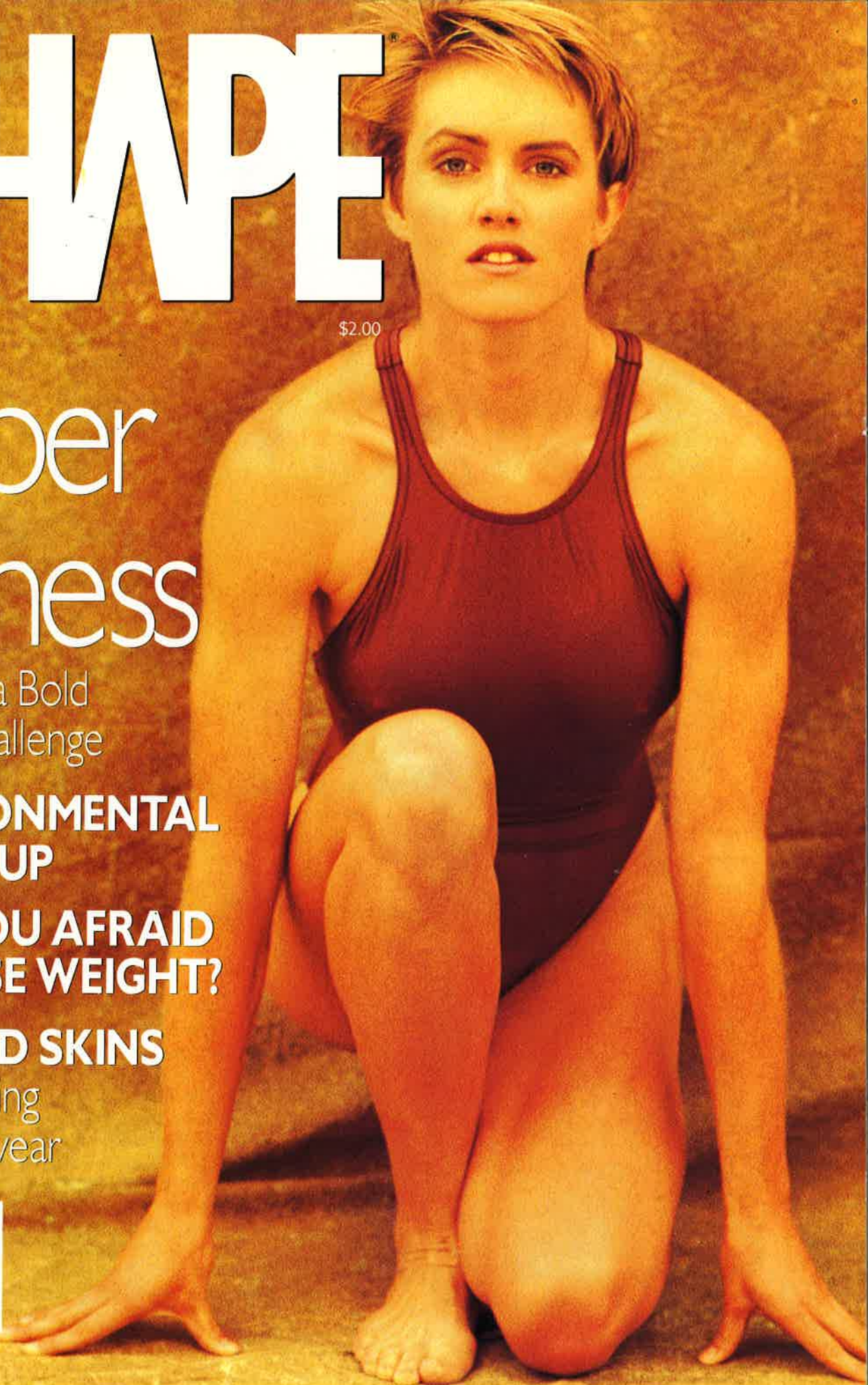
Take on a Bold  
New Challenge

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
CHECKUP**

**ARE YOU AFRAID  
TO LOSE WEIGHT?**

**SECOND SKINS**

Form-fitting  
Exercisewear



BY EVETTE HACKMAN, Ph.D., R.D.

# What's on Tap?

*Sales of bottled water have soared in the past decade. But is store-bought H<sub>2</sub>O really better than what comes out of your kitchen faucet?*

THE HUMAN BODY IS 40- TO 60-PERCENT WATER BY weight; our need for water is second only to our need for air. But with all the contaminants in our present supply of fresh water, how do we know if our drinking water is safe?

## MUNICIPAL WATER

According to a federal law, enacted in 1974 and amended in 1986, called the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), if your community water supply is a source for more than 15 connections, the supplier is required to test it for various chemicals and other substances on a regular basis and to provide you with the results. If you live in a rural area and have your own well, you will have to have your water tested by an independent lab.

Don't expect your municipal water supplier to furnish you with an exhaustive report. Some 700 contaminants were found in drinking water from 1974 to 1986, yet companies are required to test for only 38 sub-

stances. The SDWA also requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set allowable limits for health-threatening contaminants found in public water supplies. By the end of this year the EPA plans to add another 53 toxins to its list. If you want your water tested for a specific toxin, such as lead or radon, you'd probably do better to have it analyzed yourself.

Municipal water is tested at the reservoir, but it may pick up solvents as it is being transported through the plumbing system, especially when it runs through lead pipes or solder. If you have this type of pipe or solder in your home you may want to consider getting new pipes, using a water treatment system or drinking bottled water. Another consideration is that softer water is more susceptible to solvents than hard water.

To help you out, the EPA will send you free pamphlets on water. Ask for a copy of "Is Your Drinking Water Safe?" or "Buying a Water Treatment Unit." Simply call the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline: (800) 426-4791.

You can have the water you use analyzed for about \$75 to \$150. If you only need to know the lead content, the price could be much lower. Keep in mind, however, that the city's analysis is free.

Look under "Laboratories-Analytical" or "Laboratories-Testing" in the *Yellow Pages* to find a water testing lab near you. There are also three mail-order laboratories with 800 numbers. They will send you a packet for collecting and mailing your water sample for analysis. They are:

- WaterTest, 33 South Commercial St., Manchester, NH 03101; (800) 426-8378.
- National Testing Lab-Water Testing, 6151 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, OH 44143; (800) 458-3330.
- Suburban Water Testing Laboratories, 4600 Kutztown Road, Kutztown, PA 19560; (800) 433-6595.

If you get back a worrisome result, consider having the water tested again, or ask an expert to look at it. Lead, radon and nitrates are the worst pollutants na-

*Evette Hackman, Ph.D., R.D., consulting nutritionist and owner of Nutrition Works in Seattle, Washington, is Shape's nutrition and food editor.*

