

For Keeps

► The only word my husband, Scott, dislikes more than *feelings* or *period* is *diet*. But come summer, cutting calories and ramping up my workouts make me feel much better in a bikini, so it's hard *not* to talk about it. While I could go on about juicing and Spinning for hours, Scott thinks I'm crazy for caring about this stuff. And when I recently asked him why our scale gives varied readings on different parts of the bathroom floor, he said I was "obsessing." (I still don't know the answer.) He also said that my diet-



He doesn't think that you're pear-shaped.

The 4-Letter Word Husbands Hate

Every month, author and journalist Kristina Grish contemplates the sweet, surprising, and often totally confusing world of marriage.

ing is silly, since he thinks I look great the way I am, even though I've noticed he's more turned on when I'm tiny and toned. Am I supposed to suppress my urges to yap about fat loss for his sake?

Unfazed by Flab

Psychologist Edward Abramson, PhD, a professor at California State University at Chico, says Scott's aversion to skinny talk is typical, since the battle of the bulge is different for men and women. Women like to shed with the support of their friends, while guys prefer to lose weight quietly on their own, so they're often baffled when we want to discuss the

process. "Men also lose weight faster," he adds, and not many people bother to nitpick over a process that's easy. Case in point: Scott once gallingly lost eight pounds after he stopped eating a piece of turkey sausage every morning with breakfast.

It's not just our different viewpoints. Psychotherapist Julie Hanks, director of the Wasatch Family Therapy Clinic, in Salt Lake City, suspects I'm sending Scott fuzzy messages. When he says I'm perfect and I reply that I need to lose weight, he could think I'm being dismissive or fishing for compliments...and both are annoying. More irritating for me, I tell her, is Scott's clear preference for my flatter

belly. Though Hanks says his amped libido may be reacting to my boosted confidence, it's probably simpler than that: "Men want hot spouses but don't want to hear how that happens." It reminds me of how Scott hates to shop but loves seeing me in a new dress.

Spare Him the Details

So when I want to gripe about a muffin top that won't die, Hanks suggests I call a girlfriend instead of chatting up Scott, since it never hurts to spare him from knowing about my every flaw. But I don't have to tiptoe around the subject totally with him.

She says I need to figure out exactly what I want from Scott and find a way to get it. I realize that while he'll never be interested in sharing slim-down tips, I'd like him at least to acknowledge how much work it is. So next time he says I look great, I should respond, "Thanks! It means a lot to hear that. I guess those Spinning classes are paying off." That way, I'm making it clear to him that I appreciate his compliment while giving myself some credit. And frankly, my taut ass deserves it. ■