

From wraith to warrior: Hoffman Center's Grimaldy Vargas triumphs in her first Spartan Sprint race!

Those of you who order supplements through our Hoffman Center store may be familiar with Grimaldy Vargas, who does yeoman's service fielding orders via Internet and phone, conscientiously packing innumerable boxes with products of your choice.

This week we celebrate her outstanding personal achievement of completing the **Spartan Sprint** race, a grueling, obstacle-course event that is decidedly not for the fainthearted.



The event covers four miles, and it is studded with 12 challenging obstacles, including a lengthy uphill barbed wire crawl, three eight-foot wall climbs, a hand-over-hand net traverse over a muddy pit, the carrying of heavy objects like sandbags, logs and stone balls, a rope climb, and a leap over a fire pit, culminating in a jump into a four-foot deep mudhole!

Grimaldy, a novice who had never entered a race before, completed the demanding course in less than two hours and seemed hardly the worse-for-wear when she resolutely reported for duty the next day at the Hoffman Center. Except for a few scratches and some sore muscles, she was fine.

You might think that Grimaldy was born a jock, but that's not the case; when she first started work at the Hoffman Center seven years ago, she was plagued by symptoms of fatigue, bloating, constipation, headaches and poor appetite—but with ravenous sugar-cravings!

And when I call her appearance then wraith-like (ghostly, insubstantial), I'm not exaggerating. She's petite. But a mere 74 pounds on a four-foot nine-inch frame, as she was then—that's darn-near emaciated!

We did some testing, and we found that Grimaldy's iron was very low, and she had a vitamin D of 17. She scored high for candida. No wonder. In a misguided effort to put on weight, she had been gorging on candy, cookies, ice cream and chips. But the clincher came when she tested strongly positive for gluten sensitivity. When Grimaldy started on a gluten-free diet with the help of our nutritionist, Leyla Muedin, she started to feel better.

And she gained weight, but not around the midsection. Her arms, which were once thin as breadsticks, started to fill out, and she started to show some curves instead of right angles.

To the surprise of all of us at the Hoffman Center, she got pregnant, first time she tried, no problem. We wondered how such a small gal could have a healthy baby, but with the help of prenatal supplements and proper diet advice, she gave birth to a perfect baby girl who is now 5, meeting all her growth milestones, and who is scary-smart to boot!

With her daughter now at school, Grimaldy recently found time to begin a training regimen. Remarkably, she added 22 healthy pounds to her petite frame—she now weighs in at a sturdy 96 pounds, and you can see from her race picture that's all muscle!

Because she's naturally light, she was able to bound up obstacles that heavier gals

find daunting. With hard work, she overcame the natural female disadvantage in upper body strength that keeps many women from doing pull-ups.

Gaining weight often is much harder for chronically underweight individuals than is losing weight for overweight persons. Usually, just packing on the calories isn't enough; it often is necessary to uncover hidden causes of malabsorption. In Grimaldy's case, it was gluten intolerance and the resulting dysbiosis and candida overgrowth that kept her underweight.

Grimaldy says she now eats only whole foods, consuming frequent small meals every couple of hours. Instead of candy bars and ice cream, she now snacks on fresh fruit, nuts or whey protein shakes.

To build muscle, she does weight lifting in preference to prolonged aerobic exercise. And she follows a simple supplement regimen of **NT Factor**, **Ultra Omega-3** fish oil, **Dr. Ohirra's probiotics**, **methylcobalamin** and **magnesium citrate**. (She always gets prompt delivery, because she runs our supplement store!)

Join us in celebrating Grimaldy's accomplishment, and don't forget to congratulate her when you call the Hoffman Center store to order your supplements!