

JULY & AUGUST 2016

*FREE! Take One!*

● ● ● enjoying the best years of your life  
**boom**  
*magazine*

**SAND  
& SONG**

**REFRESHING  
SUMMER  
BEER**

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY  
INDIANA**

*Getting  
Back to the*  
**BASICS**

● ● ●





# 14 Ideas for the *Ultimate* MIDLIFE WARDROBE

BY: LISA A. BEACH

**R**emember back in your 20s and 30s, when you used to love shopping for clothes? You enjoyed the thrill of the hunt for a sophisticated blouse for work, a fun sweater for the weekend or a pair of trendy printed pants for date night. Of course, that was back when you looked good. (And by you, I mean me.)

Flash forward to middle-age, where you struggle to find clothes that look or feel good on a bigger, bumpier, post-childbirth body in the thick (and heat) of menopause. Well, I shouldn't make assumptions about *you*. Maybe you're still holding it together all these years.

But on my end, body parts have . . . shifted. My once flat stomach now jiggles like *Baywatch* boobs, with my own built-in muffin top spilling over the waist of my I-hate-these-low-rise jeans. My saggy upper arms now swing like a pendulum whenever I reach to get something, inviting my snarky teenager to flick my flab so he can watch it wave. My wider hips? The ironic life-long penalty of birthing another human being.

At 50, I can't pull off the same trends as a 20-year-old (nor do I want to). But I'm also not 85, either. (No granny mumus for me, thank-you-very-much.) Somewhere in the middle lies a polished casual look that bucks the revolving door of fast-fashion trends and fits real women in midlife (somewhere between Ann Taylor Loft and

Ellen DeGeneres' new E.D. clothing line). I'm in search of the ultimate midlife wardrobe---comfortable, casual clothes that bridge the gap between perky and wrinkly.

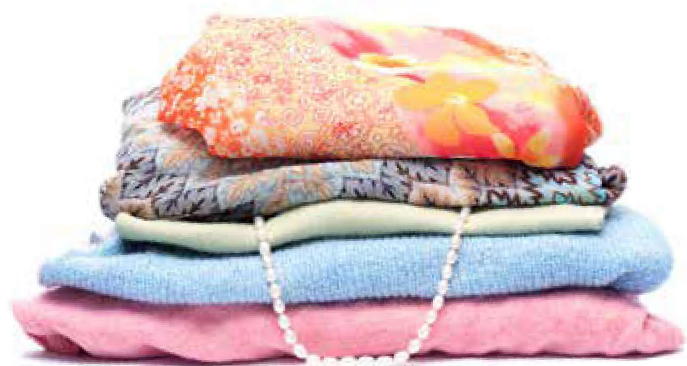
As Vikki Claflin says on her Laugh Lines blog, "Trendy choices at 20 often look unsophisticated at 30. What works at 30 may look cougar-ish at 40. And what was flattering at 40 can look downright slutty at 50."

Sadly, I've broken at least a handful of Vikki's what-not-to-wear rules in her "Frumpy Fashion" blog post. I've also committed some of the "7 Sins of 'Middle-Age' Dressing" pointed out by image consultant Patty Buccelato on *Better After 50*. And, I'm sure I'm on the Fashion Police's Top 10 Most Wanted list. I truly am a Fashion Don't most days.

I admit that I've pretty much lived off the fashion grid most of my adult life, foregoing haute couture for no couture. The opposite of a style savant, I suffer from fashion dyslexia (i.e., the inability to differentiate between a tunic and a top, a clutch and a tote, a pair of espadrilles and mules).

In addition to my fashion disability, I'm all about comfort, preferring flats over high heels and pants over skirts. But, it's difficult to find clothes that fit, feel good and look casually stylish.

Comfortable pants, in particular, seem harder to find than my keys. (And, according to my research, I should ban the elastic waistband, which screams "old lady," from my closet. But I'm not sure I'm ready to go cold turkey on this one yet.) Trying to find the fashion trifecta of pants that fit my waist, hips and thighs is almost a Mission Impossible, making me rethink my "No Thanks, Spanks" philosophy.



## 14 IDEAS FOR THE ULTIMATE MIDLIFE WARDROBE

In light of my struggles to find clothing that flatters midlife women, I'd like to offer ideas on specific items, brands and collections that would win me over.

For starters, everything should be made with a wicking material (a.k.a. hot flash fabric) that automatically adjusts to sudden and intense changes in body temperature.

***Then use this wicking wonder-cloth to create these coveted midlife wardrobe staples:***

1. All-You-Can-Eat Pasta Pants
2. I've-Got-a-Baby-Bump-But-There's-No-Baby Tops
3. Cellulite-Is-The-New-Skinny Skinny Jeans
4. The Gap's No Thigh-Gap Pants
5. From Crop-Top to Muffin-Top Tops
6. I'm-Not-Really-Active Active Wear
7. Shoulda, Woulda, Coulda Shorts
8. Just-the-Right-Rise Jeans
9. My Metabolism Tanked Tops
10. FifTeens Anti-Aging T-shirts
11. Victoria's Secret to Hiding Belly Fat
12. Lucky (To Be Alive) Brand
13. You-Should-Have-Seen-Me-In-My-20s Swimwear
14. Plump-and-Juicy Couture

Plus, I'd love to see a few collections that take the what-to-wear guess-work out of my day:

- No-Brainer Collection: mix-and-match pieces when you don't have the time, energy or mental cognition (otherwise known as Any Morning Before Coffee) to figure out which pieces go together.
- WTH? Collection: a stylish, comfortable, Lycra-infused clothing line that always fits---regardless of your calorie consumption in the last 48 hours---so you'll never again utter the phrase, "What the heck? These fit last week!" Ellen or Ann Taylor, are you listening? •••