

FLAT BELLY MADE EASY

FAST & EASY STOMACH FLATTENING
TIPS & STRATEGIES BASED ON PROVEN RESULTS



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Introduction

When it comes to losing weight, many of us have tried more than once to shed those extra pounds only to be unsuccessful. In fact, many of us have spent most of our lives being unhappy about our bodies, wishing we had a flat stomach or a stronger core, but not knowing how to get started.

If every year, your New Year's Resolution has been to 'finally lose my stomach pooch', 'knock off the baby weight' or 'lose 20 pounds.' you are certainly not alone! According to Forbes, only 25% of people stick to their resolutions by the end of the first month. Dig a little deeper and after the first month, you'll see a staggering drop-off with only 8% of people continuing to follow their resolution.

So, the question is: how can you come up with a plan that is realistic and that you can stick to so you can finally lose that stubborn belly fat?

Rather than focusing on long-term goals, one of the most successful ways to stick to your weight loss and flat tummy aspirations is through proper planning and creating small, achievable milestones that keep you on track. I like the SMART Goals plan that can be found on

www.FunctionalFitnessGuru.com/SmartGoals

Keep reading and you will learn time tested and proven ways of achieving a flatter stomach. We will explore the top fat burning food strategies that aim to destroy stubborn fat that is usually difficult to lose. Then we'll take things a step further by taking a closer look at the foods that can help you lose unwanted belly fat and food you should absolutely avoid (or at the very least, eat in moderation) while on your belly fat burning journey.

Finally, I'll give you some powerful exercise tips that will keep you on the right track while turbo-charging your fat burning progress.

It'll require some changes to your diet and overall lifestyle, but the strategies featured within this guide are proven to work.

Before we dive in however, please keep in mind that your goals of losing that stubborn belly fat, getting a toned body and living a healthier life won't happen overnight. Your goal should be to make a **lifestyle change** that will gradually eliminate and keep off the fat for the rest of your life.

Losing weight, and obtaining that flat belly will require consistency and determination. A few minutes each day is all it takes but you need to be persistent in your goals and stay focused. Reward yourself for the milestones you reach and then set new goals.

That's the key to a flatter, toned stomach.

Are you ready to get started?

Let's begin.

Flat Belly Strategies – Proven and Time Tested

Losing belly fat and getting rid of bloating can be such a struggle. In fact, for many of us, our belly is the last place that ‘goes’ as we begin to lose weight. We could be losing inches from our thighs, arms and shed weight around our neck and face before we see the inches begin to shrink around our waistline.

Not seeing instant results can lead to frustration, so you need to keep in mind that just because you may not see the inches go from your waistline, it doesn’t mean you are failing in your flat belly and weight loss goals. Weight will come off evenly, for the most part, meaning that you’ll see a reduction in weight all over your body rather than just in one place.

You’ve likely heard the term “spot reduction” right? This is when someone focuses on exercises that aim to eliminate fat from

specific areas of the body. The truth is, spot reduction doesn't work. If you focus only on one area of the body, you'll still end up losing weight from head-to-toe! This is a great thing because you'll end up with an even weight loss and a better, leaner frame.

That being said, incorporating core-based exercises into your weight-loss routine that specifically focuses on the major groups of muscles will definitely help you burn more fat. The bigger those muscle groups are, the more fuel they need (fuel being calories), which will lead to weight loss and flatter abdominals that will be closer to that six pack you may want.

Make sense?

Let's take a look at some proven tips that lead to a flatter, toned stomach:

Tip #1: You Booze, You Lose!

You may enjoy a few glasses of wine with dinner every night not realizing that these sugary calories can stack up, throwing your system off balance and knock you off track in your weight loss, flat belly journey.

Our livers process alcohol before they work on breaking down protein and carbs, which means that alcohol itself slows down your body's overall fat burning ability.

But hold on! Don't panic and start pouring that bottle of chardonnay down the drain just yet.

You can still enjoy one glass a day without an adverse effect on your fat burning process. To be safe, stick with 12 ounces of beer, a single wine (5 oz.) or some spirits (1 oz.) with a low-calorie mixer. Red wine also contains fewer carbs and sugar content than white wine so, enjoy that glass of Pinot Noir!

Tip #2: More Muscle leads to a Faster Metabolism

The more muscle you have, the faster your metabolism will work. Muscle beats fat when it comes to overall metabolic activity.

This also means that the more muscle you have, the more calories you can eat and burn all day. So don't skip your exercises.

For example, a woman that is 5'4", 150lbs, has 22% body fat, lifts weights and does cardio 4-5 days a week can eat 2,500+calories per day.

That's more than a woman who is 150lbs, 30% body fat and sedentary 7 days a week. The second woman can only eat around 1,600+ calories.

Each person requires a different caloric intake due to their size, activity and body fat percentage. Someone with less body fat and more muscle needs more energy (calories) to maintain body weight. Since men naturally tend to have more muscle, they can enjoy more calories. Resistance training can be your

friend in building lean muscle and burning more calories.

Tip #3: Stress can impair weight loss

Weight loss pills and other items are usually never as effective as a good diet and exercise regime. When you want to lose that stubborn fat, the best pill to take is a chill pill! The anxiety and stress you may feel from your daily life can cause extra cortisol to be produced in your brain. This hormone only encourages your body to store more fat (especially in your abdomen.)

Take time out of your day to simply relax whether it's a few minutes of calm meditation in the morning, a brisk walk or a quiet cup of tea. Work on allowing yourself to not be too overwhelmed and stressed. I know, relaxing is easier said than done at times, but the more you focus on letting go of stress, the easier it will be to condition your body not to hold onto that excess weight.

Watch out for our upcoming e-book on reducing stress for lots of good information on stress reduction.

Tip #4: Eat and Drink More!

You should be very careful about how many calories you cut when you are focusing on a calorie deficit. If you are uncertain about how much you should be eating, try one of these tools

- **Total Daily Energy Expenditure calculator.**

<https://tdeecalculator.net/>

- **MyFitnessPal App**

<https://www.myfitnesspal.com/>

- **FitBit App**

Any of these tools can give you an idea (based on your height, age, weight and other factors) of the number of calories you need to eat to maintain your current body weight. When you have that number, you can decide how many calories you should cut per day.

Cutting 500 calories from your daily diet is usually fine, but cutting 1,000 or more too quickly can wreak havoc on your metabolism

and cause you to be fatigued and light headed. While drastically cutting calories can lead to faster weight loss, if you go back to your old style of eating, you'll see all that weight pack right back on. And this can be detrimental not only to weight loss goals, but to your flat belly goal.

It's always better to slowly and surely reduce your calorie intake, replacing empty calorie foods with ones that are full of nutrients.

Nutrient dense foods will leave you feeling full and energized for a longer period of time.

And don't overlook the importance of staying hydrated!

Drinking more water is a great way to stay hydrated, have clearer skin and keep your body operating at its peak performance. It also helps rid your body of toxins that can cause belly bloating and impede weight loss.

Get yourself a water bottle and keep it filled up. It might mean a few extra trips to the restroom while you're at work but you will also see the scale tip in your favor and your belly a bit flatter.

Tip #5: Enjoy Green Tea Time

Plenty of studies have shown that the antioxidant epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) found in green tea helps to boost your metabolism and also targets belly fat. Make a few cups during the week or swap your morning coffee for tea.

Tip #6: Workout Wise

A big mistake that newbies make in the gym involves only working out their abdominal muscles to get the abs they want. Have you heard the term ‘Abs are made in the kitchen.’? It’s true! Your sit ups, v-sits, hanging leg raises, crunch and tucks won’t do much if you still have a lot of fat to lose.

So, consider abdominal training as a sculpting move while you are ridding yourself of most of your belly fat through wise eating and a balanced exercise routine.

Think about focusing on your whole body. Use compound moves and weight lifting workouts that use bigger muscle groups and yoga, that requires balance and core engagement. Ab workouts shouldn't take up most your gym session.

Tip #7: Be Aware of Sugar and Labels

Sugar is in practically everything that we eat. It's usually tucked into processed foods like yogurt, salad dressing, reduced fat ice cream and other treats and snacks. The average American consumes more than 20 teaspoons of sugar during their day – usually unaware - as the sugar is packed inside their processed meals.

This can add hundreds of empty calories to your diet without you even realizing it!

Sugar intake causes your insulin production to spike, which can then slow down your metabolic rate and make it hard to burn more calories. A good way to avoid excess sugar is by not buying as much processed foods. Try making your meals from whole

foods instead.

Another way to be sure you are eating right (less sugar and hitting your calorie goals) is to pay attention to labels and be sure to pay special attention to serving sizes. When you are working on eating the correct portions and counting calories you don't want to get into a spot where you are eating more than you think you are and essentially self-sabotaging your weight-loss goals.

Pictures and wording on processed foods cans and boxes can be very misleading. Be sure to check out the ingredient list and not just trust the label. Also, take the time to measure your food on a food scale to be sure that you are eating the right amount. After measuring several times, you will be able to eye ball portions, so eating the portion of food you actually intend to eat becomes less laborious.

Tip #8: Pay attention to your whole body

When you're new to the gym it can be daunting.

Make the most of your gym time by focusing on compound

movements that work your whole body, such as squats or lunges. If you spend too much time working on isolated muscles, you won't be burning as many calories as you would if you focus on a complete body workout. Also, be sure to include some balance or one-legged exercises as these require core engagement at the deepest levels of your muscles.

Tip #9: Plan Your Meals to Reduce Inflammation and Bloating

To state the obvious, less bloating and inflammation leads to a flatter looking belly.

When it comes to cutting down inflammation and bloating, you need to think ahead of what you eat. If you know that certain foods might cause you to bloat, skip them!

If you are planning a weekend away and want to look your best, stick with proteins, fruits and vegies. Carbs hold more water and too many carbs, especially simple carbs like the ones you find in cake and candy can cause bloating.

Having a lighter dinner that's packed with vegetables and protein can help to cut down on the chance that you'll be holding onto belly-bloating water in the morning. This takes time and planning, but the results are well worth it. And after you have done it a few times, it becomes much easier.

Try following these rules when it comes to your food intake.

- 1- Eat every 2-4 hours
- 2- Include a protein and vegetable most times you eat
- 3- Drink 8-10 glasses of water per day
- 4- Drink only zero calorie beverages without artificial ingredients such as fruit infused water, sparking waters and teas

- 5- Focus on whole foods such as protein, fruits and veggies
- 6- Enjoy healthy fats such from avocado, olives and olive oil, nuts and fish. But don't go too crazy on the amount because these fats, while healthy, are packed with calories.
- 7- Ditch the fruit juice and enjoy fruit
- 8- Read labels and avoid high fructose corn starch and partially hydrogenated food
- 9- Enjoy lots of plain yogurt filled with healthy probiotics
- 10- Remember you don't have to be perfect. Plan on breaking the rules 10% of the time.

Tip #10: Keep a Food Diary and a Have a Food Scale Handy

One great way to be sure that you are keeping on track is to journal your food intake. It's very easy to let a few hundred extra calories slip in if you have had a busy day haven't paid attention to what you put in your mouth.

If you are a fan of pen and paper, go the old-fashioned route and write everything down. Otherwise, you can track on mobile with apps like my favorite, MyFitnessPal available at <https://www.myfitnesspal.com/>

I prefer the mobile apps because it tracks your macro nutrients, making food planning much easier.

Tracking your calories during the day can be an eye opener for those of us who aren't being as regimented as we thought we were. In addition, being diligent about tracking your calorie intake will also help you identify just how much carb-creeping can happen when you sample this, take a bite out of that, etc.

Careful food planning and calorie and carb tracking can also be the push you need to lose that last ten pounds or ramp up your workout routine.

When it comes to losing weight, and getting that flat belly you have always wanted, a food scale can be your best friend. It's a

great way to accurately measure how much food you are really eating.

Fatty Vs Fat-Healthy Foods

What's better than butter? Or sugary treats? It's hard to say no to some of our favorite foods, especially for the long-haul. You likely have a good idea of what foods you shouldn't be eating in excess (donuts, ice cream, chocolate bars, candy etc.). They're all the obvious "evils" when it comes to shedding weight and losing that stubborn belly fat. But what is not so obvious are those hidden fats in "supposedly" healthy food.

When you are aiming to lose weight and flatten your belly, you'll obviously want to focus on incorporating healthy foods into your daily routine, while minimizing high-calorie, high-sugar treats.

So, the title for this chapter might seem like a juxtaposition.

How can a food be "fat-healthy"?

When are they healthy?

If it's healthy, can I eat as much as I want?

What's best for a flat belly? Are you better off following a high fat diet like a Ketogenic diet, a more balanced diet like the Mediterranean or a diet higher in carbohydrates such as a juice cleanse?

Let's start with the question, can any type of fat help me get that flat belly?

The answer is yes and no.

Certain fats are healthy but all fats are dense with calories. Good and bad fats have 9 calories per gram versus carbohydrates and proteins that have 4 calories per gram. So, when you eat a food high in healthy fat such as nuts or avocados, you must be acutely aware of the quantity. You can eat them, but you must measure, measure, measure.

How much fat you are allowed will depend on a number of factors including your goals, weight and activity level. Tools such as MyFitnessPal, FitBit and Iphone health apps can be valuable in

helping you determine how much fat should consume if you want to achieve your goals.

When it comes to reducing inflammation, bloating and overall health, it is best to stick with healthy fats and try to load up with Omega 3 fatty acids, use Omega 6 fatty acids sparingly and limit saturated fats to special treats. Notice, I am not suggesting you cut anything out, just to watch portions and always be acutely aware of what you are eating.

Another words, be mindful of what you are eating.

OMEGA 3 RICH FOODS

include all Fish especially Mackerel, Salmon and Herring. If you can't get yourself to eat fish, try eating food high in ALA Alpha Linoleic Acid, such as Flaxseed, walnuts, soy and chia seeds.

Note: If you eat a lot of fish, try to eat fresh water fish and be cognizant of the level of mercury. Swordfish, tilefish and King mackerel tend to highest in mercury. Young children and nursing women need to be especially conscious and can safely eat 12 ounces of other type of fish per week.

OMEGA 6 RICH FOODS

Americans tend to get more than enough Omega 6 rich foods. Walnuts are a good choice because they rich in ALA and Omega 6. Other healthy sources of omega 6 are nuts, seeds, corn soybeans, soybean oil, olive oil (it does have a little Omega 3) meat and poultry.

Be careful of getting too much Omega 6 dense calories. Given the prevalence of soybean oil in salad dressings and other processed food, American diets could stand to focus on consuming more Omega 3 and less Omega 6

SATURATED FAT

Saturated fat is found in cheese, processed meats, fatty meats, pastries, cream, biscuits, sausages....and the list goes on and on. These foods are easy to over eat and not only are they laden with calories, they are bad for you and can increase belly fat. Enjoy these foods as a treat and use them sparingly.

Now let's address the question of what's best diet for a flat belly? Are you better off following a high fat diet like a Ketogenic diet, a more balanced diet like the Mediterranean or a diet higher in carbohydrates such as a juice cleanse?

The answer is that there is no one perfect answer, BUT no matter what you choose, you must follow certain rules.

RULE #1: Get enough lean protein. Protein helps your body burn more calories as it is being digested. This is known as thermogenesis or heat production as you metabolize food. Cuts of

meat like flank, sirloin or round are excellent lean choices. Other good sources of protein include eggs, egg whites, fish and chicken without the skin. Tofu and yogurt are two tasty vegetarian sources.

RULE #2: Drink plenty of water. Water actually can help you lose unwanted belly fat in a few ways. First, studies have shown that our bodies cannot properly metabolize fat or carbohydrates without adequate H₂O. Also, water help keep our joints and connective tissue lubricated so our workouts can be more effective. Staying hydrated can decrease bloating and can keep us satisfied.

RULE #3: Ditch the fruit juice and soda and eat fresh fruit. An orange has only 9 grams of sugar and it contains fiber. It is also very satisfying to eat. A glass of OJ has about 20 grams of sugar and most of the fiber will have been stripped. A can of coke has about 35 grams of sugar. The American Heart Association recommends that a woman have no more than 24 grams of sugar in an entire day and that the average man have no more than 36 grams for the day. It's all about choices. It's easy to see that choosing a coke or juice can pack on the calories and sugar, increase our insulin output and

lead to more bloating and a bigger belly.

RULE #4: Write an eating plan and be measured with junk food.

It's easy to snack your way into a big belly without even realizing it. We all know that eating processed junk food is bad for us, but most of us don't really know how much we are eating. And it is especially hard if we are not prepared with healthy choices when we are hungry. My clients with the flattest bellies take the time to plan and prep meals so they are well prepared when they are hungry.

RULE #5: Eat lots of vegies Noone has every gotten fat by eating too many vegies. Focus on what you should eat and not what you are eliminating. Enjoy raw, steamed, roasted, baked and stir- fried vegies from every color of the rainbow.

RULE #6: Measure, Measure, Measure!!! In order to know what we are eating we must measure our food. A kitchen scale and measuring cups are your best friend. Eventually you will be able to eyeball exactly how much you are eating.

RULE #7: Be good to yourself and allow yourself to cheat 10% of the time. The good news is you don't have to be perfect to get the results you are hoping for.

If you follow these rules, you can apply them to any diet you choose with great results.

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Belly Fat Burning Workouts

When it comes to toned abs, your biggest challenges will involve exercising your discipline and willpower involving food AND maintaining a consistent workout routine. Two things that cause anyone to put on weight and get unwanted belly fat are excess calorie consumption and inactivity, so you'll need to switch things up so you can get that flat belly you've always wanted.

If you eat less and move more, you're going to see the fat falling off your body. It's as simple as that. Combine that with time in the gym strengthening your core with compound moves like squats, lunges, planks and cable chops and the flat abdominals will follow.

When it comes to core building, you don't want to get stuck in a rut of just doing one or two exercises that only work on one plane of movement (left/right, up/down). Instead, you'll want to do exercises that turn, twist and move your core in every direction

(medicine ball throws, ab wheels, hanging leg raises etc.)

Caution: If you aren't ready for these exercises, you can apply the same principle to easier exercises like walking in all directions, side bends and simple balance exercises like standing on one leg.

The most annoying thing about spending hours working on your abs is that you often don't see results. This is because your body fat absolutely dictates how and if your abs can be seen. A toned stomach is all about your fat content and your core strength.

When you don't have time to do a full-body workout you can focus just on core. But in the long run, you need to do balanced workouts that include full body weight and balance, cardiovascular and stretching routines. Even though it may be months until you lose enough fat to see your abs, your hard work and balanced workouts will pay off.

In order to really see results with your belly flattening workout, you must follow the rules listed below

1. Begin with the unwind principle: The unwind principle states that we must create balance and harmony in our muscles so they move the way that we expect them to. For example, if you sit hunched over a desk all day, then your chest muscles will become short and tight and this is likely to cause back pain. Aggravating the situation is that our back muscles probably became overstretched and weak and our hip flexors probably became tight. This becomes even worse if you sit with your legs crossed in one direction all day. So, if you go to the gym and start with a heavy chest workout, planks and squats, it is very likely that your form will “just suck” and you won’t get the benefit you are expecting. So, in this case it would be important to stretch the pecs with exercises such as a door stretch and strengthen the back with exercises that include rowing. It

would also be important to stretch your hip flexors before completing such exercises as squats and chest presses.

2. Start with abdominal breathing: Too often people think they are working their abs when in reality all the other muscles are taking over. We must first learn to use our abdominal muscles and create intraabdominal pressure with simple moves. The first move is simply abdominal breathing. Start by placing your hand on your stomach and allow it to rise and fall as you breathe. Too often it is our shoulders that move when we breathe. When we use do abdominal breathing, our diaphragm and lungs expand allowing for additional core muscles to be engaged. A bridge, superman and modified plank are also excellent exercises to teach your core to be engaged properly. All Functional Fitness Guru programs have videos of each of these exercises.
3. Be consistent: It's not how much you do in any one day that is the key. The key is consistent work so your body will be prepared to progress

4. Start slowly and progress gradually: Start slowly. Cardio, weights and stretching are all important to creating the lean, strong body you are hoping for but as they say Rome wasn't built in a day. Begin by increasing the length of time you exercise and then by increasing intensity. By the way glute bridges are one of my favorite starter exercises that produce great results.

5. Consistently overload your muscles: The overload principle states that in order for your body to make muscular adaptations, you must overload them. Work your muscles to fatigue, but just be sure they are ready and that you are always in good form. I always ask my clients where they feel the exercise to make sure that they aren't inadvertently overtaxing shoulders, neck and low back. That being said, you must work your muscles hard, i.e., overload them, for optimal results.

6. Balance moves are great for your core: Exercises that require you to balance such as one leg dead lifts and one leg squats require you to use a lot of muscles including your core to stay balanced. These tend to be higher calorie burning and great for your core:

7. Work large muscles: When you are ready, and only when you are ready, exercises that work large and multiple muscles such as burpees, walking weighted lunges, pull ups and mountain climbers can be very high fat burning and lead to that 6 pack you wanted. Until then large muscle exercises such as chair squats, hip flexor lunges, band or cable rows and modified burpees from a table are a great way to go.

8. Include core work but don't limit yourself to any one body part: Work it all and create balance and harmony in your body and results will follow.

Final thoughts on exercise, for now...

People often ask me if it is better for a flat belly and weight loss to exercise in the morning or night? And if they can break us their exercise into small segments or if they should do it all at once.

The answer is it doesn't matter. What does matter is that you exercise consistently. Finding what schedule works best for you is the #1, #2, and #3 consideration!

Final Words

You now have the information you need to start on your journey towards a leaner body and a flat stomach. Toned abs are one badge of honor; they demonstrate how hard you've worked to get into shape and how much dedication and commitment you've put into becoming healthier.

Begin by creating a meal plan that aligns with staying within your daily calorie allotment. Plan out your meals for the week in advance so you can minimize carb creeping and stay on track.

Keep a food and workout diary to document your progress and reward yourself when you reach milestones.

Weigh your food so you can stay on track and ensure you're eating the correct portion size.

Stay hydrated to avoid bloating, improve workout performance and to better control your appetite.

And most importantly, stay focused and don't get discouraged! Decide on a series of small goals (I like SMART Goals that you can find at www.FunctionalFitnessGuru.com/SmartGoals)and work towards improving your diet and incorporating more movement into your day.

Small changes can yield incredible results.

You can do this!

Resources

Here are links to a few resources that I believe will help you:

My Fitness Pal:

>> <https://www.MyFitnessPal.com>

Workout and diet planner and tracker. Available in app format.

Plate Joy:

>> <https://www.platejoy.com>

Meal planner, grocery list generator and food tracker.

Total Daily Energy Calorie Generator:

>> <https://tdeecalculator.net/>

Smart Goal Planner

www.FunctionalFitnessGuru.com/SmartGoals