

Making Everything Easier!™

Corr-Jensen Edition

Fat Loss

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Fight fat and tone your midsection
- Enhance fat loss with supplements
- Take control of your eating habits
- Get started on an exercise program

**Erin Palinski-Wade,
RD, CDE, LDN, CPT**

*Nationally recognized nutrition
and fitness expert*

with Matt Hesse



If you spend hours exercising and try to eat all the right things, but still have that stubborn fat on your midsection that just won't go away, this book is designed for you. It seeks to give you some tools to get rid of that midsection fat with a combination of eating, exercise, and proper supplementation.

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DUMMIES®
CORR-JENSEN EDITION

**by Erin Palinski-Wade
with Matt Hesse**

Based on *Belly Fat Diet For Dummies®*



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Chapter 1

Taking Control of Your Waistline and Your Health

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In This Chapter

- ▶ Identifying the risks of excess belly fat
 - ▶ Evaluating your weight and waist circumference
 - ▶ Understanding different body types
-

The next time you're in a public place, look around. What do you see? Almost everywhere you look you can see expanding waistlines and bellies protruding over belts. In fact, it's harder to spot a person at a healthy body weight than it is to find one who isn't. The United States is in the midst of a very real and very dangerous epidemic. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 35.7 percent of Americans are now obese and another 33.3 percent are considered overweight. That's the majority of the country! And since 1980, the prevalence of obesity in children and teens has tripled! The scariest part is that so many people are now overweight that it almost appears normal and can be difficult to tell what a truly healthy body weight even is.

In this chapter, we discuss the dangers of visceral, or midsection fat, explain how to analyze your weight and waist, and go over common body types — with some nutrition and workout tips for each type.

About This Book

Just as no two individuals are exactly alike, no two individuals lose weight in the exact same way either. So fad diets and cookie-cutter weight loss plans usually don't work for most people. Instead, it's helpful to understand your weight and body type and take helpful steps based on diet and exercise to reduce your weight. This book is a small primer on the best steps you can take to reduce midsection fat.

This special edition has been adapted from *Belly Fat Diet For Dummies* by Erin Palinski-Wade (Wiley), with additional information brought to you by Corr-Jensen.

As you read through this book, you'll see icons — small images in the margins — that are designed to call your attention to specific pieces of information. Here are the icons we use along with a description of what they mean:



When you see this icon, you know you're about to get helpful tips and practical advice to help shrink your belly and promote effective weight loss.



The text next to this icon typically contains important information that helps you stay on track with your long-term weight loss goals.



We use this icon as a red flag. It draws your attention to common weight loss obstacles that can sidetrack your progress.

Exploring the Dangers of Midsection Fat

The concern about being overweight or obese isn't just about looks. Sure everyone wants to look great in a bathing suit, but your health is more important. Being just slightly overweight significantly increases your risks for disease and premature death. And where you hold your excess weight matters even more. Even if you're at a relatively healthy body weight, holding excess fat in your abdominal area causes you to have an increased waistline and thus be at a much greater risk of

health complications. So much so, in fact, that a comprehensive European study found that every 2-inch increase in your waistline increased mortality by 13 percent in women and as much as 17 percent in men.

The most dangerous fat of all is visceral fat, which is often referred to as *belly fat* and which we mostly call *midsection fat* in this book. This fat is different from the subcutaneous fat that you can see on your body and pinch between your fingers. Visceral fat is the layer of fat deep inside your body that forms between your organs. Even though you can't see it, you know it's there if you have an increased amount of subcutaneous fat.

The more visceral fat you have, the more toxic it is to your body. Visceral fat is so toxic that research has linked it to everything from an increased risk of heart disease, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, and gallstones to increases in certain cancers and dementia. Throughout this book, we explain how to make simple changes to banish belly fat from your body so you can look great and feel great as well!

Analyzing Your Weight and BMI

Visceral fat is some pretty scary stuff, so you need to identify whether you're at risk. Then you have to determine what you can do to decrease your midsection fat as much as possible. Your risk isn't just determined by your weight, however. It's important to keep the size of your waistline in mind, too. Even if you're at a healthy body weight, you may still have too much visceral fat.

A recent study by Statistics Canada found that 21 percent of women considered to be at a normal weight were at an increased risk of health complications due to their levels of abdominal fat. So even though your weight on the scale may look okay, you may still be at risk of health conditions brought on by excess belly fat.

Your body mass index (BMI) is a formula that takes into account your height versus your weight to determine whether you're at a healthy weight. BMI is great tool to determine the percentage of visceral fat you hold in your body. Although BMI doesn't measure body fat exactly, research has indicated that it does correspond closely with direct measures of body



fat. Identifying your BMI is an easy, inexpensive way to see whether you're overweight or have a high percentage of body fat and to identify your health risk based on your weight.

To determine your BMI, you can use the following formula:

$$(\text{Weight in pounds} \times 703) \div \text{Height in Inches}^2 = \text{BMI}$$

BMI has five categories. As you can see in Table 1-1, your BMI can fall into one of the following categories: underweight, healthy weight, overweight, obese, or morbidly obese. Your goal is to keep your BMI within the healthy weight range, because weighing too much or too little can increase your risk of many health complications.

Table 1-1 BMI Categories and Risk

BMI	Weight Status	Risk
18.5 or less	Underweight	Increased risk
18.6–24.9	Healthy weight	Low risk
25.0–29.9	Overweight	Increased risk
30.0–39.9	Obese	High risk
40.0 or more	Morbid obesity	Very high risk



You can also use an online BMI calculator. The calculator on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website is reliable and easy to find. Simply go to www.cdc.gov and search for BMI calculator in the search box on the homepage. You may be able to find a BMI calculator app for your smartphone or tablet as well.

Identifying Your Body Type

It's important to understand what body type you are in order to start losing your midsection fat once and for all. The following list goes over three body types and gives you some tips on how to appropriately alter your nutrition and exercise based on the category you fall into. You may be a combination of two body types rather than fitting exactly into one category:

- ✓ **Ectomorph:** An ectomorph is a naturally skinny and petite person, who can typically eat as much as she wants without gaining weight. Ectomorphs have a very hard time gaining muscle. They tend to have very fast metabolisms, which accounts for their lack of weight gain. People with this body type are typically interested in gaining weight and muscle.
 - Nutrition needs: Ectomorphs should eat every two to three hours, with at least half of their calories coming from complex carbohydrates. They should also aim to consume an adequate amount of lean protein to help build and maintain muscle mass.
 - Exercise needs: Ectomorphs should do no more than three days of moderate cardio per week to prevent excess calorie burning. They should do five days of heavy lifting per week to help build muscle mass.
- ✓ **Endomorph:** An endomorph is naturally large and round; someone who gains weight very easily. Endomorphs tend to have a slow metabolism. This body type is typically interested in losing weight.
 - Nutrition needs: Endomorphs should eat every three to four hours, with their daily caloric intake consisting of a balanced amount of complex carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats. Because endomorphs have a higher likelihood of being insulin resistant, they may find more success with following a weight loss plan that provides a higher amount of calories from lean proteins and healthy fats than carbohydrates. These guidelines can help endomorphs reduce overall body fat for a leaner physique.
 - Exercise needs: Endomorphs should do full-body workouts with minimum rest between sets. Strength training should consist of moderate weight with higher reps. High intensity interval training (HIIT) should be done two to three times per week.
- ✓ **Mesomorph:** A mesomorph is naturally athletic and muscular; someone who is naturally lean. Mesomorphs tend to have fast metabolisms, but still need to be cautious of what they eat. This body type is generally maintaining weight.

- **Nutrition needs:** Daily caloric intake for mesomorphs should consist of balanced amounts of complex carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats. These guidelines can help mesomorphs maintain their naturally lean physique.
- **Exercise needs:** Mesomorphs should mix up weight training: Do two days of high weight, low reps and two days of low weight, high reps. Cardio should be done three days per week.



Although each body type has different requirements, all body types need to make sure they get adequate nutrition and exercise to burn visceral fat. Always remember to consult with your licensed physician before starting a workout routine, especially if you have any medical conditions.

Chapter 2

Eating Your Way to a Flatter Midsection

In This Chapter

- ▶ Taking a quick look at the basics
 - ▶ Explaining how smart weight loss works
-

We want you to learn how to lose weight in a healthy way, without being ridiculously restrictive, and to learn how to manage your weight for good. As much as everyone wants to look good in their jeans, being healthy is the most important thing. Reducing midsection fat is key for your health because it can decrease the risk for heart disease, diabetes, and even certain cancers.

Fighting Midsection Fat by Eating Right

As you transition into a belly-flattening lifestyle, you need to make a few key dietary changes over time. The more consistently you stick with these changes, the better your results will be. The following are some general guidelines to follow:

- ✓ **Consume an adequate amount of fiber per day.** Aim for a minimum of 30 grams of fiber daily. (The average American consumes half the daily recommended amount.) Fiber provides you with a sense of satiety without any calories. Increasing your fiber intake helps stabilize blood sugar, control cravings, and prevent overeating — all things that help promote weight loss and flatten your belly.

- ✔ **Consume an adequate amount of healthy fat each day.** Don't worry. Dietary fat doesn't equal midsection fat. Healthy fats in the diet, mainly monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids, have been shown to help promote a decrease in midsection fat. But portion control is still key here. Even though these fats are healthy, they're still rich in calories. Try to have a small amount of healthy fat at each meal to help you feel full. You can take a couple teaspoons of oil or eat six to twelve almonds.
- ✔ **Consume an adequate amount of lean protein.** Lean proteins — which include animal proteins like chicken breast and fish as well as plant-based proteins like tofu and beans — are important. Without enough lean protein each day, you may begin to lose muscle mass as you lose weight, which can slow your metabolism. Protein, like fats and fiber, is a nutrient that is slowly digested, helping to regulate appetite and control hunger. We recommend including a source of lean protein at each meal to help you feel satisfied and avoid cravings.
- ✔ **Increase your intake of whole fruits and vegetables.** Vegetables and fruits are rich in fiber, and they're also loaded with antioxidants and phytochemicals. Certain antioxidants, such as vitamin C, have been linked with reducing midsection fat by helping to regulate stress hormones in the body. They're also rich in minerals like potassium, which helps to expel excess water from the body. They improve overall body functioning, helping you perform and heal better.
- ✔ **Drink up!** Drinking at least eight (8 ounce) glasses of water per day helps keep you hydrated, gives you increased energy, and helps prevent water retention that can bloat your belly. Drinking adequate amounts of fluid also helps with appetite regulation and promoting weight loss.

The Principles of a Lean Midsection

You're probably ready to discover the main steps you can take to shrink your waistline and become a healthier version of yourself! This section lists the lifestyle principles you must keep in mind.

Eat more to lose more

That's right; you have to eat more to lose more weight! And who doesn't want to eat more? But you can't just start eating more of all foods. In fact, that type of uncontrolled eating would be a great way to end up gaining more weight. Instead, you want to focus on eating more of the foods that help you get rid of midsection fat.

For example, vegetables are an unlimited food. And you actually need to eat more of these to promote weight loss. Vegetables, such as celery, cucumbers, and spinach, are rich in nutrients and low in calories, which fill you up without filling you out. Because these foods keep you satisfied, they help control hunger and cravings.

By following this plan, you'll eat more food than you were likely eating before, but this time you'll see the scale start moving in the right direction. And the best part of all? You won't be hungry!

Properly time your meals

Make sure to eat on a regular basis. If you wait too long between meals or skip a meal or snack, you can sabotage your weight loss efforts. If you wait too long to eat, you may start to get too hungry. And, of course, excessive hunger is what leads to strong food cravings — and usually for the wrong types of foods. Getting overly hungry also leads to eating too quickly.

The last time you were *very* hungry, did you a) cut the food you finally scrounged up into small bites, chewing each bite thoroughly and stopping when you reached the point of feeling satisfied but not stuffed, or did you b) wolf it down so fast you barely tasted it, leaving you feeling unsatisfied, which led to you looking for something else to eat, and before you knew it, you had eaten so much you felt stuffed or even sick? If you're like most folks, you went with option b. We have all been there.



Excessive hunger can be avoided by eating on a regular basis. Not only do small, frequent meals and snacks control appetite, but they also help boost your metabolism (a great perk)!

Don't wait more than three to four hours between meals and snacks. You may be saying "that doesn't work for my schedule," or "I don't have time to sit and eat that often." Before you drop the book, let us explain. Eating every few hours doesn't have to entail elaborately prepared meals and snacks. It also doesn't have to involve sitting down for long meals. A simple snack, such as grabbing a handful of almonds in between breakfast and lunch or munching a few raw vegetables in the afternoon, will suffice. The key is to simply prevent hunger from sneaking up on you.



Aim to eat within an hour of waking up and then have a light meal or snack every couple of hours depending on your body type. For instance, if you are an endomorph, your eating schedule might look like this:

- ✓ 7 a.m. Breakfast
- ✓ 10 a.m. Snack
- ✓ 1 p.m. Lunch
- ✓ 4 p.m. Snack
- ✓ 7 p.m. Dinner
- ✓ 9 p.m. Evening snack (if needed)

The evening snack isn't always necessary. It really depends on how late you stay up. Whatever you do, try not to eat within about an hour of going to bed and avoid carb heavy foods. You won't gain weight from eating late — that's a myth. However, eating too close to bed can affect digestion, cause heartburn, and disrupt your sleep cycle.

Eat fat to fight fat

It takes fat to fight midsection fat. Sounds like an oxymoron doesn't it? But it's true. However, it's only true if it's the good fat. Both good fats and bad fats exist.

Bad fats include saturated fats and trans fats. Saturated fats are mostly found in high-fat animal products, such as butter, red meats, and full-fat dairy. Trans fats can be identified in foods by looking for the words "partially hydrogenated oil" in the ingredient list. Avoid all trans fats and limit saturated fat.

Good fats are those that protect your heart, decrease disease risk, and even promote loss of belly fat. The two best sources of fat are

- ✓ **Monounsaturated fats:** Found in olive oil, nuts, seeds, and avocado
- ✓ **Omega-3 fatty acids:** Found in fish, walnuts, and flax seeds

Multiple studies have found that a diet rich in monounsaturated fats prevents midsection fat from accumulating when compared to a high-carbohydrate and high-saturated-fat diet. This may sound like a no-brainer, but the surprising part is that this prevention of midsection fat occurred even when both diets delivered the same number of daily calories! Other research has found that monounsaturated fats may help you lose more fat even without changing your normal caloric intake or adding additional exercise. Omega-3 fatty acids have been found in several studies to help reduce the output of stress hormones. Because stress hormones promote the storage of midsection fat, consuming a nutrient that helps reduce these hormones can in turn help to reduce abdominal fat storage.



Another benefit of fat is that it's filling. Fat provides a longer period of satiety after eating than carbohydrates do. So consuming a meal that contains an adequate amount of healthy fat helps you stay full longer, helping to prevent that excessive hunger you know can lead to cravings and overeating.

Go whole grain

Transitioning away from refined carbohydrates and consuming only whole-grain starches is an essential step in flattening your midsection. Refined, simple carbohydrates spike blood sugar and insulin, leading to more and more storage of stubborn midsection fat. In fact, research has shown that people who eat a diet rich in whole grains lose more abdominal fat.

So what is a whole grain? A *whole grain* is a grain that hasn't been stripped of its outermost layer. This layer contains the highest amount of fiber and nutrients. *Refined, simple carbohydrates*, like white bread, are grains that have been stripped of their fiber and nutrients. Simple carbohydrates are often

enriched, meaning that vitamins and minerals have been added back into these foods. However, fiber is rarely added. As a result, these grains are rapidly digested, triggering increases in blood sugar and insulin levels.



To make sure you're selecting a whole grain, look at the ingredients on the food label of any grain product. The first ingredient should always be a whole grain. Whole grains to look for include the following:

- ✓ Bean flour
- ✓ Brown rice flour
- ✓ Oat bran
- ✓ Rye
- ✓ Whole wheat

Foods that list "enriched flour" as the first ingredient are refined and should be avoided.



Because whole grains have higher fiber content, they help you stay satisfied for a longer period of time than refined grains would. Staying full helps you to control your appetite and portions, thereby promoting further weight loss.

Limit your salt intake

Salt doesn't cause your body to gain fat, but it can still expand your belly. The major problem with sodium isn't its calorie content but the fact that it causes water retention. When your body has a high concentration of sodium due to an increased intake from the foods you eat, the kidneys retain more water in your bloodstream.



Excessive sodium intake can do more damage than just making you look bloated. A high intake of sodium can also increase your blood pressure. And studies have shown that your arteries can actually stiffen within just 30 minutes after eating a high-sodium meal, increasing your risk of a cardiac event.

Due to the negative impact of sodium on your health as well as your belly, try to keep your daily sodium intake to 2,000

milligrams or less per day (keep it under 1,500 milligrams per day if you have high blood pressure). Not only do you want to nix the table salt, but you also want to carefully look at food labels and limit high-sodium foods. Whole, unprocessed foods like fresh produce are naturally low in sodium. So the more you stick to these foods and avoid adding salt at the table (or stove), the easier it is to keep your total daily sodium intake within the recommended amount.

Supplement your diet

Healthy eating and exercise can shrink your waistline and blast away belly fat. But certain nutrients also have the ability to help you burn belly fat faster and more effectively. Incorporating nutrients through food choices and supplements may help you shed fat more productively, especially around your midsection.

The following supplements have been shown in clinical research to be effective in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight:

- ✓ **Green tea extract:** This supplement is shown to increase the body's rate of burning calories, which increases the rate of burning fat; it's a great source of antioxidants and supports various aspects of good health. However, you can have too much of a good thing. There are questions about green tea extracts harming the liver when consumed in larger doses.
- ✓ **Raspberry ketones:** This supplement has been shown in animal studies to favorably impact hormones related to weight loss and body composition, which may help prevent weight gain and promote fat breakdown in mice. Clinical human trials have yet to be conducted, so benefits and side effects in humans aren't known at this time.
- ✓ **Fucoxanthin:** Derived from brown seaweed (wakame), this supplement promotes loss of belly fat, and controls the amount of fatty tissue stored in the body; it also helps burn fat from fat cells.
- ✓ **Omega-3s:** This supplement provides an array of health benefits, such as reducing body inflammation and

improving heart health; it's also linked to reducing body fat and improving overall body physique.

- ✓ **CLA:** Clinically tested and shown to help reduce body fat and enhance lean tissue, CLAs are found in meat and dairy. For more on these supplements, see Chapter 3.



The full effects of these supplements are unknown. Some medical experts recommend eating the whole food; for instance, increasing your intake of green tea, raspberries, seaweeds, omega-3s, and meat or dairy with CLA.

Chapter 3

CLA's Role in Fat Loss

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding how CLA can help fight fat
- ▶ Learning the health benefits of CLA
- ▶ Going over potential risks

Whether you're really overweight or just obsessed with unwanted love handles, supplements that promise to attack your fat might sound like the answer to your prayers. In this chapter, we look at the promises, possible benefits, potential risks, and proven positives of conjugated linoleic acid supplements, more commonly known as CLA.

Defining CLA

CLAs are a group of naturally occurring fatty acids found in high concentrations in grass-fed meat and dairy products. It might surprise you to know that all fats aren't harmful. Our bodies need certain fats and some have proven health benefits. The next sections explain what researchers know about CLA.

Fighting your fat with CLA

CLA isn't a miracle drug. Taking it isn't going to cause large numbers of inches to magically drop from your waist or hips or pounds to melt off unless you make dietary changes, reduce calorie intake, and increase your exercise level.

But CLA does appear to modestly improve weight loss and reduce the percentage of body fat you have; in some cases, replacing it with lean muscle mass. When you're trying to

improve your figure, every little bit helps. Talk to your doctor before picking up CLA supplements.

Understanding how CLA works

When cows and other ruminant animals eat plants and grasses, they convert linoleic acid, an omega-6 fatty acid, to conjugated linoleic acid. The CLA is stored in the muscle and milk of the animals, so it's available to people who eat them.

When cows are fed a diet consisting primarily of grain, as most cows are today, they don't produce as much CLA. Taking supplemental forms of CLA and/or increasing your intake of grain-fed beef can help increase your levels.



CLA might also increase your body's energy output, which increases fat burning. Some animal studies have indicated that CLA can cause programmed cell death, or *apoptosis*, in certain types of fat cells.

Combining omega-3s with CLA

Omega-3 fatty acids, found mostly in fatty fish, walnuts, flax seeds, and omega-3 fortified eggs, have proven health benefits in reducing the risk of heart disease. They lower your lipid levels, particularly triglycerides. Omega-3 fatty acids have anti-inflammatory effects. Decreasing inflammation inside blood vessels can reduce the risk of atherosclerosis and heart attack or stroke.

Omega-6 fat can have a pro-inflammatory effect. Because your body uses inflammation to fight off infection, pro-inflammatory fats are useful in the correct ratio. Most Americans eat too many foods high in omega-6 fats and not enough omega-3s. It's important to maintain a balance between the two, because having a large percentage of calories from omega-6 fats and too little from omega-3s can increase disease risk.



To keep your fatty acids in a proper ratio, your doctor might suggest taking omega-3 fatty acids in the form of over-the-counter fish oil supplements. CLA can be combined with fish oils to provide the best of both worlds.

Summing Up the Potential Health Benefits of CLA

CLA offers a few other benefits, including the following:

- ✓ **Reduced weight:** Scientific studies consistently demonstrate that simply adding CLA to your daily diet can help promote modest weight loss.
- ✓ **Increased metabolic rate:** Several studies have shown that CLA increases your metabolic rate, a change that supports a healthier metabolism. When combined with a healthy diet and exercise program, CLA could help support healthy weight and fat loss. Although a small handful of studies have reported these changes, a smaller number of studies indicate that this benefit may not continue for prolonged periods of time.
- ✓ **Improved lipid levels:** Several studies have examined the effects of CLA on lipid levels, which include both “good” and “bad” cholesterol and triglycerides. Taking CLA might increase *high-density lipoprotein*, the so-called “good” form of cholesterol or lower *very-low density lipoprotein*, a harmful form of cholesterol.
- ✓ **Decreased risk of type 2 diabetes:** CLA might benefit folks with insulin resistance, a condition which often predicts the onset of type 2 diabetes and can prevent cells from removing glucose from the bloodstream to use for energy.
- ✓ **Better bone density:** Studies on the effects of CLA indicate that this fatty acid might help stimulate bone growth and prevent bone density loss. Low bone density can lead to osteoporosis and an increased risk of hip, spine, and wrist fractures, especially in the elderly.
- ✓ **Reduced cancer risk:** Although this is far from a conclusively proven benefit, a number of studies utilizing laboratory animals indicate CLA could possibly reduce your risk of developing some types of cancer, including breast cancer, colorectal cancer, and lung cancer.

Some studies in mice have shown the opposite effect. Talk to your doctor before taking CLA supplements if you're at increased risk for breast cancer.



- ✔ **Immune system benefits:** CLA might help quell immune system responses that worsen inflammatory bowel disease and other autoimmune disorders.
- ✔ **Allergies and asthma:** CLA might decrease airway hyperactivity in overweight people with mild asthma or those with exercise-induced asthma. CLA might also help reduce allergic reactions in people with birch pollen allergies.

Examining the Potential Risks

Very few substances come with absolutely no warnings or potential risk factors, and CLA does have a few potential drawbacks, some of which could have serious health consequences. The recommended dosage is around 3,000 milligrams of pure CLA per day. Never take more than 6,000 milligrams per day. In some studies, very high doses of the supplement have been given to the subjects.

Some of the potential risks of CLA include:

- ✔ Worsened insulin sensitivity
- ✔ Shifts in fatty acid storage
- ✔ Gastrointestinal symptoms, including stomach upset, nausea and diarrhea, as well as fatigue

Chapter 4

Motivating Yourself to Exercise

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding how exercise can help fight fat
- ▶ Sampling some workout routines

Staying active isn't just important for shrinking your waistline, it's also vital to your health. Exercise can help reduce your risks of many diseases. This chapter shows you why exercising is key to cutting back on midsection fat and gives you some workouts to get started with. Check with your doctor before you start any exercise routine.

Why Exercising Is Vital

Exercise is an all-around great habit to pick up and maintain. It benefits your body in three main ways:

- ✔ **Flattens your abs:** If you really want to flatten your midsection and keep it that way, you have to exercise as well. Part of what makes up your belly is your abdominal muscles. If you start to strengthen these muscles, they work like an internal girdle, pulling your stomach in, flattening it, and showing those abs you've worked so hard to achieve.
- ✔ **Improves overall health:** In addition to slimming your waistline and flattening your abs, exercise also improves your overall health and well-being in a number of ways. Exercise can help you decrease blood pressure and blood sugar levels (if diabetic) and prevent insulin resistance,

improve cardiovascular health, lower cholesterol levels, and prevent diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers.

- ✓ **Boosts your metabolism:** Exercising while losing weight is important because it boosts your metabolism. By following a regular exercise routine while you make dietary changes, you maintain more muscle mass, which ensures that your metabolism is as good as or better than when you started. A good metabolism makes weight maintenance easier.

Fat Fighting Workouts

This section goes over a couple easy to understand workouts that can help you to fight fat effectively. They're both *high intensity interval training (HIIT)* workouts, which are short intense workouts that help you effectively fight fat.

Sample Cycle HIIT Program

This program presents a 20-minute workout, which can be completed on any electronic exercise bike.

Warm-up

Always do a warm-up to get your body prepared for the workout ahead:

- 1. Do the complete ab routine, performing the following exercises three times in a row.** Make sure that you're familiar with the proper way to do these exercises, in order to prevent injury.
 - **Ab crunches:** Perform 15 to 20 repetitions
 - **Ab planks:** Hold each side for 45 to 60 seconds
 - **Side crunches:** Perform 15 to 20 repetitions
- 2. Select a resistance level on your bicycle that slightly increases your heart rate and causes your skin and body to feel warm.**

20-minute HIIT workout

Now that you're warmed up, you can start getting down to business:

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- 1. Increase the resistance level on your bike by three levels from your warm-up, set the clock for 20 minutes, and spin as fast as you can for 10 seconds.** Try to achieve speeds greater than 90-100 rpm.

Here are a couple tips:

- If you select too little resistance on the bike, the pedals will spin too quickly, making sprinting difficult. If this happens, increase the resistance on the bike until you strike the correct balance.
- Alternatively, if the resistance is too high and you can't achieve and maintain optimal speeds over 90-100 rpm, the resistance level needs to be slightly reduced until you strike the correct balance

- 2. Without stopping or changing the resistance, slowly spin at 50-60 rpm for 15 seconds.**
- 3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 until your time elapses.** You should do about 48 repetitions.

Five-minute cool-down

Now all you need to do is cool down a bit:

- 1 Select a resistance level similar to what you selected for the warm-up and pedal for approximately five minutes.**
- 2. Do the complete ab routine again.**

HITT program for overweight, low fitness individuals

People who are less fit can follow a modified version of this workout. During the first three to six workouts, people who are less fit may need to shorten their workout, but within six workouts, should be able to complete the full 20 minutes.



Resistance can initially be set pretty low. The resistance level can be slightly increased from one workout to the next.

Sample Walking HITT Program

This program goes over a 20-minute walking workout, which can be completed on any treadmill.

Warm-up

Always do a warm-up to get your body prepared for the workout ahead:

1. **Do the complete ab routine (for instructions see the previous section).**
2. **Set the treadmill incline at 2 percent and program the speed so that you're moving at a moderately fast speed for five minutes.**

20-minute HIIT workout

Now that you're warmed up, you can start getting down to business:

1. **Set the incline between 5 and 10 percent. Set the speed to between 2.5 and 3.0 miles per hour and walk for 15 seconds.**
2. **Increase the incline by 2 percent and increase the speed by 0.5 miles per hour and walk for 10 seconds.**
3. **Repeat steps 1 and 2 a total of 48 times until 20 minutes have elapsed.**



Using a treadmill allows you to change the speed, the incline, or both. When you first start this program, only change one so you can concentrate on your workout and avoid any accidents.

Five-minute cool-down

Now it's time to cool down:

1. **Select a resistance level similar to your warm-up and walk for approximately five minutes.**
2. **Do the complete ab routine again.**

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Fight midsection fat with diet and exercise tips that can help you look better and feel healthier

Struggling with midsection fat? Discouraged by your progress? This special edition goes over the basics of belly fat: why it's bad, how you get rid of it, and how to keep it off. Find effective strategies to lose midsection fat by improving your exercise and dietary habits and adding some helpful supplements. Get realistic and practical advice.

- **Know the facts** — *understand the dangers of midsection fat and find out how to analyze your body type*
- **How to eat** — *find out more about the best eating habits for a flat midsection*
- **CLAs can help** — *when you combine CLAs with healthy diet and exercise, they can help you lose stubborn fat*
- **Exercise to tone your abs** — *you can lose weight through diet, but exercise amplifies results and promotes a leaner midsection*

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Erin Palinski-Wade, RD, CDE, is a nationally recognized nutrition and fitness expert who has contributed her expertise to media outlets such as the *CBS Early Show*, *The Doctors*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, *News 12*, *Fox News*, *Fitness Magazine*, *Consumer Reports*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Prevention Magazine*.



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