

# Secrets To A Flat Stomach &

# Trimmer Waistline

By Shane Doll CPT, CSCS

■ Ok ladies so you want to get a flat, firm tummy this year. I've got great news. I'm going to help you do just that without wasting your time on crunches or other ineffective exercises. But wait a minute; I thought crunches were the best exercise for your abs? Truth be known, crunches are last on my list of exercises you should do for your waistline. In fact, you could never do a single crunch again and have the best midsection of your life if you follow some simple guidelines.

If you want to have a firm, flat stomach

you need to do two things. Number one, you must remove the layer of fat covering up your abdominal muscles. You'll never see the benefits of all your hard work if you've got a layer of fat covering up your abs. Number two; you must work your core muscles with integration exercises and not isolation exercises. I'll give you some examples of integration exercises later in the article.

Here's the first of many reasons why crunches are ineffective at changing your waistline. If you want to remove fat from your midsection you must burn it for fuel. The only place fat can be used for fuel is in a muscle cell. Your abdominal muscles are relatively small and require very little energy for contractions.

This means they simply cannot burn that much fat for fuel no matter how hard you work them. If you want to lose fat from your waistline, I recommend you do more squats, lunges, rows and other exercises that will burn more calories.

The more you work the larger muscle groups of your body the more fat you'll burn from the midsection.

Two other important points is you must be eating something small every 3-4 hours using supportive nutrition principles and doing a minimum of thirty minutes of cardiovascular exercise five days a week. This is essential to improving your body's ability



to burn fat. Ab exercises alone will never produce the results you're looking for unless you combine them with supportive nutrition, cardiovascular and resistance training exercise.

Like I mentioned earlier, the best exercises for your abs are ones that integrate instead of isolate. Some of my favorites include medicine ball chops, planks, band rotations, leg raises, stability ball knee tucks and cable wood chops to name a few. The primary responsibility of your abdominals is to stabilize your pelvis during movements in which you rotate, flex or extend from the hips.

The crunch helps with none of these and is an unnatural movement. The muscles in your body work together as links in one big kinetic chain. Ever notice how yoga instructors often have great waistlines but

never do crunches. That's because they're regularly working their body in multiple planes of motion with integration and not isolation.

The bottom line is forget the machines in your local health club, using the Ab Lounger or some other gimmick you've seen on TV or doing endless crunches in search of that toned, trim and tight tummy. They simply won't work. Consult the assistance of a fitness professional who can demonstrate for you a variety of the most effective exercises for that flat stomach you've always wanted.



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