



# HOW TO GET 6 PACK ABS

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## Introduction

Nothing says “FIT” like the rippling abdominals of a six-pack. Men and women alike can’t help but admire the look of a hard, taut, muscular waistline. Surveys have shown that women are actually more physically attracted to six-pack abs than they are to muscular chests, shoulders or arms. And when men are asked if they’d rather have Arnold’s arms, back or abs, most vote for the abs.

Well developed abdominal muscles say more about physical conditioning, fitness and readiness than do bulging biceps or a massive chest. Maybe there’s something primal that makes us get that impression from a strong core, but whatever it is, it’s compelling.

There are several schools of thought on how to develop and display a six-pack. One group advocates working your abs, obliques and lower back heavily and often. These proponents generally have the abs to show for all that hard work, so the evidence for this technique is compelling. They are usually professional bodybuilders who display their bodies for a living.

Another equally well developed group says that waist work is a waste of time (pun intended). Their spokesperson for many years was the late, great Vince Gironda, one of the finest trainers of bodybuilders in the world. Vince was a little eccentric in his approach to bodybuilding, but he was immensely successful nonetheless. He also trained many of the great bodybuilding champions of the time and had a long list of Hollywood stars among his varied clientele.

Vince Gironda was fond of saying, “Bodybuilding is 80% percent diet!”, and no one has ever disagreed with this statement. Diet is important, but so is doing the proper exercises, because the muscles don’t grow without exercise.

On the other side of the spectrum is four-time Mr. Universe, Bill Pearl, whose great encyclopedia of bodybuilding, ***Keys to the Inner Universe***, has more than 60 pages dedicated to waist exercises. Bill not only had great abs, but at the age of 47, he was voted by his contemporaries as the “Best Built Man of All Time”.

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Fat is an indiscriminate depositor and “spot reducing” is nothing more than a popular myth. Most people have fat cells distributed all over their body. Women tend to have more fat cells below the waist, while men often have theirs around their middles. Love handles and sagging bellies are the norm for guys who spend more time on the couch than at the gym.

When all is said and done, developing a six-pack is a two-pronged effort. You must work the muscles to develop them and you also need to get rid of the body fat that hides the developed muscle. We will deal with these and other aspects of how to get a six-pack in this guide. We will also look at both schools of thought on the workout side of the equation.

## **The Bodybuilder Approach to a Six-Pack**

**These exercises are performed for a once a week midsection blitz. On other days, amidst other body part blitzes, three sets of side bends and sit-ups are performed.**

### **Warming Up and Working the Midsection:**

**Dumbbell or Kettlebell Swing-** Standing erect with one dumbbell or kettlebell grasped in both hands, raise the weight straight over head and swing it towards the ground and back through your legs as far as possible, while bending your knees as you go towards the bottom position. Exhale as you go down. Inhale and swing the weight back to the top position. Repeat for thirty or forty reps.

**Twisting Barbell Good Morning –** Standing erect with a light barbell across your shoulders, bend forward at the waist until your body is at a right angle to your legs. Twist towards your right, then towards your left. Raise to the start and then repeat. Keep your knees locked and inhale before you start your bend, exhale when you raise back to the start position. Perform fifty repetitions.

**Barbell Side Bend –** Standing erect with a light barbell across your shoulders and your legs spread to about shoulder width, dip your left shoulder towards your left hip while contracting your abdominals. Center your body and then dip to the right hip. Repeat for fifty reps on each side.

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**Dumbbell Rear Side Bend** – Standing erect with the dumbbell in your right hand held behind your buttocks and the other hand on your head, lean forward while raising the weight with a straight arm. Perform fifty reps and then switch hands and repeat.

**Stiff-Legged Dead Lift** – Stand erect with a moderate weight barbell held at arms length in front with your palms facing rear. Bend forward keeping your legs stiff and touch the floor with the weights. Return to the erect position and repeat for fifty reps.

**Decline Compound Sit-Up** – On a decline sit-up bench, beginning in the supine position raise your upper body until erect, then twist the right and then the left. Center your torso and return to the supine position. Repeat for fifty reps.

**Bent Knee Sit-Up** – On a sit-up board, knees bent and your hands behind your head, raise your upper body while crunching your abdominals. Lower your torso and repeat for fifty reps.

**Compound Bent Knee Sit-Up** – The same position as the bent knee sit-up except at the top of the move, twist your torso to the right and then the left before centering and returning to the start position.

**Heel High Sit-Up** – Begin with your calves and feet over a bench and your upper torso on the floor and hands behind your head, raise your upper body while crunching your abs. This exercise may be performed as a compound move by twisting your body at the top of the move.

**Jackknife Sit-Up** – Starting supine on the mat with legs and arms extended, bend at the waist and reach for your toes with your hands, keeping both limbs straight. Return to floor and repeat.

**Over A Bench Sit-Up** – With your feet hooked under a stanchion and your upper thighs resting on a bench, lower your torso backwards to a level position, then elevate while crunching your abs until you are erect. Return to start and repeat.

**Decline Compound Sit-Up** – On a decline board with your feet elevated and your hands behind your head, raise your upper body while crunching your abs, and reach your right elbow towards your left knee. Lower your body then raise

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again but reach your left elbow towards the right knee. As you progress in this exercise, begin to use a weight held behind your head to add resistance.

**Incline Compound Sit-Up** – On an incline bench with your head at the top and your arms extended overhead, bend forward and touch your lower leg or feet with your hands, first the right hand to the left leg/foot and then the left hand to the right leg/foot.

**Lying on Side Scissor** – While lying on your right side with your left foot resting on a bench, your right hand behind your head and your left hand on your hip, raise your right leg from the floor and touch the other foot while keeping your leg straight. Repeat and then reverse sides.

**Kneeling Back Kick** – On your hands and right knee on the bench, kick your left leg backwards while keeping your leg straight. Repeat and then reverse your stance and kick the right leg.

**Dip Stand Leg Raise** – On a dip stand raise your body to full height with your arms straight and then raise your legs until they are straight out in front. Lower and repeat.

**Incline Bench Leg Raise** – On an incline bench lie supine with your hands holding the bench behind your head, raise your straight legs in front until they are at a forty-five degree angle with your body. Lower and repeat.

**Chinning Bar Leg Raise** – Hang from a chinning bar with your hands widely spread. Raise your legs until they are parallel with the floor. Lower and repeat. This may also be performed in a compound manner whereby you raise the legs alternately to the left and right sides.

**Weighted Leg Raise** – Lying supine on a mat, grasp a dumbbell between your feet and raise your legs overhead. Lower and repeat.

There are many variations of each of these exercises. Some of them are compound moves where you incorporate twisting or turning within the movement. In others you may add weights, either held behind your head or grasped with your feet. Or, you may bend your legs as you raise your legs, thus crunching the abs a little more. It is wise to change your established routine every three

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months so that the muscles never get too conditioned to the moves, thus you continue to make them grow and define.

## **The No-Sit-Ups Abdominal Routine**

**Vince Gironda used to decry doing sit-ups of any type; flat, incline or decline. He was fond of making the statement, “Which athletes have the best developed abs? Gymnasts, of course! Did you ever hear of gymnasts doing sit-ups? No!” It was Gironda’s contention that their abs developed because those muscles were constantly under stress and tension while the gymnasts perform their sport. Try to do an “iron cross” on the Roman rings without tensing your abs.**

Vince’s students ranged from professional bodybuilders, to ordinary fitness minded people, to A-list movie stars like Clint Eastwood, Robert Blake, William Smith, Clint Walker and a host of others.

Acolytes of a “no-sit-ups” method of abdominal exercises follow a type of routine that emphasizes applying tension to each muscle in your midsection by crunching, stressing, twisting and compressing these muscles. It does work very well and isn’t nearly as much work as the pro bodybuilder’s approach outlined earlier. It is performed daily though and does account for some pretty spectacular abs development!

The “Roman chair” referred to is a device where your legs and buttocks are supported while your upper body is free. This allows for extreme movement and stress on the midsection while performing simple movements.

**Roman Chair Sit-Ups** – Seated in the Roman chair with your body parallel with the floor and facing up, bend your body to near the floor, the raise your torso until you are nearly sitting erect, lower again and repeat.

**Compound Roman Chair Sit-Ups** - Performed as the previous except that you raise your torso with a twisting motion, alternating sides. This adds oblique stress to the abs being worked.

**Roman Chair Reverse Sit-Up** – Begin face down in the Roman chair, lower your face towards the floor then up to a nearly level position. This works the rear obliques and lower back muscles.

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**Supine Crunches** – These may be performed on a bench or a floor mat. Lie supine with your hands behind your head and legs overhead and bent at the knee. Bend your upper body forward in a rolling motion, moving your head towards your knees, until the abdominals are “crunched.” Your shoulders and upper back will be off the floor but your lower back and buttocks will not be. The stress should be on your upper and middle abs.

**Compound Supine Crunches** – Performed as above except for a twisting motion at the top of the move, right elbow to left knee and left elbow to the right knee. This adds the frontal obliques to the exercise.

**Chinning Bar Leg Raises** – Hanging from the chin bar at arms length, raise your legs until they are parallel with the floor. Hold for a two-count and then lower and repeat.

**Chinning Bar Front Levers** – Hanging from the chin bar at arms length, attempt to raise your body level while keeping your arms straight. Hold at the highest point you can achieve for a two-count, lower and repeat. As you get conditioned to this you will find that you are able to get to nearly level and hold it longer. I have seen gymnasts performing this exercise on Roman rings and holding for a long ten-count.

**Leg Raises** – On a bench or floor mat, lie supine and place your hands under your buttocks. Keeping your legs straight, elevate them to a forty-five degree angle and hold for a two-count. Lower and repeat. This move may be performed in a compound manner by raise them alternately to the right and left. Another compound move is to raise them and then separate them in a scissors move before return to the start position.

**Bench Leg Crunches** – Seated on the end of a bench with your body stabilized by your hands and your legs extended downwards, raise your knees towards your chest while crunching your abdominals. Return to start and repeat. This one works the lower abs. This exercise may be made compound by alternating the legs separately.

**Dumbbell Side Bends** – With a dumbbell in each hand while standing erect, bend to the side, alternating right and left. This exercise works the obliques.

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**Dumbbell Rear Side Bend** – With the dumbbell held behind your buttocks, bend forward and then return to start. Alternate sides, performing a set with the dumbbell in your right hand, then a set with in your left. This exercise works the rear obliques.

## **Foods That Help Burn Belly Fat**

What good does all that working out do for you if you still have all that body fat, particularly around your middle? Belly fat is a problem for many people, most notably when their metabolism makes midlife changes in our thirties or thereabouts. The real enemies to any fat loss program are refined carbohydrates, starches and sugars.

There are foods that you can eat that will not add any more fat to your body, and they may even accelerate your weight loss. We all know about proteins, carbohydrates, fats and fiber, but which ones will help burn off that subcutaneous adipose that is hiding your six-pack?

### **Here are the guidelines for burning belly fat:**

- **Don't eat processed foods** – Those easy-to-prepare foods that come in boxes, cans, bottles and frozen food packages are loaded with preservatives and other chemicals to help them retain color. Most of these things, like high fructose corn syrup (found on many labels), are contributors to the obesity epidemic in the world.
- **Eat Fresh, Live Foods** – Organic vegetables and fruits, grass-fed beef, free-range poultry, lean pork and fresh fish. Don't reach for the fish sticks, chicken fingers, sausage biscuits or any of that garbage. Grill a chicken breast, broil a nice piece of sirloin or bake a fish fillet instead. It really doesn't take any longer and it's a lot better for you.
- **Drink a lot of Water** – Water will boost your metabolic function, keep you hydrated and it will abate your hunger. Don't mix it with anything sugary or artificially sweetened. Try making green tea that will help burn fat.
- **Eat High Protein Meals** – Lean protein in every meal will help keep your blood sugar from spiking and it will pump up your metabolism. Protein is

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the building block of muscle. A bodybuilder needs a lot of protein, 25% or more calories should come from protein.

- **Eat Good Carbohydrates** – Avoid those refined starches and sugars. Eat good carbs like fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh or dried beans and other legumes. Sprouted grain breads are also healthy. Dried beans of any sort are very high in protein and fiber, as well as good carbs.
- **Healthy Fats are Okay** – Avoid saturated fats, especially trans-fats. Good fats come from olive oil, fish oil, flaxseed oil, avocados, nuts and seeds.
- **Avoid Getting Really Hungry** – Don't skip meals, rather you should eat five or six small meals per day. Use nuts, seeds, fresh fruit and vegetables for healthy snacks.

For long-term, automatic fat loss, as proscribed in Dr. Mark Hyman's ***Ultra Metabolism: A Simple Plan for Automatic Weight Loss***, you should eat foods that rank high on the phytonutrient index (PI) and low on the glycemic load (GL). Since lean meats do not register on either, what you are looking for are: Vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans, seeds, olive oil, tea, herbs and spices. You should avoid flour, flour products, refined grains, sugar in any form and processed foods.

In ***Fat Burning Furnace***, Rob Poulos recommends the following foods that will help your body burn fat: Complex carbohydrates like brown rice, wild rice, whole grain pasta, whole oats, whole grain cereals (without any added sugars), sweet potatoes and quinoa. He also advocates eating a lot of apples, oranges, melons, papaya, bananas and berries.

Proteins should include lean beef, lean ground turkey, chicken breast, skinless lean ham or pork and No-Fat skim milk.

Rob also says you may eat: Yogurt, shellfish, low-fat cottage cheese, dried beans, lentils, peas, peanuts, almonds, cashews, walnuts and natural peanut butter.

Vegetables that will help you burn fat are: Broccoli, salad greens, spinach, green beans, sweet peppers, carrots, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, mushrooms, onions, tomatoes, squash, artichokes and greens.

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## **Some Health Foods Aren't Healthy: Five Foods That May Increase Your Belly Fat**

There are few enforced regulations on what may be called "Health Food". Just because the word "health" is on the label doesn't mean the contents of the package are good for you. Often it is quite the contrary.

For example, how about soy products, are they healthy? Conventional wisdom says that soy is healthy. Think again. Most of the soy commonly used in soy burgers, soy milk and soy snack in the USA is unfermented and highly processed. Research has shown that unfermented soy may lower sperm count in men who eat it regularly.

The Mayo Clinic ranks soy as a leading food allergen. The phytoestrogens that give soy its good name may also cause a hormone imbalance in both men and women. Even the American Heart Association has withdrawn their endorsement of soy as a heart-healthy alternative food.

In Asia, the home of soy foods, people consume fermented soy or whole soy as a condiment. There are no unhealthy associations with these products.

**Read the labels** of any "health" food before purchasing. There is no regulation on what can be listed as a health food; instead, consumers must rely on their own research and the integrity of the manufacturer and stores that sell these products. What is their motivation: Profit or altruism?

Here are some of the foods for which there are warnings on the internet cautioning that they are unhealthy:

- Breakfast Cereals – Highly processed and loaded with added sugar or other sweeteners like high fructose corn syrup. The manufacturing process has been shown to produce acrylamide, a carcinogen. These highly processed foods are loaded with toxic waste. An alternative is to buy cereals found in the natural foods section of the market . . . but, read the label.
- Orange Juice Drinks – These "sunny" drinks have very little real juice, but are mostly high fructose corn syrup, sodium benzoate and sodium hexametha-phosphate, also found in laundry detergents.

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- Processed Lunch Meats – These cold cuts are loaded with preservative chemicals and bad fats.
- Performance protein shakes and bars – These are scientifically engineered protein powder full of artificial sweeteners (high fructose corn syrup, again).
- Sports drinks – Bromated vegetable oil, oil of wood resin and high fructose corn syrup abound here. The body doesn't need any of them.

Some of the marketing words used by health food products manufacturers often conceal what really lies within the package. How come our ancestors survived without all these *healthy* foods?

- Diet – Why did the lab rats get cancer?
- No Sugar Added – No sugar needed because of the other sweeteners present.
- Sugar Free – What other sweetener is used?
- Low-Fat – But probably off the scale on their Glycemic Index or Glycemic Load.
- Reduced Fat – Less fats but much higher in carbohydrates.
- Fat Free – There may actually be no fats, but they are usually full of sugars and chemicals. Hey, jelly beans are fat free, so are they healthy?

Here are some other foods that are not always good for you, despite the wording of the labels and contents:

- Diet Soda (called “pop” in some parts of the world) – Sugar free but loaded with artificial sweeteners, flavoring and food color, the latter of which has been shown to be a carcinogen, according to researchers.
- Peanuts – Not actually a nut, but a legume, these tasty snacks have an imbalance of Omega 6 and Omega 3 fats, 3:1 instead of 1:1 as optimal.

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- Reduced Fat Peanut Butter – The fat isn't the problem, but the added sugars are.
- Corn Oil – The Omega 6 is 60:1 to Omega 3.
- Fat Free or Reduced Fat Salad Dressings – Out with fat, in with the sugar. Also salad ingredients are oil soluble, so fewer of their nutrients are absorbed without the fats.
- Yogurt Cups – The fruit-at-the-bottom variety are loaded with artificial sweeteners and no live cultures.
- Fruit Juices – Check the labels for artificial sweeteners. You get no fiber with juice like you do with fresh fruit.
- Dried Fruits – These contain the same calories and sugar as the fresh fruit, but without the volume, so we may tend to overeat.
- Canned Beans – These are usually packed in sugary syrups that will spike your blood sugar.
- Granola – This “health” snack is loaded with HFCS and has little nutritional value.
- Pasta – The white flour variety is bad, the whole wheat or vegetable varieties are good.

## **Fat Does Not Equal Unhealthy**

The human body needs fats to process protein into muscle tissue and to supply energy. Saturated fats contain anti-oxidants that help prevent and control serious illnesses.

According to the University of Michigan Health System, the following are some of the sources of healthy fats and should be included in your nutrition program:

- Olive oil, canola oil and flaxseed oil – used in salad dressings and for cooking.
- Avocados, olives and nuts – Snack on seeds and nuts and top your salad with avocado and olives.

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- Fish that are high in Omega 3 fatty acids – Tuna, salmon, sardines, amberjack, mackerel.

## **Junk Food Cravings: An Addiction**

The Weill Cornell Medical School has reported that their studies and those at the Scripps Institute have shown irrefutably that cravings for junk foods are an addiction similar to those for cocaine and opiates. Their lab tests showed that even the threat of pain did not stop the pigging out on junk food by the test subjects. The nerve centers in the brain that control pleasure are stimulated by drugs and junk food in exactly the same manner.

Just like with drugs, the pleasure center in the brain becomes insensitive to the stimulation provided and requires more of the stimulant in order to receive the pleasure. This addiction leads to obesity.

**Junk Food Defined** – A loose description of junk food is “**any processed food that is high in fat, high in calories and low in nutrition**”. This is also the description of the diet of many people raised on meals of Big Macs, fat saturated French fries, sweetened soft drinks and milkshakes. People who grab a meal on-the-run often fall victim to junk foods.

Junk food is readily available and few people are interested enough to learn about the ingredients of these quick meals. The “drive-through-generation” loads up on fast food, much to the detriment of their waistlines. Fast, junk food is largely responsible for the obesity epidemic rampant in the USA and much of the developed world.

Much of the preservatives and sweeteners used in junk food is high fructose corn syrup. This corn byproduct in sufficient quantities may actually be a poison. HFCS is a common substitute for sugar in many processed foods such as peanut butter, jellies and jams, soft drinks, fruit juices and other commonly consumed tidbits. A peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich on white bread may actually qualify as junk food, being high in calories, high in fats and low in nutrition.

Truth in labeling offers some protection against all the HFCS, chemicals and other “shelf-life-enhancers, but few people take the time to read the labels and fewer still understand what they are reading.

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Even the fast food purveyors are labeling their products so you may know that a double-cheeseburger contains more than half the recommended daily allowance of calories for an adult male. It also exceeds the RDA for sodium and saturated fats. No wonder there are so many obese hamburger eaters.

What is worse is that many school meal programs have gone from being nutritionally correct to looking like the menu at a food court, all fast, junk food. We are raising the next generation of unhealthy, obese adults.

## **Treating the Addiction**

Withdrawals are the physical and mental pain felt by addicts when the source of their pleasure is removed. This is a very painful process, one an addict avoids at all cost. In order for an addict to voluntarily enter treatment, they have to understand the negative impact on their health and wellbeing that the addiction is causing. They have to want to be free of their addiction.

In addition to a little self-control, the junk food addict must understand that the move to a fast-food-free diet is in their best interests. Making good nutrition part of an overall health and fitness program stands a better chance of succeeding than just withdrawing from the junk food consumption. When committed to a lifestyle change that involves a good diet and physical activity, the program has a good chance of overcoming the addiction.

It is helpful to replace the junk food with healthy foods and snacks. You may overcome the appeal of how quickly you are served **fast food**, by having the ingredients of healthy meals and snacks readily available. Prepare snacks and the ingredients for healthy meals ahead of time so you may partake when the urge comes over you.

Prepare healthy dishes in quantity and then freeze them in serving-sized containers. Use lots of spices so your flavor center is sated. Have healthy snacks at hand: Carrots, celery, fresh fruits, nuts and dried fruit may be packaged in snack sized containers and kept close at hand.

If eating at work isn't an option, then go to restaurants that serve live food, not preprocessed junk foods. You will be surprised to find that the service at a family restaurant is almost as quick as at a drive-through and the food is a lot better for you. It probably costs no more either.

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If you grab a can of diet soda, that isn't helping. Your metabolism is boosted by the artificial sweeteners just as it is by the sugar in regular soda. Your stimulated system will be triggered to enter a slow-down and then it will store more fat. Drink water or unsweetened ice tea instead.

The initial withdrawal from junk foods, just like with narcotics is largely mental after the first physical pangs have abated. It only takes a few days for the needs of your body to diminish to nothing, but the mental addiction lasts much longer. The mental addiction must be addressed much more forcefully in order to get through this period.

Meditation or self-hypnosis may be able to overcome the mental addiction. Research has shown that in order to cure any addiction, both the conscious and subconscious minds must be engaged. The subconscious in nine-tenths of the total mind and is the part that most influences our actions and behavior. It is best engaged by some form of "auto-suggestion" like self-hypnosis. This is a means of freeing the subconscious by achieving a relaxed state in which you may program your mind with positive thoughts and reinforcements of acceptable behavior.

Self hypnosis may be achieved by sitting in your favorite chair, close your eyes and visualize your spinal cord of twenty-four vertebrae. Picture a light circling your lowest vertebrae for a count of ten, and then move up to the next vertebrae for another ten-count. By the time you have counted all 24 you will be in a relaxed state. A feeling of heightened awareness will come over you. You are now in the "zone."

Now you make suggestions to yourself about your eating habits, exercise or anything else you want to influence. A good idea is to prerecord your suggestions and play the take after you are in the zone. Hearing your own voice uttering the behavior changes will often reinforce your conscious will. You might want to preface your vocalization with some nice, relaxing music which will help you focus on the circling light and be immune to outside noises and interruptions.

## **Fat Loss Eating Secret: What You Don't Know Could Hurt You**

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The most overlooked fat loss eating secret is “***it is possible to under-eat!***”. Overly restrictive low-calorie diets make it much harder to lose weight and keep it off. Reduced caloric diets increase the production of cortisol by our bodies. Cortisol is the “stress hormone” responsible for belly fat. Cut your calories too much and you will gain a belly.

The best approach by far, is to eat a properly balanced, healthy diet of protein, natural vegetables and fruits, and lots of fiber. Avoid all processed foods as they have a lot of chemicals and preservatives. Read the labels of any ready-to-eat foods and you will see a laundry list of things your body doesn't need.

Many things that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use today may be banned tomorrow after sufficient research into their reaction in the human body. Remember cyclamates? It was approved by the FDA as a sweetener in diet foods. Later research showed that it caused cancer in lab animals. It has since been banned.

A number of common food additives have also been approved by the FDA, but these are not healthy and should not be eaten on a regular basis.

- Acesulfame Potassium (Ace-K) – A sweetener used in baked goods, chewing gum, gelatin desserts and diet soda. Studies have linked it to cancer in lab animals.
- Artificial Colorings – Blue 2, Green 3, Orange B, Red 3, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 are used most often in candy, soft drinks and gelatin desserts.
- Aspartame – Another artificial sweetener linked to cancer.
- Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA) – Use in cereals, chewing gum, potato chips and vegetable oils as a preservative. US Dept. of Health and Human Services considers BHA as a human carcinogen, but the FDA still allows its use.
- Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils – Trans fats that are found in margarine, crackers and fried restaurant foods. Also in

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baked goods, icings and microwave popcorn. Trans fats are linked to heart disease.

- **Olestra** – A synthetic fat that is not absorbed as it passes through your system. It may cause severe side effects like diarrhea.
- **Potassium Bromate** – Used in bread and rolls, bromate has caused cancer in lab animals in some studies. It is banned in many countries, but not the USA or Japan.
- **Propyl Gallate** – A preservative used in vegetable oil, processed meat products, potato sticks, chicken soup base and chewing gum. Some studies have suggested that it may cause cancer.
- **Sodium Nitrate/Sodium Nitrite** – A preservative, coloring and flavoring agent in bacon, ham, hot dogs, lunch meats, corned beef, smoked fish and other processed foods. Can lead to the formation of cancer-causing chemicals.
- **Saccharin** – This artificial sweetener has been controversial for many years. It should be avoided, though it was removed from the list of cancer causing agents in 2000 by the Dept. of H&HS.

To lose weight and fat, eat an appropriate mix of proteins, vegetables and fruits, fats and fibers. Exercise with regularity and get lots of rest. Avoid white flour breads, pastas and desserts, stick to whole grains or sprouted grain products. Record everything you eat and drink as it will make you more aware of your consumption.

## **Exercising to Eliminate Abdominal Fat**

There is no such thing as 'spot-reducing.' If you work your waist until sweat is pouring off your body, you will develop your abs and you will lose some fat. The fat loss, however, will come from all parts of your body, not just your abdominal

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area. Sure you can trim your waist by performing waist exercises, but your six-pack won't show until you have rid your body of your subcutaneous adipose.

The best exercises you can perform to rid yourself of the fat over your abs is the ***exercise of self restraint and the exercise of good judgment***. The restraint comes in when you are offered a choice between a piece of fruit or a piece of chocolate cake. Choose the fruit. The good judgment comes in when you set up a good fitness program and stick to it. More good judgment is exercised when you develop a good nutrition plan with lots of good protein, complex carbohydrates, good fats and fiber. Great judgment is shown when you stick to your plans and the body you really want begins to emerge from the lump that was on the couch.

All that being said (with a little tongue in cheek) good abs are not going to happen by themselves or from taking any supplements or little blue pills you buy in the locker room from Louie the Loop. They do require work in the form of exercise and a good bodybuilding diet.

## **The Iron Guru's Secret Diet**

If you are a bodybuilding contest aspirant, that high-protein-low-carb diet is great until the last few weeks before the big event. At that time you have to revert to a contest mode and go for the strip-it-all-off diet program to get rid of those last bits of body fat. The late Iron Guru, Vince Gironda, had an extreme diet that would melt off that last layer of subcutaneous fat very quickly. You might also lose a little muscle tissue, but that could be minimized by loading your system with protein and soluble oils that help metabolize the protein.

Vince would recommend this diet to his clients, most of whom were major bodybuilders, both amateur and professional. He advocated using this diet for from three to six weeks and no more than eight continuous weeks or you could start losing muscle tissue as your body burns that for energy from the lack of carbohydrates in your system.

This bodybuilder's pre-contest diet was a five day cycle of four days on, one day off, then four more days on, another day off. The minimum he recommended was three cycles (two weeks) and the maximum was for eight cycles (about six weeks).

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## Pre-Contest Diet

For the first four days of the five day cycle, eat as close to zero carbohydrates as humanly possible. Consume lots of eggs (very high in usable protein and 95% biological), organ meats (liver, kidneys, heart and sweetbreads), lean meat, poultry (particularly turkey breast), and fish (salmon and tuna for the Omega 3). Raw milk, also a great source of protein and calcium, is recommended. Eat salad greens, spinach and broccoli for the fiber, minerals and minimal carbs. Use olive oil and vinegar for salad dressing.

Supplement your food intake with: Protein powder, kelp tablets, desiccated liver tablets, wheat germ oil and amino acid supplements like Lipo3 compound (three essential amino acids available in a capsule form).

Drink lots of water, but avoid caffeine, alcohol and soft drinks of any kind. Get plenty of rest and good sleep. Perform your normal workouts, but avoid overtraining.

**Note:** *Inositol, choline, betain and methionine are essential amino acids produced in the body and are important for metabolizing fats. They are often taken as dietary supplements to assist in controlling estrogen levels, cleanse the liver and in the processing of hormones. They also help prevent the build-up of bile in the liver, a condition that may lead to cirrhosis. Inositol is also an “unofficial” member of the B vitamin group and assists in relieving panic and depression.*

The fifth day of the cycle is a free day in which you should eat normally of a balanced diet of protein, carbohydrates, fats and fiber.

In this manner, you should cycle three or more times until you desired body fat level is reached, about two days before competition.

One bodybuilder to whom I provided my copy of Vince’s program, told me that he lost fat in places he didn’t know he had fat! He went on to say that he had developed “hollow” cheeks . . . on his buttocks.

The supplements are very important as they provide additional nutrition and the catalyst for fat loss. Wheat germ oil has been used for many years by bodybuilders because of the energy and endurance gained from its consumption.

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## Do You Know Any Vegan Bodybuilders?

A number of internet marketers who are selling books on health and fitness programs profess to living a vegetarian lifestyle. They maintain that eating of any meats is unnecessary in our modern age, as we can get all our proteins and nutritional needs from vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds. These folks may be trim and fit looking, but very few of them have any real muscle development.

I'm sure there are a few vegan bodybuilders, but I personally don't know of any. Those who claim to be must be augmenting their diet with a lot of protein supplements in order to grow their muscles.

Most people who claim to be vegetarians are really not. They will eat fish, shellfish, some poultry and dairy products. They do not eat beef or pork. Here are some comments on vegetarianism by a college professor.

***“When I ask my university students if they’re vegetarians or meat eaters at least two-thirds of the class claims to be vegetarians. But, most of them admit to eating fish, poultry and dairy products. This wishful thinking is common to vegetarians. Even nutrition students are misinformed. Avoiding red meat doesn’t make you a vegetarian . . . and it doesn’t make you any healthier.”***

If you are not eating red meat, chances are you are deficient in **zinc**. Those who avoid beef are seven times more likely to be zinc deficient.

Zinc is second only to iron as the most concentrated mineral in the human body. Zinc helps produce the hundreds of enzymes that are critical for body function regulation. One organ that is very high in zinc is the prostate gland. Zinc deficiency may cause an inflammation known as prostatitis. Any man who has suffered from prostatitis can tell you that many aspects of their lives change dramatically . . . including their sex life.

Zinc is also essential for the production **superoxide dismutase (SOD)** the most potent antioxidant in the body, one that is responsible for keeping your skin elastic and resilient so you retain that “youthful” look.

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Zinc also transports vitamin A to your retina, keeping your vision sharp and improving your night vision. It also slows down the effects of aging on your visual acuity.

Zinc helps promote a healthy immune system, it helps with the growth of reproductive organs and aids in fertility and conception. It aids in wound healing and cell reproduction and bone formation. In short, zinc is very essential in the human body.

Have you heard CoQ10? CoQ10 is a coenzyme that is critical to life itself. It is directly responsible for the production of ninety-five percent of the energy in the body. It is particularly concentrated in those organs that need high energy input; the heart, liver and kidneys. Without CoQ10, we cannot live. **Red meat is the only dietary source of this coenzyme!**

Sure your body produces CoQ10, but you need a dietary source as well to assure that you are getting enough. Non-beef eaters are often critically low in this vital nutrient.

Vegans are also prone to be low in vitamin B12, the creator of red blood cells and maintainer of our nervous system. Without the protection provided by B12, your brain cannot function properly. Memory loss or lapses may occur. Animal sources are the only reliable dietary supply of B12. So eat your liver, fish, eggs and meat to avoid B12 deficiency.

## **Vegetarian Myths**

Most vegetarian ideas have no scientific basis. Some of them are totally wrong and more than a few are dangerous to your health.

- The Myth: Animal fats cause heart disease – The truth is that the arterial plaque that contributes to heart disease is made from **unsaturated fats** and **polyunsaturated fats** found in vegetable oils, not saturated fats found in meat.
  - Fact: The body needs saturated fats to utilize other key nutrients.
- The Myth: Vegetarians live longer – The truth is that there is a higher mortality rate among vegans, even though there is slightly less mortality from heart disease.

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- Vegans often choose an overall healthy lifestyle of exercise, non-smoking and minimal alcohol consumption, but they still don't live longer than their meat-eating brethren.
- The Myth: Humans evolved as vegetarians – The fact is that there are no native vegetarian cultures. Every native culture has prized meat above all other foods.
  - Until Western diets entered their systems, native cultures ate a diet rich in animal products. Some, like the Eskimo people, eat a diet of nearly seventy percent animal fats and they are healthy (until we introduced them to the Big Mac and fries).
  - The people of the Caucasus Mountains of Russia are known to live to great ages on a diet that is heavily fatty pork and raw milk products.
  - The Hunzas, legendary for robust health and long live eat a diet rich in goat's milk that is higher in saturated fat than cow's milk.
  - Most vegetarians in the Hindu culture in India have the shortest life spans in the world. There is no animal protein in their diet.
- Myth: You can get all the protein you need by substituting soy for meat – Fermented soy foods like miso, tamari, tempeh and natto are healthful. Processed soy as found in soy milk, soy flour and other Western soy products is actually not nutritious at all. Unfermented soy is high in phytic acid.<sup>10</sup>, an anti-nutrient.

Vegetarian diets are mineral deficient and also lack many of the essential amino acids that are the building blocks of tissue. Vegetarian foods contain zero B12 and CoQ10, and a minimal amount of zinc.

Soy is no meat substitute. It has high levels of phytoestrogens that can feed tumors and decrease cognitive function. ***Parents who elect to feed their babies on soy-based infant formula are giving them the hormonal equivalent of five birth control pills per day.***

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Our ancestors thrived on meat and it is in our DNA to savor a juicy rib steak. The best meat is not what's on special at your local supermarket (usually). Grass-fed beef is the most nutritious and is not loaded with growth hormones or antibiotics, like the meat from feedlot animals.

Grass-fed meats are becoming more readily available as consumers become better informed. There are ranches that specialize in grazing beef cattle and bison for their rich, low-fat meat. Sources of these delicious cuts may be found online, or maybe as close as your local telephone directory.

If all of this information still hasn't convinced you vegan readers, then be sure to have regular blood tests to detect any deficiencies in zinc, CoQ10 and B12.

## **In Summary: The Secrets to Your Six-Pack Abs**

There is no magic formula to getting six-pack abdominals. It takes both a good workout program and a proper nutrition to develop and display those attractive muscles. Whether you choose to work hard at your midsection like the professional bodybuilders, or you want to try the Iron Guru's no-sit-up routine, you will have to support the effort by eating a bodybuilder's diet that is high in protein and fats, has good carbohydrates and lots of fiber.

You should augment your food intake with protein supplements, soluble oils and amino acids to help those muscles grow and to have the energy for your strenuous workouts for your entire body.

Quality food is not the cheapest option, but it is the healthiest and most productive, from a bodybuilding standpoint. Remember not to under-eat, but to consume five to six small meals per day, drink lots of water and stay away from sports drinks, meal replacement products, alcohol and caffeine.

If you would like a complete bodybuilder encyclopedia with every possible exercise variation pictured and described, you might acquire **Bill Pearl's** great book, ***Keys to the Inner Universe***. If you are training for specific athletic activities, you might also try his book on sports training, ***Getting Stronger***. Both are well written and edited and provide lots of great, detailed information.

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## Recommended Reading

### **Burn Fat, Feed Muscle**

<http://sixpackabsin3weeks.com/go/burnfatfeedmuscle>

Every body builder needs a one-stop guide as a companion to their fat burning and muscle building.

Finding one isn't a problem; there are literally thousands of self-help body building guides out there. The trouble is, not all of them are trustworthy.

My pick of the bunch is "Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle"

Burn The Fat, Feed the Muscle has been around a long time, at least in Internet years. It was released in 2003 and was one of the first diet and nutrition e-books ever published. Today there are e-books all over the web, not to mention more supplements, weight loss programs, ab machines, workout videos and "magic" diet pills than you can keep track of.

Even when your gut instincts tell you all these "fast and easy", "just take a pill" weight loss claims are too good to be true, sometimes the advertisements press your emotional buttons so well that your curiosity gets the best of you.

But after getting burned enough times, you eventually smarten up. You swear off "quick fixes" and you finally figure out the long way (through your own experience), about what really works; a calorie deficit, proper nutrition, intelligent training, changing your lifestyle and replacing your old negative habits with positive new ones.

Through all the Internet diets that have come and gone in the last decade, this e-book is one that has stood the test of time. It has been an Internet best seller every year since 2003. Men and women of all ages in over 141 countries have lost anywhere from a few pounds to 253 pounds using Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle. The program consistently gets positive reviews and has earned a reputation for being sensible, science-based, honest and effective.

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The author, Tom Venuto, received his degree in exercise science and has held certifications as a strength and conditioning specialist and personal trainer, but more importantly, Tom walks the talk. He is a natural-for-life bodybuilder, which means that he's never taken steroids or other body-enhancing drugs. Venuto has competed in bodybuilding 28 times and has 6-pack abs you have to see to believe (check out the picture at <http://sixpackabsin3weeks.com/go/burnfatfeedmuscle> of Tom at 3.7% body fat).

Although Tom admits that he was never obese, he says he always struggled with stomach fat and never saw his abs until he'd gone through many years of trial and error and a lot of hard work. Many people are encouraged when they hear that Tom is a lot like them and that he was not genetically predisposed to be lean. It gives them the hope that they can do it too.

Now that you know about the history and the author, here's a quick overview of what you'll find when you read Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle.

Burn The Fat, Feed the Muscle is published in Adobe PDF format so you can download the e-book. It's on the long side at 300+ pages, so if you're looking for a Cliff's Notes type of read, this might not be the book you want. On the other hand, if you're a detail person or if you want to know not just what to do, but also why you're doing it, then Burn The Fat, Feed the Muscle is exactly what you're looking for.

For more than 20 years, the author has studied physique athletes (bodybuilders, female figure competitors and fitness models). That's the whole premise of this book: If you want to get lean as quickly as possible, wouldn't it make sense to find the leanest people in the world, find out how they did it and do what they do?

In the introduction of the book Venuto points out: "Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle was created BY a bodybuilder, but it's not just FOR bodybuilders." In fact, the book easily could have been titled, "What every man and woman can learn from bodybuilders about permanent fat loss."

The nutrition techniques will work for anyone because they progress in stages from beginner to advanced. Unless you plan on competing in a fitness or bodybuilding competition, you'll only need to use phase one, aka, the "baseline" diet. If you want to get "ripped", with the six pack abs look – you can use phase

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two and phase three of the program, where you will find the more advanced techniques that many people have used to prepare for their first bodybuilding or figure competitions.

The main focus of the e-book is nutrition, because nutrition is arguably the most important key to getting lean. You could have the best training program in the world, but if you eat more calories than you burn, you'll gain fat regardless of your well-designed training plan.

In the chapters on nutrition, you'll learn how to set up a meal plan you can enjoy by using Tom's menu "template" system: You just choose the foods you like (pick from the recommended food lists), plug them into the meal plan template, and your menus virtually create themselves. Sample menus are also provided for ideas.

You also learn the truth about six pack abs: Body fat tissue lies on TOP of the abdominal muscles, so you'll NEVER see your abs unless your body fat gets low enough. You can't burn fat off your abs with abdominal exercises like crunches or sit ups. You must get the nutrition right to achieve very low body fat levels.

In *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle*, you learn everything you need to know about calories, protein, carbs and fat to get low levels of body fat. You'll learn the facts about low carb and high protein diets. You'll get the inside scoop on fat burning foods – including lists of what to eat and when to eat them.

You also learn how to set up a training program. These are the same workout routines used by top natural bodybuilding and fitness champions. However, *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* nutrition works in combination with any training program (so you can use your own workout if you choose).

The 2 components are weight training and cardiovascular training. You'll need access to basic equipment at home like dumbbells and barbells or you can train in a gym. One caveat: This e-book doesn't give you photos or detailed instructions on how to perform each exercise. There's more attention given to nutrition than training in this e-book, and if you use the training programs, it assumes you know how to perform basic weight training exercises.

Customizing your program is a major theme in chapter 5, which explains metabolic individuality and how to figure out your unique body type. The major

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lesson is: There's no one-size-fits-all nutrition program. If you have special needs, for example, if you're lactose intolerant, allergic to gluten or if you're just a picky eater, you can easily modify the menus to work for you.

In addition to the nutrition and training plan, chapter one contains what is probably the best explanation of goal setting, mental training and the psychology of motivation that you will ever read in any book. If you know what to do but you have a hard time doing it (ie, if old bad habits keep haunting you or if you're inconsistent with your diet or nutrition), you'll find the solution in the mental training, not the physical training.

In summary, Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle is no quick fix. You don't get six pack abs or a body like a fitness model by training a few minutes a day and eating haphazardly or cheating frequently. This program calls for structure and requires effort. In fact, many Burn The Fat customers have said that the main reason they bought the program was because it openly admits that fat loss is hard work. However, it's worth it because if you follow the program, there's no question that you will get very, very lean.

After all these years, Tom Venuto's Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle is a classic in the diet and nutrition e-book genre. There are many imitators and copycats, but if you want the original, this is it. Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is literally the "bible of fat loss."

You can get more information and download the e-book at the official site here:

<http://sixpackabsin3weeks.com/go/burnfatfeedmuscle>

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