



THE SCULPTED VEGAN

THE
**SIX
PACK**
PLAN

**ELIMINATE BELLY FAT
AND SCULPT LEAN ABS**

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THE DANGERS OF BELLY FAT

Belly fat is dangerous

Getting rid of belly fat is important for many reasons, the least of them being vanity. Belly fat is also known to have dangerous health implications. According to Harvard medical school the visceral fat stored in your midsection is "biologically active". This means that your body actually treats belly fat like it would one of your organs or glands. Except it is definitely not an organ you want to have.

Belly fat produces hormones that can affect your health, especially those related to appetite and metabolism. Latest research links belly fat to everything from heart disease and type 2 diabetes to certain cancers and even an increased risk of dementia. In women, belly fat is associated with breast cancer, asthma, cardiovascular diseases and infertility.

It clogs up your internal organs and stops them working efficiently.

The secret to long term health and vitality is a healthy inner body. And internal fat does not constitute a healthy internal body.

WHY DO WE HAVE BELLY FAT?

We are emotional eaters. Women feel their emotions much more deeply than men. This is due to a number of hormonal and biological factors and many of us did not learn good coping mechanisms when we were kids to deal with these confusing and strong emotions. In fact worse, often we were given candy or sweets to "make us feel better" but our well intended parents or carers, who didn't realise that we were just setting ourselves up for a life of emotional eating and food dependancy. Emotional eaters are much more common than you would believe. We eat when we feel upset, stressed or in pain. There is no conscious thought involved. Our bodies crave whatever toxin we have used in the past to alleviate the pain. For some it's tobacco, for others alcohol or drugs, but for many, it's food.

We drink too many sodas. Original or sugar free, sodas are ruining your health, your gut and your waistline. The high amount of sugar in soda triggers your craving for food, so you end up eating more than you should during mealtimes. Sugar free sodas also trigger the same cravings as their sugary sisters and worse, contain artificial sweeteners or sugar alcohols, which cannot be broken down in the small intestine. As a result, they travel through to the large intestine where they must be broken down by the microbiome, which causes a huge amount of gas to be released. This in turn, causes bloating which just adds to your distress if you're already suffering from unwanted belly fat.

We eat too many "low fat" processed foods. Many people who suffer from belly fat have a tendency to reach for the "low calorie" or "low fat" option in the supermarket. When you try to eat a whole food, plant based diet, these words should not feature in your diet. I never eat anything that comes from a packet, except for the odd vegan protein bar. All my food is freshly prepared and calorifically light but nutritionally dense. People who suffer from belly fat generally eat a diet higher in processed foods. And processed foods not only play havoc with your digestive system, they also affect your hormones. Processed foods are highly addictive which does not bode well when you are trying to consume less calories and lose the flab.

We don't eat enough protein. While it's true that you do not need as much protein as the meat industry would lead you to believe, you do need to eat a diet rich in protein to stave off hunger and raise the metabolism. Belly fat is in part usually due to a sluggish metabolism. And one way to kickstart the fat burning hormones inside your body is to eat more protein. Protein is thermogenic, meaning that it takes energy from your body to digest the protein. You actually burn calories eating it! Protein also raises the metabolism so that it works more efficiently during the day.

Our plates are too big. Recently my husband and I holidayed in Biarritz in France and stayed in a very swanky hotel. One thing we noticed at breakfast was how small the plates were. It was a buffet style breakfast with the usual eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms etc, except that the plate you used to serve yourself were no bigger than a conventional side plate. This meant that you never filled your plate with more than you needed, and if you wanted seconds you had to get up and traipse back to the buffet table. Quite often by the time you got there, you realised you weren't actually still hungry after all. The size of your plate has a direct effect on the volume of food that you eat. When you have a large plate you tend to over consume food, which leads to more fat stored in your body. The simple choice to use a smaller plate can have a notable impact on your waistline.

We don't get enough sleep. I recently invested in a Whoop Strap which tracks my sleep, workouts and recovery by measuring my resting heart rate and heart rate variable. I have always been a good sleeper but this strap has made me realise just how important sleep actually is for controlling all aspects of your life. According to the Whoop, with my 4-5 workouts and 4-5 cardio sessions per week, I need an average of eight to nine hours sleep. And if I am short on sleep, it shows a very sub par recovery. When you are tired and your body is not recovered, it causes cortisol to rise in the body. Cortisol causes you to crave sugary and high fat foods. There is a direct correlation between the amount of sleep you get and the amount of belly fat you have.

We have never shredded. The key to getting a very flat stomach is to shred down to low percentages of body fat. There is simply no other way of zapping those pesky fat cells.





WHAT TO EAT & WHAT TO AVOID

Simplicity is key

The key to getting unparalleled results in anything in life is keeping things extremely simple and repetitive. Yoga, meditation, bathing. You do these things simply, effectively and daily.

WFPB

Eating a whole food plant based diet is the key to eliminating body fat once and for all. Choosing foods that are nutritionally dense but calorifically light is the secret to success.

Avoid anything that will make you store fat

Avoid excessive fruit consumption and white starchy carbs. Aim for heaps of fibre.

FOODS TO AVOID

Trans fats

Saturated fats and trans fats are damaging for the internal body.

Wheat

Wheat is the result of 40 years of genetics research aimed to increase yield-per-acre. This means that wheat has been so genetically modified that it only grows to 18-24 inches tall instead of it's normal 4.5 feet tall! Why is this important? The modification of wheat coupled with the highly processed breads our society consumes has caused a whole host of digestive issues that didn't exist in our ancestors times. Interestingly also, the protein that is unique to wheat is called gliadin. Gliadin is weakened in the gastrointestinal tract to form peptides (small proteins) that have the ability to cross into the blood and enter the brain to bind to morphine receptors. When you stop eating bread and remove wheat from your diet, you remove the gliadin protein which stimulates the appetite. The average daily calorie intake drops by 400 calories with less hunger, less cravings and more feelings of satisfaction. This all occurs simply from eliminating wheat.

White Starchy Carbs

As a general rule in my life, I steer away from ultra refined carbs, also known as white starchy carbs. When I'm cutting body fat for competition, the first thing I cut out are white starchy carbs. I try to make all my carbs come from lentils, beans, cruciferous vegetables and sweet potatoes. This way, you can still eat a lot of food, but your body doesn't store it as fat. Post training is the only time that I will pack in white starchy, ultra refined carbs.

Processed Foods

I very rarely eat sweets, cakes or processed goodies. I just don't like putting that stuff in my body. I have zero sugar cravings or addictions and that is because I don't eat sugar. When you don't eat something, you don't crave it.





FOODS TO INCLUDE

Lean plant protein

Tofu, seitan, tempeh, lean soy meats

Green Vegetables & Salad

Good for antioxidants and enzymes for digestion

Wholegrains & Sweet Potatoes

Wholegrains and fibre are good for the digestive system

Berries

Eat small amounts of fruit in moderation. Berries are best.

Fermented Foods

Sauerkraut, fermented salsa and kombucha

CONCLUSION

Losing belly fat takes longer than you think and is more effort than you think! Work hard to build muscle, do cardio to raise the metabolism, eat whole, clean, nutritious food that is good for the liver. And above all, be patient!