



Female Fat Loss Over Forty

Nutrition Basics to Help Reduce Your Waistline

Our Goal

The objective of the program is to SEE aesthetic changes as well as FEEL an increase in your fitness level. Once you are on a fitness program, 75 to 85% of how you LOOK is diet related. You will need to APPLY the diet modifications suggested in order to lose fat.

Dieting Alone Will NOT Work

Body fat is nothing more than stored food energy. So, body fat provides your body with energy. In order to use this energy, you need to expend more energy (calories) than you take in through your diet. This can be done in two ways; expend more by doing more, or take in less. The less desirable method is to eat less and the preferred method is to do more. If you eat less, you will slow your metabolism and set yourself up for problems later. If you do more, you will increase your metabolic rate, which is exactly what you want to accomplish. This can best be achieved through exercise. Dieting alone just does not work to rid you of that muffin top. When you diet you will:

- Lose muscle and fat in equal ratios
- You will feel terrible
- You will get weaker
- You will be forced to continuously reduce calories as your metabolism slows
- You will set yourself up for a rebound or weight gain once you resume 'normal' eating
- You will suffer and be hungry all the time
- You will look almost as bad as you feel
- And worst of all, statistically speaking, you will fail!

It's been proven that dieting alone doesn't work! Supportive eating while engaging in muscle building activities does.

You will need a basic understanding of nutrition and how to apply simple principles to help you achieve fat loss. These concepts are not rocket science. They are fairly simple to understand, it's the APPLICATION on a consistent basis that is the challenge.

What do we eat?

All the food we eat falls into one of three categories: proteins, carbohydrates and fats.

Protein:

Proteins are the building blocks for the body. They are composed of amino acids of which there are 8 essential amino acids & 11 non-essential amino acids. Complete proteins contain all 8 essential amino acids. An important point is that food source proteins take approximately two hours to digest and all sources are four calories per gram. It is desirable to ingest protein with every meal for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, protein has a stabilizing effect on blood sugar levels (more on why this is desirable later). To support resistance training, your body will need protein to recover from your intense workouts.

Fats:

Fat is required for optimal health, weight regulation and body function. It is a mistake to eliminate all fat intake in an effort to lose body fat as essential fatty acids cannot be produced by the body. In fact, including the proper types and amount of fat will aid in your fat loss efforts. There is a wide variety of dietary fat available:

- Saturated fats are solid (butter, shortening, animal fat) – These fats should be mostly avoided, or reduced as much as possible.
- Monounsaturated fats are liquid (vegetable oil, olive oil, etc.) – These are healthy fats, and should make up the majority of your fat intake, along with polyunsaturated fats.
- Polyunsaturated fats are liquid (flax oil, fish oil, etc.) – As stated, these are healthy fats. These should be consumed or supplemented daily
- Trans fats are altered vegetable fats (hydrogenation) – These fats are killers. They are the unhealthiest and damaging fat you can consume. They should be avoided at all costs.

Omega 3 is fat that is usually overlooked and under consumed. There is a myriad of health benefits associated with these fats. You should ensure that if your diet lacks omega 3 fats, that you supplement with a high quality super concentrate of omega 3.

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It should be noted that all fat sources digest in 3 to 5 hours. This fact is essential to those trying to lose body fat as it helps you to feel satiated for a long time after eating a meal, and is why a healthy source of fat should be consumed with all meals. The downside of fat is that it is calorically dense; it has nine calories per gram. Therefore, only small amounts should be consumed at each sitting.

Carbohydrates:

Carbohydrates are our primary source of energy. Your body prefers and will use any carbohydrate as an energy source first, thereby sparing the use of your muscle as a fuel source. This fact is an important consideration as your goal is to lose fat and not muscle (lean body mass) when you are calorie deficient. Remember, you must be calorie deficient (eat less calories than you are expending) to lose body fat, so we can manipulate carbohydrate types and quantity to maximize fat loss.

There is plenty of carbohydrate confusion. To simplify things, remember that simple carbohydrates are short chain sugars and complex carbohydrates are long chain sugars. *All carbohydrates are sugar.* All carbohydrates illicit an insulin response in order to lower blood sugar. The most important fact about carbohydrates is that different carbohydrates digest at different rates. Simple carbs are released into the blood stream very quickly, and complex carbohydrates take more time as your body must break these down into short chain sugars. All carbohydrates are approximately 4 calories per gram.

Recently, there has been much hype about eliminating carbohydrates from the diet for fat loss. This approach can actually be dangerous if done incorrectly, so you need to be cautious with this approach. Is a diet deplete of carbohydrates one that you can sustain long term? Probably not, so use caution if you are considering this method of fat loss. At best, it is a short term solution, likely accompanied by short term results. Once you begin eating a regular diet, even with healthy portions of carbohydrates, your weight loss will be difficult to maintain. Also, be aware that many people report that they feel terrible when in the state of heavy ketosis, which is the goal of the no-carb diet. For a long term solution to fat loss, for most of us it's safest and most effective to continue eating carbohydrates, but choosing the types and amounts carefully

Insulin Response

Your body is a wonderful machine; if you ingest any kind of food, the body goes through a series of processes to break down this food. In particular, when you ingest carbohydrates in any form, the body releases insulin to counter the resulting rise in blood sugar. Insulin is a powerful hormone that can be manipulated for optimum benefit. It enables the body to use the ingested carbohydrates in three ways: as an immediate energy source, to be stored as muscle glycogen or to be stored as body fat. Insulin is fat sparing which means that if there is an abundance of insulin caused by high blood sugar levels, the body is stimulated to store more body fat. It makes sense then to avoid insulin spikes. How is this done?

You will want to avoid the rollercoaster of blood sugar spikes and valleys of low blood sugar. Advertisers try to entice you to eat a chocolate bar to battle those mid-afternoon slumps. The result of this indulgence is a blood sugar spike (slightly more energy or alertness), followed by a surge of insulin (a slump in energy, lethargy, sleepiness). This insulin surge will make you crave more sugar, and thus goes the roller coaster. Sound familiar?

To avoid this, you will want to consume more complex carbohydrates, and avoid simple carbohydrates, or sugary foods. One of the most effective ways to lower insulin response is to eat protein or healthy fat with any carbohydrates ingested. Small meals five or six times a day are another effective tool to moderate the insulin release and control appetite. It's so much easier to resist tempting foods when you aren't hungry. Try to eat every 2-3 hours, just when you start to feel a little hungry, but before you are ravenous. Your skills reading your body will get better with practice. Then choose whole grains and other low, lean proteins and plenty of fruits and vegetables.

What about fruit?

Clearly any program that discourages the consumption of fruit is suspect. Keep in mind that fruit is a carbohydrate and some are more nutritionally dense than others. You will want to choose the fruits you eat wisely. Remember that portion control is important in your weight loss efforts and it's easier to over eat on fruits than it is vegetables. You will want to choose fruits that have a low GI (Glycemic Index) reading to avoid blood sugar spikes and eat in moderation.

Glycemic Index

Simply put, the Glycemic Index is a number given to carbohydrate sources which tells you how quickly this source will enter your blood stream as sugar, raising blood sugar levels. As discussed, it is imperative that we manage blood sugar levels, avoiding the highs and lows. With this in mind, it is best to concentrate on low GI foods when working to lose body fat. A comprehensive list of GI numbers for specific foods can be found in numerous sources, such as books and on the internet.

How Many Calories??

This is one of the most common questions I get asked by clients in their quest to get into their best shape. There is no 'one size fits all' answer. Even clients that are of similar weight and height will have different caloric requirements. While it's not rocket science, figuring out your caloric needs does take a bit of know-how and math. Proper nutrition is essential for optimum health and athletic performance, and even more imperative if your goal is to look great in your blue jeans.

First you will need to determine your *BASAL METABOLIC RATE* or BMR. Your BMR is the number of calories your body needs to maintain your current weight while it performs basic functions, including circulating blood, digesting food and breathing. A ballpark number can be established using the following formula:

Female BMR = $655 + (4.35 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (4.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (4.7 \times \text{age in years})$

Male BMR = $66 + (6.23 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (12.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (6.8 \times \text{age in years})$

For example, if you are a 35 year old, five foot five, 150 lb woman, your BMR would be 1448 calories a day. This is the approximate number of calories that this woman would need to consume just to perform basic functions while maintaining her current weight.

Next, you can use the *Harris Benedict Formula* to determine your daily caloric needs. This is a formula that uses your BMR and applies an activity factor to determine your total energy expenditure or calories. For those individuals that fit into the general population, the formula will be quite accurate. However, the formula will probably underestimate caloric needs for very lean people, and overestimate

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calories for the obese. It should also be noted that a factor omitted by the Harris Benedict Formula is the amount of lean body mass a person has. Lean mass or muscle tissue increases metabolism. Therefore, more muscular bodies generally have higher caloric demands.

To determine your total daily calorie needs, multiply your BMR by the appropriate activity factor, as follows:

1. If you are sedentary (little or no exercise) : Calorie-Calculation = $BMR \times 1.2$
2. If you are lightly active (light exercise/sports 1-3 days/week) : Calorie-Calculation = $BMR \times 1.375$
3. If you are moderately active (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/week) : Calorie-Calculation = $BMR \times 1.55$
4. If you are very active (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days a week) : Calorie-Calculation = $BMR \times 1.725$
5. If you are extremely active (very hard exercise/sports & physical job): Calorie-Calculation = $BMR \times 1.9$

In order to lose weight, there needs to be a calorie deficit. There is approximately 3500 calories in a pound of stored body fat. So, if you create a 3500-calorie deficit through diet, exercise or a combination of both, you will lose one pound of body weight. A safety guide set out by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that caloric intake never drops below 1200 calories per day for women or 1800 calories per day for men. These low calorie levels, for extended periods, can be dangerous to your health. *A safe way to calculate caloric intake for weight reduction is to reduce calories by 15-20% below your calculated daily calorie maintenance needs.* You may increase or decrease this slightly, depending on your weight loss goals.

Maintaining body weight is an ongoing process for the majority of people. Learning as much as possible about what your body needs will make that process a little bit easier. Knowledge is power and this power may also increase your will power, helping you to make the right choices to achieve your goals for a healthy, attractive, lean body.

May I Have a Drink?

Is there any place for alcohol in the fitness lifestyle? The answer is ambiguous. Studies show that there are definite health benefits to moderate alcohol intake, however, if weight loss and waist reduction is one of the goals of training regimen, you'll need to think carefully on how much alcohol you want to ingest. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Alcohol contains 7 calories per gram and offers NO nutritional value. It only adds empty calories to your diet. If you can afford the calories for the occasional drink, then enjoy, but if you are restricting calories, it may be best to invest your calories in something more nutritionally dense.
- Alcohol is metabolized differently than proteins, carbohydrates and fats. When no other food is present, alcohol is absorbed immediately from the stomach. With the presence of other food, the process is slowed down. However, once food and alcohol get to the small intestine, alcohol is processed first. Carbohydrates and fats are dealt with secondly and if there is no immediate need for this energy, it is stored more readily as fat.
- Alcohol stimulates appetite and lowers your inhibitions. This may be detrimental to your diet plans and good intentions. Your will power may be reduced and you may make poor dietary choices or overeat after ingesting alcohol. To avoid this, it may be best to have a drink after you've eaten.
- Alcohol is a diuretic. This means that it causes water loss and potential dehydration. With this water loss, there is an accompaniment of mineral loss. Minerals such as potassium, calcium, zinc and magnesium are vital to important bodily functions. To avoid dehydration and mineral loss, it's best to have a full glass of water following every alcoholic beverage.
- Some people will choose hard liquor over beer and wine in an effort to reduce overall calories. If this is your strategy, be mindful of the mix that you use in your drink. Hard liquor has marginally less calories than beer and wine, but when mixed with sugar pop or juice, those calories begin to add up. Choose water, club soda or possibly diet pop as a mix if calories are an issue for you.

As with anything in life, moderation is the key. You need to decide how to 'spend' your daily calories and if this includes an alcoholic beverage, then enjoy!

Helpful Hints

1) Be honest with yourself and figure out how many calories you're currently eating each day. Do this for three to four typical days to get a baseline calculation of your caloric consumption. You can now begin calculating your caloric intake needed to reduce body fat. Then you can use the Harris Benedict Formula previously outlined to determine how many calories you should consume to create a calorie deficit.

2) After revealing your caloric intake, you'll likely notice that there's room for improvement. Cut out the junk food and fast food, plain and simple. If you want to reach your goal, this is a no brainer.

3) Start eating 4-6 meals a day, beginning with breakfast. (If you want to be fat, skip breakfast.) This means breaking up your daily calories into smaller meals, rather than adding more food. Eating small meals more often has a twofold purpose. First, it keeps you from getting overly hungry which causes over eating. And secondly, it keeps your metabolism from slowing down. Often, in an effort to cut calories, some will skip meals, only eating 1-2 larger meals a day. This is a mistake. The very act of eating actually helps to raise metabolic rate, so eat smaller meals, but eat often.

4) Increase protein intake. This is down at #4, when it should be one of the first things you do. Adding protein with every meal has an insulin stabilizing effect which helps to curb your appetite. It is much easier to eat healthily when you aren't starving.

5) Just by doing the above, you'll likely notice that this will help you to drop a few pounds. It will ensure slow and steady weight loss which is easily maintained. Remember that rapid weight loss accomplished by extraordinary means usually pile back on once you stop what you were doing, causing a yo-yo effect. Also, and just as importantly, by eating in the manner described, you won't feel as hungry and deprived, which means that you will likely be more inclined to follow these eating strategies and hopefully make them part of your routine, which will become a part of your life style. Make sure that you maintain your workout schedule with intense workouts as well.

6) Allow for a 'free meal' once a week. Give yourself a chance to have a small indulgence to look forward to. If you know you're going

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to meet up with 'Miss Vicky's Chips' on Saturday night, it's easier to resist potato chips all week, (rather than thinking that your love affair with Miss Vicky is over for eternity).

In Conclusion...

This is NOT a diet plan! It is not something that you start and stop. You need to MODIFY your eating now and forever. Although this sounds ominous, it really gets easier as you go. You will develop a taste for more natural foods and feel better eating in a supportive way. I promise that your cravings for unhealthy, unsupportive foods will diminish over time. And once you see the results of your efforts, you will be motivated to incorporate these changes into your life style, making them healthy habits.

Keep in mind that weight loss is not a reliable indicator of progress. Although it is desirable, you need to pay attention to how your clothing is fitting and how you are feeling to assess your progress.

There are three ways to accurately assess progress:

- Body fat/lean muscle mass analysis
- Compare pictures/how do clothes fit?
- Look in the mirror!

You have only two goals; Firstly, increase lean muscle mass (active tissue) and secondly, reduce body fat. Do NOT starve yourself in an effort to achieve this. Remember that if you are training hard and eating correctly, you will be adding some muscle while losing fat, simultaneously. The scale may not show that you are making extraordinary progress. Have a loved one take pictures, and compare them once every month or two. Adding a little muscle and taking off a little fat will make you lean and curvy in all the right places. Say good bye to your muffin-top, and say hello to your new athletic, sexy body!