

Help Me Get Rid of My Belly Fat!

By Shawna Kaminski

Everyone would like a flat, toned mid-section. Too often you'll hear advertisers promote diets and products that will flatten your wallet but not your tummy.

Here are **ten** no-nonsense ideas that will help trim your waist:

1. **You need to drink more water**; recent research found that drinking 2 cups of water before meals helped men and women lose more weight when on a diet.
2. **Have a small snack of almonds** (1 ounce or about 22 almonds). This sounds like the opposite thing to do if you want to lose weight, but research shows it helps you lose weight and control appetite.
3. **Increase your intake of low glycemic fruits and vegetables** through out the day. Aim for 5 to 10 servings daily. In order to consume this amount of fruits and veggies, you'll need to add some to each meal and snack.
4. **Eat 'whole' food as much as you can.** That is, avoid processed foods and eat food that is closest to its natural state as possible.
5. **Reduce your starchy carbohydrate intake** (potatoes, rice, bread, etc) in the evening meal. Fill three quarters of your dinner plate with veggies.
6. **Avoid trans fats and include heart healthy fats** such as Omega 3 fatty acids (cold water fish, walnuts, flaxseeds).
7. **Eat five to six times a day.** Keep meals and snacks small and never let yourself get famished or full. You need to stay just a little hungry.
8. **Drink green tea daily.**
9. **Limit alcohol consumption.** This may sound like a 'no fun' suggestion, but if you're serious about flattening your tummy, you'll need to reduce calories from alcoholic beverages (and the extra calories from munchies consumed after a few drinks).
10. **Don't get fooled** into thinking that eliminating an entire macro nutrient group is your answer to slims-ville. In the 80-90's there was the 'no fat' craze that resulted in a skyrocket increase in Type II Diabetes. Next came the 'no/low carb' bandwagon. Eliminating carbohydrates will result in weight loss, but it's a tough road to go down and the kicker is that weight management is very difficult. Once you start introducing carbs back into your diet, you may gain back any weight you've lost. A healthy balance of carbohydrates, protein and fat is the answer to healthy weight loss and maintenance.

So what is a healthy balance of carbs, fat and protein? The following percentages allow you to get sufficient intake of essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals:

45% to 65% of calories eaten should come from carbohydrates.

20% to 35% of calories eaten should come from fat.

10% to 35% of calories eaten should come from protein

The exact percentages of each macro nutrient vary from person to person based on goals and activity levels. The main thing to remember is that you need to include *all* three macro nutrients. Of course it goes without saying that those most successful with weight loss and management are those that include exercise in their plan. Muscle building, heart pumping exercise is not only great for reshaping your physique; it provides those 'feel good' endorphins that help you stick with your program. If you just diet, you may lose weight, but may not like the shape your body takes after you've lost it.

Again, common sense rules the day regarding the loss of belly fat: sensible, conscious food choices and more exercise!



Shawna Kaminski has always enjoyed an fit lifestyle and was active at an early age. It wasn't long before she was rated a national level competitor in swimming, freestyle skiing and bodybuilding. After years of teaching fitness in schools, Shawna started her own fitness business instructing boot camps and helping people learn how to work fitness into their daily lifestyle.

Today, Shawna is not only a highly respected fitness professional, but also owner and master trainer of *Calgary NW Adventure Boot Camp*, owner and master trainer of *Kaminski Fitness Consulting*, and author of *Female Fat Loss Over Forty*.