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Health & Wellness Bulletin

Summer is soon approaching, so now is the time to get into “summer shape”, so May is dedicated to the BELLY. Read for ways how to avoid belly fat and how to finally rid of it.

8 Habits That Cause Belly Fat

While there are no quick fixes, there are some lifestyle changes you can make that can help flatten the spare tire around your waist. The following are 8 habits you'll want to eliminate from your routine to improve overall health, maintain weight loss, and lose the belly fat.



Lack of Exercise

While it's possible to lose belly fat without exercise, it is a lot more difficult, especially if you want to keep it off for good. Having strong, lean muscle helps the body burn fat and calories more efficiently. If you lose weight without exercising you'll actually risk losing this lean body tissue which will ultimately slow your metabolism. Exercise should be done at a moderate level to achieve results. A moderate level means you can carry on a conversation while still breaking a sweat. This type of exercise should be carried out 3 to 5 times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes each time for best results

Too Much Sugar

There is a strong connection between sugar consumption, insulin resistance, and the increase of belly fat. Since high blood sugar can lead to insulin resistance it's important to limit too much sugar in the diet. A 12 ounce soda may only have 140 calories but approximately 8 teaspoons of sugar. Cutting back on soda and processed foods high in sugar is a good start when it comes to losing weight around your middle section

Eating too Much Dessert

Most desserts contain high amounts of sugar and fat, which of course easily adds pounds. Filling up with healthy carbs, proteins, and veggies will eliminate our cravings for dessert. Indulging in chocolate cake or double crust apple pie every now and then is acceptable as long as the calories are cut somewhere else or a little extra exercise is incorporated into your daily workout routine. Also, when selecting desserts find out how much sugar verses fat is in the item. Even if the dessert is fat free but high in sugar, you'll still gain weight.

Drinking too Much Beer

It's not surprising that the term "beer gut" is used to describe gaining too much weight from drinking a lot of this particular alcoholic beverage. While not all beer bellies are the result of beer, an individual can definitely gain excess weight by consuming too many beers. One reason is that beer is pretty much empty calories. Another reason beer can cause weight gain is that when the liver is processing alcohol it's not burning fat. Drinking alcohol can also stimulate the appetite, causing you to ingest even more calories. If you're going to drink it's best to stick with wine, which has been shown to have some health benefits when drunk in moderation and generally has fewer calories than a glass of beer. If you can't imagine not enjoying a cold brew, try some of the many great tasting light beers. Sometimes having a small glass of water between drinks can limit how many alcoholic beverages you consume

Eating When Stressed

Ways to beat stress eating include cleaning out your kitchen and cabinets of all the specific items you tend to reach for after having a difficult day. Make a list of fun hobbies or activities that you can distract yourself with when you feel like indulging in doughnuts and pizza

Late Eating

After going to sleep our bodies generally tend to slow down all biological systems. When you eat late your digestive system simply won't process all the food in the same efficient manner it would have several hours earlier. It's generally recommended to stop eating at least two hours before going to bed. Before going to bed you shouldn't feel really hungry but you shouldn't be completely full either. The best place to be is somewhere in the middle. Going to bed feeling just slightly hungry is the goal you should reach for.

Not Getting Enough Sleep

Not getting enough sleep each night can cause more problems than simply leaving a person tired and groggy the following day. This is one of the many weight loss tips that a lot of people may not be aware of. Our bodies increase the hormone known as cortisol when we don't get enough sleep. A high cortisol level can increase appetite which makes it easier for us to overeat the day after we have been sleep deprived. This process is similar to what happens when we eat because of stress. Pounds get put on in the abdominal area more easily than other parts of the body

Not Eating Enough Protein

Protein helps balance blood sugar levels while keeping our metabolism up. Protein will also keep you full longer, reducing the amount you'll eat over the course of the day. Eating two hard boiled eggs for breakfast instead of a bagel can keep you feeling full much longer throughout the day. Many nutritional experts agree that adding protein to the diet may be the single most important step for losing fat.

The Workout That Can Help You Lose 2 Inches of Belly Fat

.....And it only takes 20 minutes

If you want to lose a belt size, skip the treadmill. Performing intervals during your regular workout may help you lose more belly fat than steady-state cardio, according to Greek researchers.

In the study, participants performed hour-long workouts four times a week. While everyone did 40 minutes of strength training, they were divided into two groups for cardio. One group ran for 20 minutes on treadmills and the other group performed body-weight intervals for 20 minutes. At the end of eight weeks, the interval participants lost two inches of belly fat compared to the runners who lost less than one inch.

The researchers think interval training—which alternates high-intensity levels of work with lower-intensity work—contributes to your body’s afterburn effect. When you go all-out for short intervals, you quickly deplete your body’s oxygen stores. This forces your body to work harder afterward to reestablish its oxygen bank. So while you might burn as many calories during a jog, your body continues to burn more after the intervals.

You’ll do as many reps as possible of an exercise in 30 seconds, rest 15 seconds, and then move on to the next exercise. Once you’ve completed the fifth exercise, rest for 30 seconds. That’s 1 round. Repeat 3 more times.



Foods That Help Fight Belly Fat

Keep your middle trim by adding these foods to your diet.

- Black Beans
- Green tea
- Monounsaturated fats: olive oil, almonds, and avocado
- Omega-3 fatty acids: walnuts, flaxseed, fish
- Spices
- Water