



LOSE YOUR BELLY DIET CHEAT SHEET

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## **The Lose Your Belly Cheat Sheet**

Want to lose belly fat? As we have seen, there are *lots* of different factors to consider and many different strategies that should be combined for the best overall results. This cheat sheet will help you to keep all of that in mind...

### **Calorie Counting**

If you burn more calories than you consume, then you will lose weight as the body will need to use up stored energy (fat) in order to keep you going.

Count calories by measuring how many go in through an app like MyFitnessPal (or just keeping notes) and then monitor how many go out using a fitness tracker or a calculation such as your AMR (Active Metabolic Rate).

### *Making it Easier*

Counting calories can be a slow process and isn't exactly easy however. This is why it's often a good idea to focus less on precise numbers and more on the ways that you can easily maintain that deficit.

- Track your intake for a short time and get some averages
- Come up with easy ways to reduce that overall intake (get rid of soda drinks etc.)
- Now come up with some consistent breakfasts and lunches you can eat in order to keep your intake *very* low at the start of the day
- This way, you can relax and eat what you want at dinner with little to no risk of going over your target calories for maintaining your deficit

### **Hormones**

Note that individual differences also play a very big role. This is why some people lose weight faster than others.

Specifically, hormones play a massive role and your testosterone/estrogen/cortisol/insulin/thyroid hormones will all massively impact your weight loss. This prevents us getting an accurate AMR.

To lose weight faster and more efficiently then, look into the foods that alter your hormones, look at the timing of your exercise and look at other factors such as possible conditions (hypothyroidism, polycystic ovaries). Most importantly, ensure that you are exercising with weights as this is a fantastic way to increase your testosterone production and generally accelerate fat loss. Remember: muscle is metabolically active!

### **Nutrition**

Getting the right micronutrients from your diet is crucial for enhancing your energy levels and for making sure your metabolism keeps burning through sugars and fats. The best nutrition is just like eating lots of fitness supplements and can give you an instant surge in energy to help make training and cooking easier.

The easiest way to get on the right track quickly, is to take a multivitamin that will fortify your energy processes.

### **Lifestyle and Timing**

Hormones also increase and decrease over time depending on your activity and various other lifestyle factors. Understanding this and being able to work it into your regime is an important way to ensure you get the best from your diet.

For example, when you wake up first thing in the morning you are in a fasted state having not eaten throughout the night. If you can maintain this state, you will burn more fat for longer. If you exercise during this time, then you will burn more fat than you otherwise would have.

Likewise, if you eat straight after intensive cardio exercise, then sugar and carbohydrates will be sent to your muscles instead of being stored as fat.

Avoid eating simple carbohydrates. These will cause an immediate spike in your blood sugar, triggering a similar spike in your insulin which in turn will increase your likelihood of fat storage. Use complex carbs and fats which will release more slowly, but keep in mind the higher calories of fats.

Note as well that your lifestyle will impact your energy levels, which in turn can make you more or less likely to cheat on your diet. After a long day at work, many of us will be tired and more likely to cheat for instance.

When we are stressed, we are also more likely to eat *and* more likely to store that energy as fat. Improving your lifestyle is just as important as improving your diet and exercise then – remove stressful activity (maybe even going as far as to change your work) and avoid long commutes.

Prepare your food when you are alert and active and remove temptation when you are tired! Find ways to remove stress, such as engaging in meditation.

## **Exercise**

Exercise for getting rid of your belly will serve two purposes:

- Helping you to lose weight so that you can reveal your abs underneath
- Helping you to strengthen your abs so they will protrude through and look flatter

There are numerous great ways to train so that you will lose weight.

- Steady state cardio is a great way to burn fat and to improve your resting heart rate for better hormones and metabolism
- If you go even slower, then you can use walking for instance as a form of cardio that you can repeat many times in a week without tiring out. Look for ways to work this into your lifestyle.

- If you go faster or use 'HIIT', then you can deplete your glycogen stores and then use 'carb backloading' – consuming carbs straight after exercise as mentioned above.

For building muscle:

- Make sure that you are training using moves that challenge the rectus abdominis – the sheet of muscle on the front of the stomach. To train this area, focus on bending at the stomach and *not* folding at the hips.
- Try including resistance on top of your ab work
- Don't forget to focus on the transverse abdominis to flatten your stomach too. Likewise, work the obliques to give yourself detail at the sides.
- Train the rest of the body equally – especially with compound exercises that challenge you to use lots of muscles at once in unison.

Finally, note that you can train both by using 'concurrent training'. This is any form of cardio with added resistance, such as battle ropes, cycling on a stationary bike with the resistance set to high, or running on sand.

This is the condensed knowledge you need to get out there and lose that belly. Now all that is left is to get to it!