

Healthy Habits Newsletter



February 2024

In this month's newsletter, I look at ways to help blast belly fat. The recipe of the month is a quick and easy lunch or dinner - egg fried rice!

BLASTING BELLY FAT



In brief

- you can't spot reduce fat
- walking, as well as other lifestyle changes, can help reduce belly fat

In detail

One of the most frequently asked questions I hear is what the best ways are to reduce belly fat, and it's no surprise considering how easily it can accumulate and how challenging it can be to shed. So, what is the best exercise to reduce belly fat and what else can help?

Why is belly fat a concern?

Excess belly fat is strongly associated with an increased risk of developing chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and certain types of cancer. This is because visceral fat is metabolically active and releases hormones and inflammatory substances that can disrupt normal bodily functions and contribute to insulin resistance, high blood pressure, and other metabolic disorders. There is also the increased risk of accumulating fatty deposits in the arteries, increasing the risk of atherosclerosis (hardening and narrowing of the arteries) and cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and strokes. Also, a large amount of belly fat can put pressure on the diaphragm and lungs, leading to breathing difficulties and increasing the risk of sleep apnoea, a condition characterized by interrupted breathing during sleep.



Can I spot reduce belly fat?

Despite efforts through exercise and diet, it often feels like belly fat remains stubbornly persistent. Apart from surgical intervention, there's no confirmed way to specifically target belly fat reduction. The notion that you can target fat loss from specific areas of your body through exercise or other methods is not supported by scientific evidence. When you lose weight, your body tends to lose fat overall rather than from specific areas.

The distribution of fat in your body is largely determined by genetics, hormones, and other factors, and it varies from person to person. Additionally, fat cells in different areas of the body have varying levels of receptors that respond to hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, which play roles in fat metabolism.

While you can strengthen and tone muscles in specific areas through targeted exercises, such as abdominal exercises for the stomach muscles, this won't necessarily lead to significant fat loss in that specific area.

Instead, it can help improve muscle definition and overall body composition.

What can I do to reduce belly fat?

Overall, the most effective way to reduce body fat, including belly fat, is through a combination of regular exercise, a balanced diet and creating a calorie deficit, as well as lifestyle changes that promote overall health and well-being.

As for exercise, high-intensity workouts like running, cycling or HIIT classes may promise rapid calorie burn, and may suit people who are time poor as they provide a larger calorie burn in a shorter amount of time, they often prove unsustainable in the long run due to their demanding nature.

However, one exercise that can be effective is walking. Walking is not only easy to maintain but also low-stress, low-fatigue, and incredibly versatile. And It's free! Research shows that while intense cardio workouts like HIIT or running may offer time-efficient benefits, they don't necessarily provide superior fat loss compared to the more accessible and sustainable option of walking. Your body doesn't distinguish between calories burned during an intense cardio session and those burned during a leisurely stroll. What matters most is what you can commit to over time and, over time, the calories burned from walking can quickly add up to significant results.



Practical 'steps' to take 😊

- **Assess Your Starting Point:** Use health tracking apps like the Health app on iPhone or Google Fit on Android to determine your average daily step count. You might be surprised by how few steps you're taking, but this presents a golden opportunity for improvement.
- **Set Realistic Goals:** Start by aiming for an additional 2,000 steps per day. With the average person taking about 1,200 steps during a 10-minute walk, achieving this goal can be as simple as incorporating two 10-minute walks into your daily routine.
- **Gradually Increase Your Activity:** Once you've established consistency, gradually increase your daily step goal. Aim for at least 8,000 to 15,000 steps per day for optimal fat loss and health benefits.

What other things can I do?

Various studies suggest that there are a number of other things you can do that will help reduce belly fat:

- **Get enough quality sleep:** Quality sleep is essential for regulating hormones that control appetite and metabolism. Lack of sleep can disrupt your hormones, leading to increased hunger and cravings, especially for sugary and high-calorie foods. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to support your body's natural fat-burning processes.
- **Eat more protein:** Protein-rich foods help you feel full longer and support muscle growth, aiding in fat loss. When you eat protein-rich foods like lean meats, fish, eggs, and legumes, you feel fuller for longer periods, which can help control your appetite and prevent overeating. Additionally, protein requires more energy to digest compared to carbs or fats, boosting your metabolism and promoting fat loss.
- **Heal your gut:** A healthy gut promotes better digestion and nutrient absorption, reducing bloating and inflammation. An imbalance of gut bacteria can lead to inflammation, bloating, and weight gain, particularly around the abdomen. Eat probiotic-rich foods like yogurt to promote healthy gut flora. Also focus on consuming fibre-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Intermittent fasting/time restricted eating:** Consuming your calories within a certain time window (eg fasting for 14 hours and eating in a 10 hour window) can create a calorie deficit as well as increase fat oxidation during fasting periods. It helps regulate insulin levels and boosts certain hormones that can aid fat burning. Using your sleep window is one way to do this, for example, having your last calories (food and liquid) at 8.00 pm, and then not consuming any calories until 10 am the next day.



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

EGG FRIED RICE

An inexpensive, tasty meal that is ready in minutes!

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

COOKING TIME: 5 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups of cooked white rice (preferably cooled, leftover rice works well or use instant rice)
- 3 eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 1 red capsicum, diced
- 1 carrot, diced
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1-2 red chillies, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- Optional garnish: chopped spring onions or herbs eg coriander

METHOD

1. Beat the eggs and egg whites in a bowl.
2. Heat oil in a large pan or wok over medium-high heat. Pour the beaten eggs into the pan and let them cook without stirring for a few moments until they begin to set. Once the edges start to firm up, gently scramble the eggs with a spatula until they are cooked through but still moist. Transfer the cooked eggs to a plate and set aside.
3. In the same pan add carrots, capsicum, peas and chillies. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes until they begin to soften. Add the cooked rice to the pan with the vegetables. Add soy sauce and stir well to combine. Add the cooked eggs to the pan and mix together until well combined.
4. Season to taste. Garnish with chopped spring onions or herbs.



WHAT'S IN SEASON

Eating in season makes sense as produce will generally be cheaper and also taste great!
Here are a few fruits and vegetables that are in season in Australia right now.

FRUIT

apricots
strawberries
mangoes
watermelon
peaches
plums

VEGETABLES

avocado
capsicum
celery
cucumber
eggplant
spring onions
tomatoes
zucchini



WHAT CAN YOU START DOING THIS MONTH?

Here are some simple things you can start doing today to help build a healthier you:

- Add a ten minute walk after two of your daily meals, eg after lunch and after dinner
- Start the day with a glass of water before you reach for caffeine
- Turn off all electronic devices such as mobiles, PC, and tablets, at least 1/2 an hour before bed



HELPING BUSY PEOPLE LOOK, FEEL, AND PERFORM AT THEIR BEST

About me

I'm a wellness transformation coach, hypnotherapist, corporate trainer, and creator of the DARE Model, a four-part system that helps individuals create healthy habits that stick. The DARE model forms the basis of my first published book, DARE to be Awesome: How to Create the Life of Your Dreams One Habit at a Time.

I now help busy people implement healthy habits so they can look, feel, and perform at their best.

I specialise in helping people with:

- losing weight using the Virtual Gastric Band hypnosis technique
- stopping smoking and vaping
- stopping or reducing alcohol consumption
- pain management
- sports performance
- business performance

About my book

I created the DARE model to help people easily set up healthy habits that stick.

DARE stands for Desire, Accountability, Reward, and Environment.

The DARE model forms the basis of my first published book, DARE to be Awesome: How to Create the Life of Your Dreams One Habit at a Time.

Work with me

Contact me if you would you like to know more about how I can help you reach your wellness goals.



info@deematlok.com



+61 412 03 2225



www.deematlok.com