

I will be completely honest with you, as much as I get satisfaction from lifting a heavy barbell or pushing the prowler quickly. The real reason why I train as I do, is to look better with my shirt off, I'm sure some of you reading this will think the same thing too.

The feeling of having a tight, toned stomach when everyone else around you is constantly sucking their tummys is very satisfying.

When summer is coming and the beach is calling you, taking action now to smooth out your stomach is a very good idea!

This article is a super simple and easy to follow guide, based on my years of personal experience with my client and also myself

So that, if you follow this plan correctly and diligently, you will see a significantly flatter stomach

So why are you here?

Well, you are probably reading this because

- **You are sick of your flabby stomach, and the fact that you have to hide it with loose fitting clothes**
- You have tried (and failed) to get rid of your bulging tummy through countless gym classes and following boring diet plans
- **You are bored of doing endless hours of ad crunches but with a depressingly average outcome**
- You have tried every fad diet going and sure for a short time your belly gets smaller but then you re-bounce worse than before
- **The abs classes in the gym just don't cut it anymore and you are ready for a different approach**
- You may have even been asked if you are pregnant!

In order to solve a problem, we have to know what is causing it in the first place

So lets not hang around and lets get into the reasons why you store belly fat:

1 – Poor diet and Lack of exercise:

Yup, seems pretty obvious, but I have to mention this, if you are constantly stuffing your face with biscuits, chocolate and pizza then chances are you just aren't eating the right types of foods.

And if you are not leading an active lifestyle, then you will storing these excess calories around your waist and your stomach, leading to larger love handles and a bigger belly!

The solution = improve your diet and increase your activity levels (simples!)

2 – Food intolerances:

Sometimes even though you are eating a healthy diet, your body may not be able to digest certain foods effectively, leading to uncomfortable bloating, wind and water retention.

This is similar to a food allergy, but not quite a severe, it is referred to as an intolerance and each of us will can have different intolerances, regardless of how "healthy" the food type actually is.

You can also develop food intolerances by eating the same food repetitively without any variation.

A classic example is when people who are trying to eat more healthily just eat chicken for every meal. If you do this for long enough, you can actually develop an intolerance to chicken, which means that every time to eat chicken you will get inflammation, bloating, wind and water retention.

This will also affect the digestion of the foods you are eating due to distress in the digestive system.

To avoid this happening, all you need to do is have a wide variety of food sources and also try to identify any food intolerances you may already have and avoid those foods where possible.

The most common food types for intolerances are:

- Gluten (found in wheat)
- Dairy
- Soy
- Peanut
- Corn

3 – Dehydration and Alcohol

When you are dehydrated your body will produce more of the stress hormone called cortisol (more on this very important hormone later on) and high levels of cortisol have been shown to increase body fat storage around the stomach.

So if you don't drink enough water and are constantly dehydrated, then you will find it harder to flatten your stomach.

Also, because alcohol is a diuretic, it will increase your levels of dehydration even more by removing extra fluid from the body.

Add to that the extra caloric load of an alcoholic drink and you will soon realize why regular boozers, especially men, start to grow a beer belly.

4 – Stress and lifestyle

There are plenty of issues in most peoples lives that will cause them stress in some form.

- Work stress
- Relationship stress
- Emotional stress

When you are stressed your body will produce more cortisol and this can lead to fat storage on your tummy.

The key is to help your body cope better with the chronic stress.

>>> The Cortisol Conundrum <<<

Cortisol is often referred to as the fight or flight hormone.

Produced by the adrenal glands, it performs a very important role in the body.

Cortisol is responsible for energy production, it helps mobilise energy from the cells in the body, and without any cortisol we would not be able to function at all.

The human body has evolved to use cortisol at short notice for energy production, like when we go to gym and need to lift some weights or when we are under threat of danger.

In our bodies, cortisol performs the same function now as it did when we were cavemen in the Paleolithic era.

Imagine that a caveman was confronted by a sabre-toothed tiger out of nowhere.

He would need to run away very quickly or fight the tiger.

Either way, his cortisol levels would rise rapidly, a bit like an adrenalin rush, to give him the energy to do that.

Then after he had run away or killed the tiger, his cortisol levels would go back down to normal.

The problem with modern day stress is that is long lasting and chronic.

The caveman had a very stressful situation, but once it was over he went back to his daily life of doing not very much.

He didn't go home, check his emails, make a few phone calls and then spend the rest of the day worrying about how he was going to pay his mortgage.

Yet this type of chronic stress will cause more damage to our bodies, because the cortisol levels will be raised for longer than we need them to be.

And it is this raising of the cortisol levels for a longer period that will cause negative health effects, including fat storage around the stomach.

So what do we need to do?

Keep your cortisol high when you train, then try to keep it low for the rest of the time.

How to Reduce Cortisol

- Limit caffeine and other stimulants (especially after exercise)
- Improve sleep patterns
- Regular exercise
- Relaxation methods like yoga or meditation
- Take cortisol regulating supplements like Holy Basil, Licorice Extract, Ashwaganda and Phosphatidyl Serine.
- Drink herbal teas such as Tulsi and Licorice to help relax (especially in the evening)
- Enjoy life

“Abs are made in the kitchen” <<< ***Is this true?***

I disagree, they are made in the gym and the kitchen. You cant have one without the other in my opinion.

Yes, you need to focus on your diet to drop the body fat from your stomach, but without working the muscles underneath the skin you wont be able to achieve as much toning in that area.

The abdominal muscles are very durable and hard wearing so you need to train them regularly and with sufficient volume.

>>> Action Plan <<<

So I have given you the reasons why your body will hold onto fat around your stomach.

But I know that all you really want to know is how to fix it

We'll follow my 5 step action plan, and you will see some significant changes

1 – Eat the right diet for you and stay hydrated at all times

Set up your diet with the correct split of macro nutrients (proteins, fats, carbohydrates) for you as an individual.

Some of you may also need to start tracking your macro nutrients on a daily basis (the free app My Fitness Pal is great for this)

2 – Relax

Take at least 10 minutes every day to relax, turn off the tv, laptop, mobile phones and other communication devices.

If you struggle to get off to sleep, then do this in the evening before you go to bed. Also if you struggle to unwind, look into relaxation methods such as meditation, priming and ascension.

Modern life is very hectic, but our hormones in our bodies have not evolved since our caveman days, so bear that in mind when trying to control your cortisol.

3 – Exercise regularly, at least 2-3 hours (including core exercises) per week

Increasing your activity levels to at least 3 hours of challenging exercise per week is crucial to toning your tummy. As mentioned earlier, you also need to exercise your core and abs on a regular basis to create the muscle tone and get your abs nice and firm.

The regular exercise will also help to create the calorie deficit required to burn the body fat from your stomach, without having to resort to a low calorie diet.

4 – Remove any food intolerances

Try to identify any foods that you may be intolerant to. If you suspect you have an intolerance to a certain food, remove it from your diet for 2-4 weeks, then gradually re introduce it and measure the response from your body.

5 – Improve your sleep patterns

One the best ways to control your cortisol levels is to improve your sleeping patterns.

If you are getting less than 7 hours sleep per night, then by sleeping more you will help reduce stress levels in your body.

If your sleep is interrupted (for example, if you have young children) then try to mitigate the effects by going to bed earlier rather than spending a few hours “winding down” once the kids have gone to bed

Also limit your sugar and alcohol intake in the evenings as this will spike and crash your blood sugar levels and make the quality of your sleep worse.

I have a rule when it comes to sleep and children that at least if you cant control when your child wakes you up, then at least try to control the quality of sleep you do manage to have.

That’s a Wrap!

As this might very well be the longest belly fat article ever, I’m going to wrap it up right now.

Where to from here?

So you now have a much better understanding of what it takes to flatten your stomach.

I don’t like to go with a “one size fits all” approach, because everyone’s circumstances are different, but if you follow as many

Finally Flatten Your Stomach: A How To Guide

of the guidelines mentioned above for a consistent period of time (4-6 weeks) you will start to see a big difference in your shape.

If you found this e-book useful, don't forget to head over to our website

www.primalfitnessuk.com for heaps more content just like that.

Plus you can sign up for our **FREE 14 Day Jump Start** at the gym.

Where we will cover, in depth, the right training programs for you.

It is free, and we will show you what to do, how much to do and also keep you accountable for the 14 day course.

If you want in on the 14 Day Jump Start, just head over to www.primalfitnessuk.com where you can opt in to reserve your place.

Thanks for reading

Chris 😊