

Top 5 Ways or Reduce Inches from your Waistline
By John Dempster

Summer is finally upon us - and with that comes... Bathing suit season! For a growing population, this induces an immediate state of fear and, potential desperation. The battle of the bulge is forever an issue for a growing number of North Americans, and statistically it is getting worse. Aside from looking good in your bikini or that 'Borat Speedo' you've been itching to try on, keeping weight in an optimal range is critical in helping to reduce the risk of many chronic illnesses plaguing developed nations today. While there is a plethora of self-help books/DVDs/webinars/programs, etc offering hope and promise to lose those extra pounds, the fact of matter is THERE IS NO 'ONE SIZE FITS ALL SUSTAINABLE WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM' for the masses. Wait! Before you hang your head in defeat and reach for the bag of chips - give me a moment to explain. We all have the capability of optimizing our body composition and getting back in shape. However, it is imperative that we address each individual's biochemical differences and obstacles in order to achieve efficient, healthy and sustainable results. Asides from core essentials such as achieving adequate exercise and reducing refined sugars in our diet, there are some additional starting points to help you reach your goal of optimal body composition. Below are my 'Top 5 ways to Reduce Inches from your Waistline':

1. Balance your dietary fats

Balance your fats - I think he means REMOVE dietary fat, right?? Wrong. This misnomer has been engrained in us over the last 30 years, but scientists are quick to show that eating healthy fats actually promotes loss of body fat. In fact, cutting out all fat is shown to slow down your metabolism and make you feel awful while doing it! Fats from the Omega 3, 6 & 9 families are critical in the formation of cell membranes, tissues, hormones necessary for life, and an optimal metabolism. Like most things, too much of a good thing can be bad. Too many Omega 6's and not enough Omega 3's in our diet will put our body in a state of inflammation which can be detrimental to effective weight loss, and potentially increase risk of heart disease, diabetes, and even some cancers. A very simple yet effective blood test can determine your levels of your Omega fats and help steer your metabolism back on course.

2. Keep your liver clean

The liver is one of the most critical organs in your body, yet also one of the most abused. Our liver is required to break down everyday toxins that we eat, drink, breathe, put on our skin, and create in our body. Among these tasks, our liver helps to balance hormones and keep sugar levels in check - both critical when trying to not only burn fat, but also prevent it from forming in the first place. In order to optimize these functions I work with my patients to optimize nutritionally driven detoxification pathways to provide a metabolic boost into the fat burning zone. Some of my favorites include Alpha Lipoic Acid, Milk Thistle, Tumeric, and Dandelion. Also, try

starting your day with ½ of an organic lemon squeezed into warm water. This tastes great and is a wonderful liver tonic.

3. Stress connection

While many of us feel over-stressed, few are taking action to reduce their stress levels -and some even take pride in this. I'm going to be frank here folks - unmanaged stress is killing us earlier, and is making us fat while doing so. One of the main hormones secreted during a stressful event is Cortisol. One of cortisol's main functions is to mobilize sugar to help us respond to a stress. If too much sugar is mobilized, fat is deposited as a result. Chronic stress also triggers inflammatory cytokines to be released further impairing our capability to burn fat. While some stressors are obvious to us, many are not. Stress can be triggered from many sources including mental/emotional, physical, dietary, metabolic, and environmental. While it actually may stress you out worrying about all of these, take a deep breath. The goal is not to eliminate all stress -it is to reduce unnecessary stressors and improve your body's capability in handling stress. Take a stress inventory. What are your top 5 sources of stress - are these essential or can they be eliminated? Be active daily - exercise is a great way to reset your adrenal system and balance stressful chemicals. Also, practice deep breathing exercises. Whether this is Yoga, meditation, or even 10 deep breaths 3x a day. All have been proven in research to reduce levels of stress hormones, putting your body into a better position to burn fat.

4. Keep your insulin levels happy

Insulin is our fat storage hormone. Our body responds to elevations in blood sugar (often caused by cortisol secretion!) by secreting insulin to help transport sugar into our cells to produce energy. Any excess sugar is then deposited as a fuel 'reserve' around our organs and mid-section. Sadly, Type 2 Diabetes is one of the fastest growing chronic illnesses in developed nations - and also the most curable. The two biggest obstacles to achieve our optimal swimsuit body are our standard American diet (high in refined sugars/grains/and Trans fats) and also our growing sedentary lifestyle. Aside from improving your diet and getting more physically active, try adding in some cinnamon, Omega 3's, and Alpha Lipoic Acid to your diet to help keep your insulin levels in balance. If you control how your body responds to insulin, you control your waistline. Period.

5. Get rid of 'False Fat'

Many of those looking to lose weight believe that their excessive weight is completely due to body fat. While excessive body fat may play a big part in this, so can another issue - water. Water is not directly problematic; it is what we've put in our body that causes water to be retained, creating a swelling in tissues. One of the biggest triggers of weight gain is hidden food intolerances/sensitivities. While many confuse these with food allergies, there is a big difference. A true food allergy creates an IgE or Type I reaction that is often recognizable within seconds to minutes of exposure. In contrast, food intolerances or sensitivities can trigger an IgG, IgM, or IgA antibodies

creating a subtle inflammatory response. It is this inflammation that can create water retention and poses the greatest difficulty to diagnose as symptoms can appear up to 7 days after exposure. A very simple blood test can be extremely helpful to identify these reactions and tailor an eating plan as a result.

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