

Michael Geary is a Certified Personal Trainer, Certified Nutrition Specialist, and author of the internationally best-selling book "[The Truth about Six Pack Abs](#)" with readers in over 150 countries. He has effective weight loss and core training programs for both men and women. He also has tips for getting a six pack on his website [The Truth About Six Pack Abs](#). Here is a small collection of some of his articles.

The Hidden Dangers of Your Excess Abdominal Fat - It's More Serious Than a Vanity Issue!

by Mike Geary, Certified Nutrition Specialist, Certified Personal Trainer
[The Truth About Six Pack Abs](#)

Did you know that the vast majority of people in this day and age have excess abdominal fat? The first thing that most people think of is that their extra abdominal fat is simply ugly, is covering up their abs from being visible, and makes them self-conscious about showing off their body.

However, what most people don't realize is that excess abdominal fat in particular, is not only ugly, but is also a dangerous risk factor to your health. Scientific research has clearly determined that although it is unhealthy in general to have excess body fat throughout your body, it is also particularly dangerous to have excess abdominal fat.

There are two types of fat that you have in your abdominal area. The first type that covers up your abs from being visible is called subcutaneous fat and lies directly beneath the skin and on top of the abdominal muscles.

The second type of fat that you have in your abdominal area is called visceral fat, and that lies deeper in the abdomen beneath your muscle and surrounding your organs. Visceral fat also plays a role in giving certain men that "beer belly" appearance where their abdomen protrudes excessively but at the same time, also feels sort of hard if you push on it.

Both subcutaneous fat and visceral fat in the abdominal area are serious health risk factors, but science has shown that having excessive visceral fat is even more dangerous than subcutaneous fat. Both of them greatly increase the risk your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, sleep apnea, various forms of cancer, and other degenerative diseases.

Part of the reason visceral fat is particularly dangerous is that it apparently releases more inflammatory molecules into your system on a consistent basis.

If you care about the quality of your life and your loved ones, reducing your abdominal fat should be one of your TOP priorities! There's just no way around it. Besides, a side effect of finally getting rid of all of that excessive ugly abdominal fat is that your stomach will flatten out, and if you lose enough stomach fat, you will be able to visibly see those sexy six pack abs that everyone wants.

So what gets rid of extra abdominal fat? Is there actually a REAL solution beyond all of the gimmicks and hype that you see in ads and on commercials for "miracle" fat loss products?

The first thing you must understand is that there is absolutely NO quick fix solution. There are no pills or supplements of any sort that will help you lose your abdominal fat faster. Also, none of the gimmicky ab rockers, rollers, or ab belts will help get rid of abdominal fat either. You can't spot reduce your stomach fat by using any of these worthless contraptions. It simply doesn't work that way.

The ONLY solution to consistently lose your abdominal fat and keep it off for good is to combine a sound nutritious diet full of unprocessed natural foods with a properly designed strategic exercise program that stimulates the necessary hormonal and metabolic response within your body. Both your food intake as well as your training program are important if you are to get this right.

I've actually even seen a particular study that divided thousands of participants into a diet-only group and an exercise & diet combined group. While both groups in this study made good progress, the dietonly

group lost significantly LESS abdominal fat than the diet & exercise combined group.

Now the important thing to realize is that just any old exercise program will not necessarily do the trick. The majority of people that attempt getting into a good exercise routine are NOT working out

effectively enough to really stimulate the loss of stubborn abdominal fat. I see this everyday at the gym. Most people will do your typical boring ineffective cardio routines, throw in a little outdated body-part style weight training, and pump away with some crunches and side bends, and think that they are doing something useful for reducing their abdominal fat. Then they become frustrated after weeks or months of no results and wonder where they went wrong.

Well, the good news is that I've spent over a decade researching this topic, analyzing the science, and applying it "in the trenches" with myself as well as thousands of my clients from all over the world to see what works to really stimulate abdominal fat loss. I want to help you succeed in finally getting rid of that extra abdominal fat that is not only UGLY, but also DANGEROUS.

Don't waste another day allowing that nasty abdominal fat to kill your confidence as well as contribute to your risk for MAJOR diseases.

The only reason most people fail in their fitness goals is that they have good intentions at first to adopt a new lifestyle, yet after a few weeks or months, they abandon their good intentions and slip right back into their old bad habits that gave them the excess body fat in the first place.

The Importance of Physical Variability in Cardio

Exercise

By Mike Geary – CPT, Founder - [Truth About Abs](#)

Are you a cardio junkie? Everyone seems to think that "cardio" is the best way to get in shape and lose body fat. I'm going to show you with this article why I disagree!

It is quite common to hear fitness pros, doctors, and other health professionals prescribe low to moderate intensity aerobic training (cardio) to people who are trying to prevent heart disease or lose weight. Most often, the recommendations go something like this:

"Perform 30-60 minutes of steady pace cardio 3-5 times/week maintaining your heart rate at a moderate level"

Before you just give in to this popular belief and become the "hamster on the wheel" doing endless hours of boring cardio exercise, I'd like you to consider some recent scientific research that indicates that steady pace endurance cardio work may not be all it's cracked up to be.

First, realize that our bodies are designed to perform physical activity in bursts of exertion followed by recovery, or stop-and-go movement instead of steady state movement. Recent research is suggesting that physical variability is one of the most important aspects to consider in your training.

This tendency can be seen throughout nature as all animals demonstrate stop-and-go motion instead of steady state motion. In fact, humans are the only creatures in nature that attempt to do "endurance" type physical activities. Most competitive sports (with the exception of endurance running or cycling) are also based on stop-and-go movement or short bursts of exertion followed by recovery.

To examine an example of the different effects of endurance or steady state training versus stop-and-go training, consider the physiques of marathoners versus sprinters. Most sprinters carry a physique that is very lean, muscular, and powerful looking, while the typical dedicated marathoner is more often emaciated and sickly looking. Now which would you rather resemble?

Another factor to keep in mind regarding the benefits of physical variability is the internal effect of various forms of exercise on our body. Scientists have known that excessive steady state endurance exercise (different for everyone, but sometimes defined as greater than 60 minutes per session most days of the week) increases free radical production in the body, can degenerate joints, reduces immune function, causes muscle wasting, and can cause a

proinflammatory

response in the body that can potentially lead to chronic diseases.

On the other hand, highly variable cyclic training has been linked to increased anti-oxidant production in the body and an anti-inflammatory response, a more efficient nitric oxide response (which can encourage a healthy cardiovascular system), and an increased metabolic rate response (which can assist with weight loss). Furthermore, steady state endurance training only trains the heart at one specific heart rate range and doesn't train it to respond to various every day stressors.

On the other hand, highly variable cyclic training teaches the heart to respond to and recover from a variety of demands making it less likely to fail when you need it. Think about it this way.....Exercise that trains your heart to rapidly increase and rapidly decrease will make your heart more capable of handling everyday stress. Stress can cause your blood pressure and heart rate to increase rapidly. Steady state jogging and other endurance training does not train your heart to be able to handle rapid changes in heart rate or blood pressure.

The important aspect of variable cyclic training that makes it superior over steady state cardio exercise is the recovery period in between bursts of exertion. That recovery period is crucially important for the body to elicit a healthy response to an exercise stimulus. Another benefit of variable cyclic training is that it is much more interesting and has lower drop-out rates than long boring steady state cardio programs.

To summarize, some of the potential benefits of variable cyclic training compared to steady state endurance training are as follows: improved cardiovascular health, increased antioxidant protection, improved immune function, reduced risk for joint wear and tear, increased muscularity (versus decreased muscularity with endurance training), increased residual metabolic rate following exercise, and an increased capacity for the heart to handle life's every day stressors.

There are many ways you can reap the benefits of stop-and-go or variable intensity physical training. Most competitive sports such as football, basketball, racquetball, tennis, hockey, etc. are naturally comprised of highly variable stop-and-go motion. One of the absolute most effective forms of variable intensity training to really reduce body fat and bring out serious muscular definition is performing wind sprints.

In addition, weight training naturally incorporates short bursts of exertion followed by recovery periods. High intensity interval training (varying between high and low intensity intervals on any piece of cardio equipment) is yet another training method that utilizes exertion and recovery periods. For example, an interval training session on the treadmill could look something like this:

Warm-up for 3-4 minutes at a fast walk or light jog

- Interval 1 - run at 8.0 mi/hr for 1 minute
- Interval 2 - walk at 4.0 mi/hr for 1.5 minutes
- Interval 3 - run at 10.0 mi/hr for 1 minute
- Interval 4 - walk at 4.0 mi/hr for 1.5 minutes

Repeat those 4 intervals 4 times for a very intense 20-minute workout.

The take-away message from this article is to try to train your body at highly variable intensity rates for the majority of your workouts to get the most beneficial response in terms of heart health, fat loss, and muscle maintenance.

My Top 55 Lean-Body Foods to Build Muscle and Lose Body Fat

by Michael Geary - Certified Nutrition Specialist, Certified Personal Trainer

[The Truth About Abs](#)

In most of my *Lean-Body Secrets Newsletters*, I like to provide a healthy snack or meal recipe that not only is delicious, but also helps to get you closer to that hard-body appearance that everyone is looking for. In this article, I'd like to give you healthy food ideas in a different way. This time, I figured I'd just give you some ideas of what I stock my fridge and cabinets with. Remember, if you don't have junk around the house, you're less likely to eat junk. If all you have is healthy food around the house, you're forced to make smart choices. Basically, it all starts with making smart choices and avoiding temptations when you make your grocery store trip. Now these are just some of my personal preferences, but perhaps they will give you some good ideas that you'll enjoy.

Alright, so let's start with the fridge. Each week, I try to make sure I'm loaded up with lots of varieties of fresh vegetables. During the growing season, I only get local produce, but obviously in winter, I have to resort to the produce at the grocery store. Most of the time, I make sure I have plenty of vegetables like zucchini, onions, fresh mushrooms, spinach, broccoli, red peppers, etc. to use in my morning eggs. I also like to dice up some lean chicken or turkey sausage into the eggs, along with some swiss, jack, or goat cheeses. By the way I'm talking about whole eggs, NOT egg whites. Always remember that the yolk is the most nutritious and nutrient dense part of the egg, so only eating egg whites is like throwing away the best part... and no, it's NOT bad for you because of the cholesterol... eggs actually raise your GOOD cholesterol. Try to get free range organic eggs for the best quality. Coconut milk is another staple in my fridge. I like to use it to mix in with smoothies, oatmeal, or yogurt for a rich, creamy taste. Not only does coconut milk add a rich, creamy taste to lots of dishes, but it's also full of healthy saturated fats. Yeah, you heard me...I said healthy saturated fats! Healthy saturated fats like medium chain triglycerides, specifically an MCT called lauric acid. If the idea of healthy saturated fats is foreign to you, check out my [healthy fats article](#)

Back to the fridge, some other staples:

- Cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, and yogurt - I like to mix cottage or ricotta cheese and yogurt together with chopped nuts and berries for a great mid-morning or mid-afternoon meal.
- Chopped walnuts, pecans, almonds - delicious and great sources of healthy fats.
- Whole flax seeds - I grind these in a mini coffee grinder and add to yogurt or salads. Always grind them fresh because the omega-3 polyunsaturated fats are highly unstable and prone to oxidation, creating high levels of free radicals in pre-ground flax.
- Whole eggs - one of nature's richest sources of nutrients (and remember, they increase your GOOD cholesterol so stop fearing them).
- Nut butters - Plain old peanut butter has gotten a little old for me, so I get creative and mix together almond butter with sesame seed butter, or even cashew butter with macadamia butter...delicious and unbeatable nutrition!
- Salsa - I try to get creative and try some of the exotic varieties of salsas.
- Butter - don't believe the naysayers; butter adds great flavor to anything and can be part of a healthy diet (just keep the quantity small because it is calorie dense...and NEVER use margarine, unless you want to assure yourself a heart attack).
- Avocados - love them...plus a great source of healthy fats, fiber, and other nutrients. Try adding them to wraps, salads, or sandwiches.
- Whole grain wraps and whole grain bread (look for wraps and bread with at least 3-4 grams of fiber per 20 grams of total carbs).
- Rice bran and wheat germ - these may sound way too healthy for some, but they actually add a nice little nutty, crunchy taste to yogurt or smoothies, or can be added when baking muffins or breads to add nutrients and fiber.

- Leaf lettuce and spinach along with shredded carrots - for salads with dinner.
- Home-made salad dressing - using balsamic vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, and Udo's Choice oil blend. This is much better than store bought salad dressing which mostly use highly refined soybean oil (full of inflammation-causing free radicals).

Some of the staples in the freezer:

- Frozen fish - I like to try a couple different kinds of fish each week. There are so many varieties out there, you never have to get bored.
- Frozen berries - during the local growing season, I only get fresh berries, but during the other 10 months of the year, I always keep a supply of frozen blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, cherries, etc. to add to high fiber cereal, oatmeal, cottage cheese, yogurt, or smoothies
- Frozen veggies - again, when the growing season is over and I can no longer get local fresh produce, frozen veggies are the best option, since they often have higher nutrient contents compared to the fresh produce that has been shipped thousands of miles, sitting around for weeks before making it to your dinner table.
- Frozen chicken breasts - very convenient to nuke up for a quick addition to wraps or chicken sandwiches for quick meals.
- Frozen buffalo, ostrich, venison, and other "exotic" lean meats - Yeah, I know...I'm weird, but I can tell you that these are some of the healthiest meats around, and if you're serious about a lean healthy body, these types of meats are much better for you than the mass produced, hormonepumped beef and pork that's sold at most grocery stores.
- Grass-fed steaks, burgers, and ground beef - Grassfed meats have been shown to have as high as, or even higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids than salmon (without the mercury). Also, grassfed meats have much higher levels of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) compared to typical grainfed beef. I recently found an excellent on-line store where I buy all of my grass-fed meats now (they even deliver right to your door in a sealed cooler) - www.healthygrassfed.2ya.com

Alright, now the staples in my cabinets:

- Oat bran and steel cut oats - higher fiber than those little packs of instant oats.
- Cans of coconut milk - to be transferred to a container in the fridge after opening.
- Various antioxidant rich teas - green, oolong, white, rooibos are some of the best.
- [Stevia - a natural non-caloric sweetener](#), which is an excellent alternative to the nasty chemicaladen artificial sweeteners like aspartame, saccharine, and sucralose.
- Organic maple syrup - none of that high fructose corn syrup Aunt Jemima crap...only real maple syrup can be considered real food. The only time I really use this (because of the high sugar load) is added to my post-workout smoothies to sweeten things up and also elicit an insulin surge to push nutrients into your muscles.
- Raw honey - better than processed honey... higher quantities of beneficial nutrients and enzymes. Honey has even been proven in studies to improve glucose metabolism (how you process carbs). I use a teaspoon or so every morning in my teas. Yes, it is pure sugar, but at least it has some nutritional benefits... and let's be real, a teaspoon of honey is only 5 grams of carbs... certainly nothing to worry about.
- Whole wheat or whole grain spelt pasta - much higher fiber than normal pastas
- Brown rice and other higher fiber rice - NEVER white rice
- Cans of black or kidney beans - I like to add a couple scoops to my Mexican wraps for the fiber and high nutrition content. Also, beans are surprisingly one of the best sources of youth promoting antioxidants!
- Tomato sauces - delicious, and as I'm sure you've heard a million times, they are a great source of lycopene. Just watch out for the brands that are loaded with nasty high fructose corn syrup.
- Dark chocolate (as dark as possible) - This is one of my treats that satisfies my sweet tooth, plus

provides loads of antioxidants at the same time. It's still calorie dense, so I keep it to just a couple squares; but that is enough to do the trick, so I don't feel like I need to go out and get cake and ice cream to satisfy my dessert urges.

- Organic unsweetened cocoa powder - I like to mix this into my smoothies for an extra jolt of antioxidants or make my own low-sugar hot cocoa by mixing cocoa powder into hot milk with stevia and a couple melted dark chocolate chunks.

Lastly, another thing that's hard to go wrong with is a good variety of fresh fruits and berries. The staples such as bananas, apples, oranges, pears, peaches are good, but I like to also be a little more adventurous and include things like yellow mangoes, pomegranates, star fruit, kumquats, pineapples, papaya, and others. Also, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, and cherries are some of the most nutrient and antioxidant-dense fruits you can eat.

Well, I hope you enjoyed this special look into my favorite lean body meals and how I stock my cabinets and fridge. Your tastes are probably quite different than mine, but hopefully this gave you some good ideas you can use next time you're at the grocery store looking to stock up a healthy and delicious pile of groceries.

If you liked these then make sure that you check back to The Sport And Fitness Library for Mike's

next ebook on ab exercises. [Free Sports Ebooks](#)

Also check out Mike's website for his [free tips](#)