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THE SECRET TO

# AMAZING ABS

THE NO-BRAINER PLAN TO  
LOSE YOUR GUT—FAST

**N**ot all weight-training systems burn fat, but the one you'll use in this program burns fat by the pound. Here's why: Since the classic study in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*, exercise scientists have known that doing hard, 10-repetition sets and following them with short rest periods produces dramatic increases in growth hormone. Growth hormone plays a huge role in muscle building. In fact, another study found that growth-hormone increases accounted for 50% of the muscle growth in trained weight lifters during a 20-week program.

But growth hormone doesn't just build up muscles. It also obliterates flab by making your fat cells smaller, according to exercise physiologist William J. Kraemer, Ph.D., who worked on the studies mentioned above. This is what happens: During exercise, growth hormone takes fat out of your fat cells and makes your body use it for energy. Thus, the fat cells in your belly shrink because you're treating them like propane to fuel your workout.

Our diet plan, designed by Susan M. Kleiner, Ph.D., author of *Power Eating*, helps you eat the right foods at the right times to capitalize on the exercise program.

Put the plans together, and you could lose up to 1 percentage point of body fat each week and see results just 9 days into the program. After 4 weeks you should be much trimmer. After that, take a week off. Then do it all over again for another 4 weeks.

## The Workouts

### The weight lifting program

**T**he two total-body weight workouts you'll do are adapted from the program used in a Penn State study on growth hormone. Here are a few particulars.

- **SETS AND REPETITIONS:** Do three sets of 10 repetitions of each exercise.
- **EXERCISE GROUPS:** The exercises are grouped in pairs. You'll alternate between those exercises, doing one set of one exercise, then one set of the other, until you've done three sets of each. Then you'll move on to the next group.
- **REST:** Your goal is to rest 60 seconds after

every set of every exercise. (In an exercise pair, you rest between exercises, rather than going straight from one to the other as you would in a superset.) You may need up to 90 seconds of rest at first, but try to whittle that down each time you work out.

- **WEIGHTS:** For the first set of each exercise, choose the heaviest weight you think you can use for 10 repetitions with perfect form. Decrease the weight on subsequent sets if you need to.
- **PROGRESS:** Try to work with more weight on your first set of each exercise each week. Aim for a 5% increase each week.

### The Cardiovascular/Sprint Program

**Y**ou'll do two types of aerobic exercise—steady-state and interval workouts—and you'll also do sprints. The intensity of the aerobic workouts is dictated by your maximum heart rate (MHR), which is approximately 220 minus your age. You can do any type of aerobic exercise—

running, cycling, rowing, stairclimbing.

One of the best at calorie burning is swimming. The freestyle stroke provides not only a killer cardio workout, but it also works the most muscles overall—building core strength and carving your V. And it shreds calories—in fact, swimming at a moderate pace can burn more calories

than working out at a health club.

➤ **FOR THE SPRINTS**, stick to running.

➤ **FOR STEADY-STATE EXERCISE**, work at 75% of your MHR.

➤ **IN THE FIRST 2 WEEKS OF INTERVAL WORKOUTS**, warm up for 5 minutes at an easy pace, then do 1 minute of exercise at 85 to 90% of your MHR, followed by 2 minutes of recovery at 60%. During the second 2 weeks, you'll warm up, then do intervals of 1½ minutes at 85 to 90%, followed by 3 minutes of recovery at 60% of your MHR. The workout calendar will tell you how many intervals to do.

Always finish with a 5-minute cooldown at an easy pace.

➤ **EXERCISE EARLY IN THE DAY**. When you exercise strenuously, most of the calories you burn come from glycogen, a carbohydrate-based fuel stored in your muscles. If you do aerobic exercise before breakfast, your body is more likely to be low in glycogen and burn fat instead.

➤ **YOUR SPRINTS WILL LAST 10 SECONDS EACH**, followed by 50 seconds of rest. Always start and finish your sprint workouts with 5 minutes of easy jogging.

staring at the bottom of the container 15 minutes later? You're much less likely to do that if you dish out the food in a measured portion. Or, better yet, purchase single servings of packaged snack foods.

➤ **EAT ETHNIC**. Have you ever binged on a huge plate of spicy food—like Thai, Mexican, Szechuan, or Indian fare? It's nearly impossible. Not only do hot foods seem to vanquish hunger better, but they also speed the metabolism, which decreases appetite. If jalapeños seem out of place, look for hot foods that are more appropriate, such as horseradish, spicy chutney, or hot mustard.

➤ **CURE CRAVINGS WITH AN ORANGE**. At 4 P.M., you're apt to experience a blood-sugar drop, and this makes your body cry for food. That's when most folks snack on high-fat cakes, chips, and other goodies from the lobby vending machine. The answer is to have an orange instead. Researchers in Australia found that this fruit fills you up three times better than a candy bar and keeps you feeling that way for hours.

➤ **BURN FAT WITH YOGURT**. A University of Tennessee study found that men who added three servings of yogurt a day to their diets lost 61% more body fat and

81% more stomach fat over 12 weeks than men who didn't eat yogurt. Researchers speculate that the calcium helps the body burn fat and limits the amount of fat your body can make.

Nonfat milk has 38 mg of calcium per oz, so drinking a few glasses is still one of the best ways to get your daily shot of calcium.

➤ **DON'T SKIP MEALS**. While it may seem counterintuitive, you should never skip a meal. If you lift weights, you need to feed your muscles, even if you're watching your weight. Otherwise you might be shorting yourself on protein. The average 180-pound iron worker needs a lot of protein—between 110 and 140 g a day to build and repair muscle. To get 100 g, you could have two large eggs, two glasses of milk, 4 oz of chicken breast (about the size of your palm), and an 8-oz steak. Eat another 8-oz steak, and you're up to 150.

Since you'd be insane to eat like that, we recommend adding a daily protein shake. A study found that people who consumed a protein-shake diet lost more weight and body fat than those who ate the same amount of calories in food with 60% less protein.

## The Food

The meal plan on pages 14 and 15 gives you a week's worth of simple meals. Each weekday is equivalent to any other weekday, so if Monday's meals turn your crank better than Wednesday's, you can eat Monday's twice a week for the 4 weeks. But note that the weekend meals have more calories, so don't give yourself a week of Sundays.

➤ **SERVING SIZES**: The bigger you are, the more food you're going to need. So eat enough at each meal to feel full, and let the exercise plan do the rest.

➤ **SNACKS**: Eat snacks 1 and 2 whenever you like during the day. Eat the preworkout snack 2 hours before exercise. Within 2 hours after your workout, have Kleiner's postworkout muscle-building shake. To build muscle faster, your body needs to take in the right mix of protein and carbohydrates during this time, and that optimum nutrient combination stimulates the hormones needed to make it happen. To make the postworkout shake, throw the

following items into a blender and whip until smooth: 8 oz fat-free milk, 1 packet Carnation Instant Breakfast, 1 banana, and 1 tablespoon peanut butter.

➤ **WATER**: Okay, so water isn't exciting, but drinking about eight glasses of it a day has a lot of benefits. It helps keep you satiated (often what we interpret as hunger is really thirst). It flushes the waste products your body churns out when processing protein or breaking down fat. It even helps your liver take your stored fat and put it to use for energy. And it transports nutrients to your muscles, to keep your metabolism clicking. Drink it all day, every day. Include at least one glass with every meal and snack.

### Eating tips

➤ **ALWAYS USE DINNERWARE**. Never eat foods out of their original containers. How many times have you dipped into a pint of ice cream with the intention of having "just a tad," only to find yourself

## CALCIUM SOURCES

Food	Calcium (mg)	Fat (g)	Calories
<b>1 SLICE SWISS CHEESE (1 OZ)</b>	272 (272/oz)	7.8	107
<b>1 SLICE PART-SKIM MOZZARELLA (1 OZ)</b>	207 (207/oz)	4.9	79
<b>CANNED SARDINES WITH BONES (1 OZ)</b>	91 (91/oz)	4.6	68
<b>HANDFUL OF ALMONDS (1 OZ)</b>	75 (75/oz)	15.0	169
<b>1 CUP LOW-FAT VANILLA YOGURT (8 OZ)</b>	389 (49/oz)	2.9	194

### YOUR WORKOUT CALENDAR

Workouts	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>Weight workout A:</b> Bench press, squat. Cable row, leg extension. Military press, bent-knee incline situp. Biceps curl, standing calf raise.	<b>Interval training:</b> 7 or 8 1-minute intervals, each followed by 2 minutes of recovery	<b>Weight workout B:</b> Lat pulldown, lying leg curl. Dip, leg press. Lateral raise, back extension. Dumbbell shrug, reverse crunch.	<b>No exercise</b>	<b>Weight workout A,</b> followed by 15–20 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Sprints:</b> 8 at 10 seconds each	<b>No exercise</b>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>Weight workout B,</b> followed by 15–20 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Interval training:</b> 9 or 10 1-minute intervals, each followed by 2 minutes of recovery	<b>Weight workout A</b>	<b>No exercise</b>	<b>Weight workout B,</b> followed by 15–20 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Sprints:</b> 10 at 10 seconds each	<b>No exercise</b>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>Weight workout A,</b> followed by 20–25 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Interval training:</b> 6 or 7 1½-minute intervals, each followed by 3 minutes of recovery	<b>Weight workout B</b>	<b>No exercise</b>	<b>Weight workout A,</b> followed by 20–25 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Sprints:</b> 12 at 10 seconds each	<b>No exercise</b>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<b>Weight workout B,</b> followed by 20–25 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Interval training:</b> 8 or 9 1½-minute intervals, followed by 3 minutes of recovery	<b>Weight workout A,</b> followed by 20–25 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>No exercise</b>	<b>Weight workout B,</b> followed by 20–25 minutes of steady-state cardiovascular exercise	<b>Sprints:</b> 14 at 10 seconds each	<b>No exercise</b>

### YOUR MEAL PLAN

Meals	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>BREAKFAST</b>	Bagel with butter Glass of fat-free milk Banana	Eggs Toast with butter Banana	Cottage cheese English muffin with butter Grapes	Bran cereal with fat-free milk Banana	Bagel with cream cheese Orange	Pancakes with butter and syrup Orange	Low-fat frozen waffles with butter Banana
<b>SNACK 1</b>	Fruit juice Pretzels	Fruit juice Graham crackers	Fruit juice Low-fat pudding or gelatin	Fruit juice Low-fat brownie	Fruit juice Fat-free chips with salsa	Fruit juice Hard-boiled egg	Fruit juice Low-fat chips with salsa
<b>SNACK 2</b>	Grapes	Dried apricots	Apple	Pear	Apple	Pear	Cantaloupe
<b>LUNCH</b>	Spaghetti and meatballs Italian bread	Roast-beef sandwich Carrot sticks	Turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato Cucumber salad	Tuna sandwich Tomato-cucumber salad	Cheese-and-vegetable pizza	Grilled cheese sandwich with tomatoes	Homemade cheese-and- mushroom pizza on Boboli bread
<b>SNACKS AND SHAKES</b>	Preworkout snack: Fat-free milk and low-fat cookies Postworkout shake	Preworkout snack: Low-fat flavored yogurt Postworkout shake	Preworkout snack: Fat-free milk, crackers, peanut butter Postworkout shake	Cashews	Preworkout snack: Fat-free milk, cashews Postworkout shake	Preworkout snack: Low-fat flavored yogurt Postworkout shake	Blueberries (fresh or frozen) with low-fat ice cream
<b>DINNER</b>	Grilled or broiled chicken breast Mixed-green salad with fat-free dressing Low-fat ice cream	Cheese quesadillas Mixed-green salad with fat-free dressing	Fish sticks Potato salad Low-fat ice cream	Steak and baked potato with fat-free sour cream Tossed salad with fat-free dressing Low-fat ice cream	Shrimp over pasta with tomato sauce Mixed-green salad with fat-free dressing Sherbet	Grilled sirloin burger Grilled zucchini and corn Fruit salad	Grilled swordfish on skewers with grapes and bell peppers Rice Italian ice

## The Secret to 6-Pack Abs

**H**ere's a tough but quick ab-searing routine designed by cover model Owen McKibbin to whip your abs

into condition. You can do it by yourself or with a partner. Add it to your workout once or twice a week for 3 to 5 weeks.

### Medicine ball blast

After a thorough warmup, select one of the following versions, and do one to three sets of 10 intense repetitions.

**> WITH A PARTNER:** Set an adjustable ab bench at a 45-degree angle. Lie down on it and hook your feet in at the top. When you sit up, have your partner throw a 5- to 15-pound medicine ball at your chest. Catch it at your chest, lower yourself as far as you can without arching your back (you want your back to stay flat throughout this movement), then sit up quickly and

explosively, chest-passing the ball to your partner at the top of the move.

**> SOLO:** Hold the ball at your chest as you lower yourself. As you come up, chest-pass the ball straight up over your head. Catch it at the top of the movement, then lower yourself and repeat.

**> HARD-CORE SOLO ALTERNATIVE:** Throw the ball against a wall as you come up, catch it on the rebound, then go back down. You have to generate a lot of power on the way up to pull this off.



### Lateral medicine ball blast

**> WITH A PARTNER:** Same setup, but this time have your partner stand 5 feet to your right. As you come up, twist to your right as you throw. Have him throw it back to you at the top of the movement, then untwist as you lower yourself. After five repetitions, have him move to your left.

**> SOLO:** Hold a medicine ball or weight plate against your chest. As you come up, twist to the right and extend your arms, as if you were throwing the ball or weight. Pull it back to your chest as you untwist and lower yourself. You can do five in a row to one side or alternate sides five times, for a total of 10 repetitions. Do one or two sets.

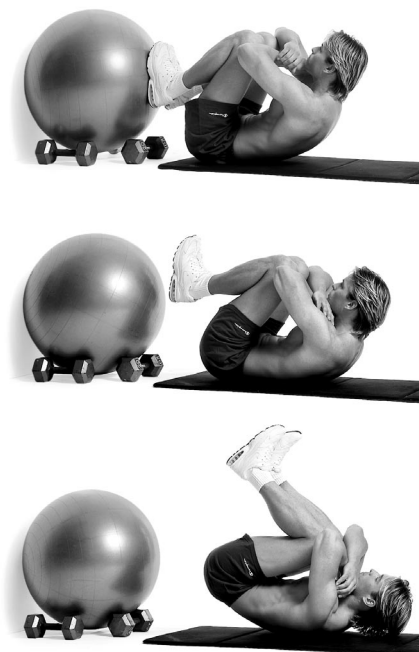


### Be the ball

Do one timed set of either version for 40 to 70 seconds.

**> WITH A PARTNER:** Lie on the floor on your back, bring your knees up close to your chest, and cross your arms, putting your right hand on your left shoulder and vice versa. Crunch up to touch your elbows to your knees. Ask your partner to grab your ankles and slowly rock you back and forth, 5 to 7 seconds each way. Keep your head off the floor and your elbows against your knees the entire time.

**> SOLO:** Wedge a Swiss ball—or something else that'll produce a rebounding effect—against a wall and assume the same starting position as for the version with a partner, but situate yourself so your feet hit the ball as you rock forward. Use the rebound to rock back.



## The Best Oblique Exercise

**T**he muscles on the sides of your waist help to bend your torso from side to side. But that's beside the point. They just look cool—if you can see them, of course. The most effective way to work those muscles: Bend to the side while struggling to hold your torso in place.

Next ab workout, try this crunch/side-bend combo: Lie on your back, knees bent, hands behind your head. Curl up so your shoulder blades are off the floor. Now bend at the waist to the right, aiming your right armpit toward your right hip. Straighten, then bend to your left. Do eight on each side.

## Strong Arms, Strong Abs

**T**he exercise known as the plank, or bridge, requires arm strength. You rest your weight on your forearms and toes, pull your abs in tight, and hold your body in a straight line from shoulders to heels. After a few weeks of doing this twice a week—along with the

similar side bridge, in which you rest your weight on one forearm and the outer edge of the same-side foot while holding your body straight as a pencil—you'll notice muscles on the sides of your waist that you've never seen before.

## BURN 1,000 MORE CALORIES A WEEK

**FIND TIME >**

Can't run or find time for the gym? These five simple "exercises" will do the trick.

Lift weights intensely for 20 minutes	164 calories
Play tennis for 30 minutes	287 calories
Chop wood for 15 minutes	123 calories
Move furniture for 20 minutes	164 calories
Ride a bike at 13 MPH for 25 minutes	273 calories
<b>Total: 1,011 calories</b>	