

THE ABS CONSCIOUS PLAN

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Part 1 ABS CONSCIOUS PLAN

Abs Conscious 1800 Calorie Diet

The first key to losing body fat and gaining muscle is with proper nutrition. You need to create a diet that burns slightly more calories than consumed.

I leave it up to you to follow the 1800 Calorie Diet I recommend for flatter abs. If you already are on a diet plan, please continue with it or choose one that suits you best. Go with your gut feeling when choosing because you will be the one having to follow it. For optimal results consult with a registered dietician so that an individualized meal plan will be developed to meet your specific nutritional and lifestyle needs.

I truly believe in following an 1800 Calorie Diet for getting flatter abs. Not only is it healthy, it is prescribed to diabetic patients. That means you will be helping to prevent diabetes and will lose weight at the same time.

It is important to have three, but it is better to have five meals. Two of them should be healthy snacks. The last meal should be a light meal. You will wake up with a flat stomach and will be ready to eat a good sized breakfast. Starting the day with enough energy will keep you from bingeing on junk food and will give you enough energy to exercise.

To summarize the 1800 Calorie Diet, it is based on having you consume a diet divided into 50% carbohydrates, 20% proteins, and 30% fats.

You can obtain nutrient profiles for 13,000 foods through the What's In The Foods You Eat Search Tool at:

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7783>

This is a free online and/or downloadable tool, and it even lets you adjust the portion sizes of the food.

As the name states, you consume 1800 calories a day. Please intake 2200 calories if you are male. Do drink purified water throughout the day to keep you from getting hungrier than you should.

Here is a great 1800 Calorie Diet menu for you:

Breakfast

- 1 cup oatmeal
- 1/2 cup blueberries, strawberries, or raspberries
- 1 cup organic low-fat milk
- 1/2 whole-grain toast or muffin, toasted, topped with 1/2 teaspoon light butter
- 1 cup orange juice or diluted apple juice

Mid-morning snack

- 1 apple, sprinkled with sea salt
- 1 cup nettle leaf infusion with or without coffee

Lunch

- Sandwich: one 6-inch whole-wheat pita, spread with 1 tablespoon light mayonnaise and stuffed with 2 ounces turkey slices, 1 slice of cheese, tomato slices and lettuce
- 6 baby carrots
- 1 cup cubed cantaloupe, sprinkled with cinnamon

Afternoon Snack

- 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt blended with your favorite fruit(s) and 1 tablespoon flax meal

Dinner

- 3 ounces grilled or broiled salmon, with your favorite spices
- 2/3 cup brown rice
- 1 cup sliced zucchini spears, steamed or baked and sprinkled with 1 teaspoon Parmesan cheese
- Salad: 2 cups Romaine lettuce leaves topped with 1 tangerine, peeled and sectioned; 1/4 small sweet onion, chopped; and 1 tablespoon chopped almonds; drizzled with 1 tablespoon any vinaigrette dressing
- 1/2 cup low calorie ice cream
- Water or nettle leaf infusion or other tea

Extra Diet Tip: For a quick fix, I found that following a high-protein, very low carb diet such as the Atkins Diet, for two to four weeks, works. I don't recommend for anyone to continue it for more than four weeks for a quick 'weight loss to achieve a flatter tummy' fix. Always consult with your physician before starting any diet or exercise program.

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Balance your Carbohydrates to Promote Flatter Abs

Make carbohydrates about 50 to 55 percent of your diet. To avoid making the body feel like it is starving do not go under 202 grams. To avoid bloating do not go over 292 grams. You can have a total of 14 servings of carbohydrate per day and should space out your carbohydrate servings into at least three meals per day.

If you do not want to be counting carbs, eat at least three to five 4-ounce servings of vegetables and two to four 4-ounce servings of fruit each day. One cup (8 ounces cooked or 2 ounces dry, or 2 slices of bread) of whole grains per meal is ideal. This is a good balance for an Abs Conscious Plan diet because vegetables, fruits, and whole grain foods are high quality carbs that also contain fiber.

A Calcium Diet for Ab Conscious Dieters

Various studies have indicated that you can burn about 100 more calories of body fat each day by eating or drinking dairy foods. Burning 100 calories this way equals to 10 pounds per year. Do keep in mind that you may lose body fat, but gain muscle due to exercise and still weigh the same. You will know when you have lost body fat because your clothing starts to look better on you.

According to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM Fit Society(r) Page, Summer 2004, p. 8-9), a high calcium diet contributes directly to fat loss in the stomach area. This is the best news ever for you. The ACSM also stated that a high calcium diet turns more calories to heat than to body fat, and that a calcium-rich diet can help minimize midlife fat gain.

Exactly what is a calcium-rich diet? This is one in which you intake 1000 mg of calcium if you are a female between 20 to 50 years of age. Do not go overboard. Three to four servings of calcium rich foods or drinks are usually enough.

Great sources of calcium include low-fat dairy products such as milk (8 ounces), cheese (2 slices), and yogurt (1 cup), calcium-enriched drinks, and various herbal infusions.

I highly recommend plain yogurt because you are getting two excellent benefits for your Ab Conscious Plan. Besides containing calcium, yogurt has beneficial bacteria. These beneficial bacteria assist in the curing of many stomach problems that interfere with digestion and having flatter abs. I use White Mountain plain yogurt because it is free of preservatives and contains active yogurt cultures that help the immune system and help prevent osteoporosis. Having a strong skeletal system will help you look more graceful and will let you show off your flatter abs.

Well can't you just take calcium supplements, like capsules? In a 12-week weight loss study, those who ate three cups of yogurt per day lost 60 percent more fat

than those taking calcium supplements. Keep in mind that milk, cheese, and yogurt contain protein and protein preserves muscle and digests slower so you end up feeling satisfied longer. Therefore, you will eat less in between your designated healthy snacks and meals. If you're going to take calcium supplements, I recommend liquid calcium, especially calcium citrate, because I believe it is absorbed into the body more than any pill. Calcium carbonate is not easily absorbed by the body.

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Part 2 Improving your Digestion is KEY to Having Better Abs

You can be a belly dancer for an entire lifetime, but if your digestion is not optimal your abdomen will still not look its best. There will still be a pooch hanging around. By the way, belly dancing is an excellent option to implement into your exercise routine. You can try belly dancing by learning through a video or local class. But, the important point is that healthy digestion is the key to having a better looking abdomen.

Fiber, Essential Fatty Acids, and Water for Achieving Flat Abs

Improving your digestion consists of following a healthy diet. It is a must to consume enough fiber to get your digestion moving. You can get fiber by eating your favorite fruits, vegetables, or grains. It is better that you eat the fruits, vegetables, and grains you know you love instead of being told exactly what you **must** eat. The goal is to improve your digestion by consuming more fiber. Just start adding fiber-rich foods with each meal. Consuming 25-30 grams daily is ideal. If you don't consume the ideal amount, then start slowly to avoid bloating. For example, have oatmeal and strawberries for breakfast, add some broccoli or a leafy green salad to lunch, and a slice of whole grain bread to your dinner.

Fiber improves blood-sugar regulation, binds and eliminates toxins, and decreases appetite because it makes you feel full without increasing body fat or weight. This leads to flatter abs.

Essential fatty acids and water are vital to the lubrication and improvement of your digestive system. Essential fatty acids replace the bad fats stored in your body, including fat stored in the abdominal area.

Among the best essential fatty acids are Omega 3 found in fish and fish liver oil, and in flax and flax seed oil. Fish oils also benefit your heart and your brain. Flax seed oil helps with weight loss and arthritis related pains. Flax can also be taken in seed form and therefore besides lubricating the digestive system, ends up helping to move along the digestive process because of its fiber content. Many vegetables contain essential fatty acids.

Since our body does not manufacture essential fatty acids, and it is often hard to consume enough, I recommend you take fish oil in capsule form. You do have to be careful that the oils you are taking are not rancid. They should contain Vitamin E and you should refrigerate them to prevent spoilage. If there is a severe fishy smell when you cut one open, then it is best to consider it spoiled. With much success, I use the Nordic Naturals brand of Omega 3 fish oil.

For flax, liquid flax that has been cold pressed and kept refrigerated at the store selling it, is best. I use 1 to 3 tablespoons daily of ground flax meal by Red Mill. It is delicious with cereal or mixed with a cup of milk, orange juice, or apple juice. It has a mild nutty flavor.

Yet another reason Omega 3 helps our belly is that it helps heal inflammation of the intestines. Taken in capsule form, the Omega 3-rich oils can be mixed with each other and with Omega 6 and Omega 9 containing oils such as borage oil or evening primrose oil. Oil Smart by Renew Life is an excellent soft gel capsule that contains a mix of borage, flax, and cold water fish oils and, therefore, delivers all three of the essential fatty acids.

The standard recommendation for Omega 3 is 1000 – 2000 mg daily. If you are taking blood thinning medication, please check with your doctor before taking fish oil. If you feel that your LDL (good cholesterol) levels will rise due to taking fish oil, taking garlic can prevent that.

Water consumption will also help your digestion. Distilled water is delicious and healthy. If you cannot stand to drink water all day, just drink diluted fruit juices, low sodium V8, green tea, or herbal infusions. I'll explain the details regarding an herbal infusion in Part 4. Six to eight glasses of 8 ounces of fluids are the general recommendation. Drinking tea counts as half of the ounces that you actually consumed since teas have a diuretic effect.

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Part 3 Exercise your Way to Flatter Abs

For the purpose of the *Secrets to Flatter Abs* ebook, I will only detail abdominal warm-ups and various abdominal exercises. For best results, please combine your very own previous or current warm-up and an entire body exercise routine with the warm-up and exercise routine explained here.

Stretching and Shifting



Abdominal stretches are a perfect way to start the routine. These are done while standing. Simply lift your arms and hands straight up then move your body backwards by bending back at the waist. Hold the position for 10 seconds while you breathe at your usual rate and depth. Repeat 5 times. Please only bend back as far as your body tells you to. You can also stretch to the side as shown in the picture. Make sure you are breathing normally while stretching. If you cannot do sit-ups or crunches, these stretching exercises are a good alternative.

There is a technique which healers use to help their clients to reposition or shift their internal organs, namely the bladder and uterus when there is tilting or slight prolapsing. It makes sense that repositioning the internal organs by lifting them back into place helps you have a flatter abdominal area. The shifting may feel uncomfortable due to the muscles not being used to this type of movement. It should not be painful and you can do this prior to doing abdominal exercise sets. If you are mixing abdominal with other body part exercise routines, you can do this in the pre-exercise or warm-up phase.

Start by laying down on the floor or on a firm bed. Bend your knees to place your feet as close as possible to the buttocks. It is natural to want to tuck in your buttocks and that is fine because that helps your heels and buttocks be closer as they should be and this lets you feel your internal organs shift toward your rib cage.

Please note: Keep your buttocks tucked in for the entire process.

Push your hand inside right hip bone and push your insides to the middle, then push your hand inside the left hip bone and push your insides to the middle of your abdominal cavity.

Place your hands slightly below your bladder. Position your fingertips into your abdomen while you push up while keeping fingertips into abdomen. You should be able to feel the organs move towards the rib cage. It may feel uncomfortable, but this should not be painful. If it is, it is best you stop. Do not do this if you recently had abdominal surgery or if you have a hernia.

While still in position (buttocks tucked in), follow up with my favorite abdominal exercise. Tuck, flex, and vacuum in your abdominal muscles into your spine for 15 seconds. This is done to get your organs used to being shifted into a higher

position. The more your abdominal muscle develops the higher up toward your rib cage your internal organs will be.

Whether standing or laying on the floor, do the abdominal muscle vacuum exercise throughout the day when you have a little break or whenever you remember to. And, as an added benefit, this abdominal muscle hold works to tone and improve the transverse muscles. The transverse muscles are located deep within the body and act as a girdle to keep your internal organs in place. This will help you gain abdominal strength and have much flatter abs.

This uncommonly used, yet effective, almost secret technique, coupled with abdominal exercise can help you have a flatter tummy. Do this gentle internal organ lifting and vacuum exercise during the warm up of your exercise routine.

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Trick Your Muscles Into Giving You More

Let's face it, the hardest part of the body to improve is the abdominal area. But with the determination of following a few tricks, you 'can' make it happen. Just caring enough about yourself to start working out will free your mind of the awful thought of having a pooch. You will automatically improve your posture with the confident sense of renewal that follows exercising. Keep in mind that all we can do is improve the body shape and bone structure we were born with while accepting it. And, do tell yourself, "Every day, in every way, I am getting better."

To achieve defined abs you should perform specific abdominal exercises that work all the abdominal muscles. The secret to faster results is to trick your muscles into working harder inside your body while your workout '**feels**' easier.

So, what's the secret to tricking your muscles into doing more for you? It's very simple. You alternate exercises between muscle groups. While you are exercising the upper abdominal muscles, you are resting your lower abdominal muscles. As soon as you complete 15 reps of upper abdominal muscle exercises, then do a lower abdominal muscle exercise set of 15 reps. Then follow with 15 reps of a side oblique muscle exercise. While one muscle group is working, the other one is mostly resting. This will keep you from overwhelming a certain muscle. You will be able to do **more** triple sets doing upper, lower, and side oblique abdominal exercises. I recommend you do each of the three muscles' sets of 15 reps, then start the process again for a second, then for a third time. After that, you can rest for 10 to 15 seconds.

Depending on your health and fitness level, you can decide how many sets you wish to repeat. Three sets is a good place to start. You can also implement your own abdominal exercises that you are already familiar with. Otherwise, here are a few exercises you can use to get flatter abs.

UPPER ABS: To tighten and tone your upper abdominal area and strengthen your lower back, the classic crunch works wonders.

POSITION: Lie flat on your back and bend your knees, placing your feet flat on the ground. Place your hands behind your head to support your neck.

EXERCISE: Curl your body upward until your shoulders are off the ground. (Do not sit all the way up.) Flex your upper abdominal muscles the entire time, and as hard as possible. Return to your starting position while still flexing. Repeat until you finish your set of 15 reps. Continue with a lower abdominal muscle exercise set.



Crunch for upper abs

LOWER ABS: The knee-in tones and tightens the whole lower abdominal area while strengthening your lower back.

POSITION: Lie flat on your back with your legs extended straight out. Keep the small of your back close to the floor.

EXERCISE: Flex your lower abs tightly and make sure you keep your knees together. Pull your knees in toward your chest until you meet discomfort. Return to starting position while keeping your abs flexed. For an added strengthening benefit, use a dumbbell between your ankles.



Knee-in for lower abs

SIDE OBLIQUES: The oblique crunch defines and develops the side abdominal muscles.

POSITION: Lie on your back and bend your knees. Position your knees to one side, then the other when it's time to do another set. Make sure your lower knee is touching the floor.

EXERCISE: Keep your back flat on the floor. Then get in the crunch position. This means you raise your shoulders off the floor. Raise your chest straight up and not to the side. Return to starting position and repeat. Also, do not use your neck to raise yourself, use your chest muscles. You may place your hands behind your neck if that makes you feel more comfortable.



Side oblique crunch

It's amazing how many machines and tools are being advertised as the magic solution for flatter abs. The latest hails from Japan. It is a mechanical machine that you sit on and you tone and strengthen your abdominal muscles while it emulates bull riding. I have not tried it yet, but the most effective home or gym tool you can use for flatter abs is the exercise ball. Exercise balls are great for crunches, twists, and other movements.



It is important to exercise the entire body in order to achieve a balanced posture and symmetrical appearance. Since your problem area is your belly, then you must do extra abdominal exercises to speed up the improvement. And, the only way to show off your visible cuts is by reducing the layer of body fat covering them.

Following the Abs Conscious Plan, and guiding yourself by the 1800 Calorie Diet will certainly help you meet your goal. You should also consider aerobic exercise, as it is an excellent way to burn calories and maintain your weight or lose weight.

Decreasing your caloric intake will lead to initial weight loss, but you will reach a plateau and you may also lose muscle. That's why exercise is vital for longterm results. Please consult a certified health care professional before starting any diet or exercise program, especially if you have health concerns.

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Part 4: How to Avoid Stress Induced Abdominal Weight Gain

It's been in the news for the past few years, the hormone that is released from our body when we are stressed causes weight gain. This hormone, cortisol, can be decreased significantly with herbal products such as Relacore. The best kept secret for avoiding abdominal weight gain due to stress is by the use of adaptogens.

Adaptogens to the Rescue - Ginseng

Adaptogens also help decrease cortisol. Adaptogens are herbs that adapt to your body's needs. Various adaptogens include Ashwaganda, Astragalus, and Ginseng of the various types.

I recommend American ginseng because it is the least likely to cause side effects among the ginsengs. Ginseng decreases the effects of stress, helps support the immune system, and treats digestive problems such as ulcers. In his book, *The Natural Physician's Healing Therapies*, Mark Stengler, N.D. states that in his experience the most effective dosage for American ginseng is 1,000 to 2,000 mg daily of the capsule or 1 to 2 milliliters of tincture two to three times daily. I like to take ginseng early in the day and with meals. It is better to start with a lower dose and increase slowly to find out what is most effective for you and to prevent jitters. Stengler also states that ginseng takes about two weeks to take effect on the body.

Please do not take any type of ginseng during pregnancy or lactation unless you have the direct care of a knowledgeable and certified or licensed health practitioner.

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Nurture Stress Away With This Natural Wonder

Excessive stress causes adrenal burnout. This directly affects our hormones, including cortisol. The best way I know how to cure adrenal burnout AND decrease abdominal fat is through the use of the nourishing herb nettles. Taken straight for six to eight weeks at one to two cups per day, dry leaf nettle infusion is known to cure deep adrenal stress. Drinking nettle leaf infusion also resets your metabolism and improves the work of your digestion, thus giving you flatter abs. Taken consistently, this herb gives you so much extra energy you didn't even know you had. Plus, it has so much pure and natural nutrition that you end up losing your cravings for sweets. Nettle contains protein and is a calcium-rich herb, and can take the place of one to two of your 'Abs Conscious Plan' milk servings. The less stress you have, the less likely you are to crave unhealthy sweet snacks that lead to fatter and not flatter abs.

To prepare nettle leaf infusion, boil 1 quart of distilled water and pour it inside a glass jar that already contains 1 ounce (about a handful) of organic dried nettle leaves. You then must cover the jar and steep for at least 4 hours. Pour yourself a cup of the mild tasting infusion either warm or cold, by itself or with any drink you wish to mix it with. I take one to two cups daily. I prepare it by pouring 12 to 16 ounces of boiling water in a glass jar that contains a heaping tablespoon of dried nettle leaves. I tell every person I meet about nettle leaf infusion because it has given me a new outlook on life due to the "feels good to be alive" feeling I have gained from taking it. I first heard about it from a very wise octogenarian I met at a beauty salon. Then after researching, I found extensive information online provided by Susun Weed, a powerful voice of the wise woman herbal movement.

In case you are concerned about the safety of herbs, this is the gentlest of herbs and it is so nutritious that it's even safe to use during pregnancy. Always consult your qualified health care provider before taking anything that is not prescribed for you.

VERY IMPORTANT, Please Note: In her book *Breast Cancer? Breast Health!*, Susun Weed recommends that you start with only 4 ounces of nettle leaf infusion. Through experience, I recommend the same and I started with 3-4 ounces of water and 1 flat teaspoon of nettle leaf. You must start on a very low dose and work your way up very slowly to avoid the fast release of stored toxins and the ill feeling that comes with that.

I tried using too much too soon and ended up feeling nauseated due to the release of stored bacteria in the stomach. Releasing old bacteria, which is usually caused by meats, sure leads to having a flatter stomach. But, of course, it is better to be gentle to your body.

When you combine various Abs Conscious Plan methods featured in *Secrets to Flatter Abs*, you will have flatter abs and you will feel better about your health and

your appearance. Choose the methods that resonate well with you. I also challenge you to try new ways of obtaining flatter abs from those discussed here.

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Part 5 ABS CONSCIOUS PLAN EXTRA SECRETS

Lymphatic Drainage and Other Methods to Having Flatter Abs

Lymphatic circulation needs to be optimal in order for our body to function properly. This includes weight and fat loss. Improvement of lymphatic circulation is helpful to promoting the release of fat from the body. The best way to improve your lymphatic circulation is through exercise. The more muscle you have, the better your lymph circulates.

Other methods that improve lymphatic circulation include using a mini-trampoline, lyposassage, and dry skin brushing. If you decide to use a mini-trampoline for the first time, please start with only one to two minutes daily, and build your way up. Otherwise, continue with your current routine and know that you are on the right track. Lyposassage is performed by certified technicians and is said to give the effects of lyposuction after a long series of treatments. I see it as a tool that you can use to help improve your circulation. Skin brushing is usually done with a natural bristle brush on either wet or dry skin. I prefer dry skin because I can jump in the shower after I'm done. Brushing your skin in a circular motion, start at the feet and move your way up. Always brush toward the heart. Avoid brushing your face, neck, ears, and breasts.

The secret to getting flatter abs through the use of skin brushing is very simple, but it does require a daily routine. Brush your entire abdominal area for 5 minutes using a circular motion. After thirty days of concentrating on skin brushing the abdominal area, you should see a difference in the way your pants fit. You will lose about an inch. It may not seem like a lot, but it does make a difference in getting you on the right track to flatter abs.

On another note, and for a temporary fix, there is a posture girdle by Ardyss. Their brochure claims that wearing the girdle consistently will mold your body into

having flatter abs and a lifted derrier. I have not tried them, but would like to. If you have circulation problems or other health concerns including, but not limited to, heart disease, diabetes, and asthma, please ask your doctor before trying any girdle. There are also department store elasticized waistbands that temporarily make your abs look flatter. Many women enjoy wearing those because their clothing fits better.

Finally, an interesting new way to achieving a flatter abdominal area is by external ultrasound treatments without aspiration. Imagine that, fat removal without going through surgery. The results tend to be small, but it may be possible to achieve more fat loss with more treatments. External ultrasound excites the fat cell's outer cell wall. This causes the fat cell to burst or weaken and the cell wall then gets absorbed and removed by the body.

No matter what age you are and what physique you have, you can always do something to get flatter abs. Consider each of these options presented to you and decide on a plan to get flatter abs. I truly believe in the 1800 Calorie Diet, taking adaptogens to prevent abdominal fat from increasing, and in abdominal stretches and exercises combined with an entire body workout of your choice. Do keep in mind the excellent benefits that drinking nettle leaf infusion can provide. I guarantee you will have more energy than ever.

Be ready to say goodbye to your love handles and welcome the new you by following the Abs Conscious Plan techniques found in *Secrets to Flatter Abs*. You will feel peace of mind knowing you are getting closer to meeting your goal. Meeting one goal often leads to success in other areas of your life. Increasing your self-esteem is an added benefit because your outer self will be matching your inner beauty and soul. And, the best part is the side effect of improved health.

Live your life through the Abs Conscious Plan, and love the new you!

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