

Losing Fat For Summer

With summer just around the corner (and it has been rumoured to be an uncharacteristically hot one this year in England!) it is inevitable that there are plenty of you who have decided to take an extra step to make sure you look your best for beach season. I congratulate those of you who are already doing this as I am not a fan of waiting until the last but if you haven't started yet, not to worry- I am going to help you get there.

Firstly you need to assess where you are and what you want to achieve. This is going to be strictly about fat loss which will leave you looking more defined, toned, lean, cut or whatever adjective you want to insert. If you do not want to get leaner this article won't be for you or at least not at the moment.

Before you read on, put yourself in one of the following categories.

- 1) You are very overweight and want to lose a lot of fat
- 2) You carry a bit of extra fat and want to lose a little
- 3) You are lean and want to move to ripped
- 4) You want to lose fat but savour your strength.

If you are a powerlifter or you are heavily into your strength and care about your lifts in the gym, it is important to take a more modest approach as if you lose a lot of fat in a short space of time it is very possible that you will lose some strength in the process. Now, if your only goal is to look good naked- you can take as hardcore an approach as is appropriate for your current level of fat.

Here are a few extremely effective tips to get you going, regardless of which category you put yourself in.

- 1) Your training must reflect your goal. Your routine needs to have a high metabolic cost. This means your adaptations need to be muscular and not neural. Neural training is geared at strength gains and will involve long periods of rest between sets to help you lift the heaviest weight possible. Reps are kept lower (usually less than 6) and you are going to sweat less during this kind of programme. If you aim at muscular adaptations you will want to shorten your rest periods (less than a minute and a half in most cases). This type of training should increase your level of sweating, increase your heart rate and if you really push it will make you feel nauseous. This lactate training increases your output of GH (growth hormone) which will in turn help you lose appreciable amounts of fat.
- 2) Clean up your diet. You may not always be 100% strict and are happy in doing so. If you aren't getting the results you want then you should take things at least one step further. Set yourself a target of being strict for a period of time and you will be much more likely to stick with it.

Step1; Eliminate all refined foods. This can be all anything from muffins and pizzas to those considered healthier such as breads, pasta and cereals. These foods are inevitably higher on the glycemic load scale (more significant than the glycemic index scale) and have a higher insulin index. Insulin is a storage hormone secreted by the pancreas which lowers blood sugar levels by shuttling nutrients out of your blood and into your cells. Insulin inhibits fat

loss and is associated with fat storage on your suprailiac (just above your hip bone i.e. love handles).

Step 2; Increase your protein intake. It is probably one of the most common pieces of advice in the gym and on fitness forums yet is still rarely obeyed to its full potential. I cannot think of a single fat loss expert who recommends less than 1g per pound of bodyweight and I have heard recommendations up to 4g per pound of bodyweight. The best protein sources to consume in these quantities are from meat, fish and eggs. This will help lower insulin levels and help build muscle, both of these will lower your fat percentage.

Step 3; Increase your intake of vegetables. Vegetables are much better sources of carbohydrates for those who want to get lean. They have a much lower insulin index and glycemic load. They are also loaded with nutrients, which is important when trying to lose fat and stay healthy. Adipose tissue is where your toxins are stored and it is therefore important that you consume enough nutrients to help detoxify these effectively to aid your fat loss process. Increasing your vegetable intake will help you lose fat even if you adopt nothing else, this does, however exclude potatoes and corn.

These things should get you to your goals and are all approaches that can be adopted as a lifestyle as well as just a temporary fix. It is debatable whether you need any form of cardio training to lose fat. I personally don't use it myself nor use it with the majority of my clients. Nevertheless, if you want to lose a lot of fat quickly you will probably find it very effective. Do NOT use this approach if you put yourself in category 4, instead you can use energy systems work strongman style such as sled drags, car pushes and tyre flips- all can produce lactate and create fat loss yet will build strength rather than sacrificing it.

- 3) HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training). This is a method that involves short bouts of intense work like sprinting followed by longer periods of work at a lower intensity like jogging or walking. One study showed this approach caused fat loss nine times faster than steady state cardio. It doesn't raise your cortisol to nearly as great an extent and can actually build lean tissue. Running and cycling are ideal options. If you have never done this before you can start slowly as it should be very intense and is not designed to be leisurely. You will feel sick if you use this to anywhere near it's maximum potential.

These steps will help you shed your unwanted fat and get you ready for the upcoming summer. They are important basics and should not be overlooked. If done properly they could be the only fat loss tips you ever need. Address them with dedication and be strict, you will not be disappointed.