

Contact: Bev Hillman
Vancouver Personal & Physical Training
PH: 604-948-0709

The Ab-solute Truth About Abs

By: Bev Hillman

Vancouver Personal & Physical Training

If late night infomercials about get-fit-quick schemes and goofy abs gadgets are any indication of the obsession people have with obtaining a flat tummy then it's time to debunk some abdominal myths and find out what really works. Here is the ab-solute truth about abs.

More is not better. As with any muscle group, you'll get the best results from training your abs two to three days a week with a rest day in between. (Your abdominals deserve a break along with the rest of your muscles.) It's actually during the recovery that muscle fibers adapt and strengthen.

Change it up. Research shows that you can benefit from switching the order, speed and kind of exercises in your fitness routine. So, rather than doing crunches or sit-ups all the time, try doing exercises in a push-up position or even standing to work your entire core - abs, back and other torso muscles. Lying prone (face down) - using a fitness ball can be an option or standing exercises force your muscles to support your back and improve your stability.

Twisting vigorously from side to side (especially with a barbell on your back) won't do anything for your waist, but it will strain the deep back muscles as they bear the burden of this movement.

When doing abdominal exercises focus on hollowing your midsection by pulling in your belly button. This will engage your deepest abdominal muscle, the transverse abdominals, and the muscle you need to target for a flatter tummy. To make muscles stronger, you must work your abs until you can no longer maintain proper form, and then take a break.

The bad news is abdominal exercises will strengthen and tone your muscles but won't burn off the fat surrounding them. Burning more calories through aerobic exercises (aim for at least 30 minutes of brisk walking or another moderately intense activity every day), and cut out excess calories in your diet. Keep in mind, if you are genetically programmed to store more fat in your abdomen than in other parts of your body, it might be harder to lose.

The good news is that your abs and other core muscles are working when you least expect it - when you are walking, running, rowing, doing step aerobics or playing your favorite sport. You can improve your core control when you exercise by contracting your abs whenever you do any kind of movement from walking to jumping. Not only will

this result in a firmer midsection, but it could save you some aches and pains. By maintaining an abs contraction, you suffer less wear and tear on your back, neck and knees.

For more information contact Bev Hillman at 604-948-0709, or contact her via e-mail at bev@trainwithbev.com.

-30-

Vancouver Personal & Physical Training

Tel. 604-948-0709

info@trainwithbev.com

www.TrainWithBev.com