

Learn to Burn, 5 Best Ways to Burn Fat

By Michael Stefano

Learn to Burn, 5 Best Ways to Burn Fat

Michael Stefano
askmike@firefightersworkout.com

FireFightersWorkout.com <http://www.firefightersworkout.com>

Michael Stefano, 2003 <http://www.firefightersworkout.com>

Permission is granted to reproduce this article in your print or electronic publications, providing you use the article in its entirety, including bio trailer, all links and references within. Please let me know if you use the article, by sending email to bravesst@optonline.net - Thank you.

LEARN TO BURN
5 Best Ways to Burn Fat
by Michael Stefano

The average American gains five pounds a year, every year over the age of thirty. Some estimate that 50 or even 60 percent of our society is overweight. Of course, the best way to avoid obesity is to resist temptation and never let these unwanted calories cross your lips in the first place. But is there a moderate, practical approach that will allow us to balance the love of food with exercise and prevent this gradual, but seemingly "inevitable", weight gain? In addition to restricting unnecessary calories, there is much you can do.

Number One –Cardiovascular Exercise

Cardiovascular or aerobic exercise has been touted for years as the best way to get your body to burn fat. Most experts agree; a fitness program with the main goal of achieving weight (and fat) loss must include at least three weekly cardio workouts. This translates into 20 to 30 minutes (or up to 60 minutes when working at lesser intensities), of any physical activity that gets your heart to beat at a rate that's 60 to 90 percent of its maximum.

The specific exercise isn't as important as its affect on your heart rate (and breathing rate). Generally speaking,

cardiovascular or aerobic exercise involves working the major muscles of the lower body in a continuous, rhythmic fashion. Activities such as brisk walking, jogging, riding a bicycle, and jumping rope all qualify as aerobic exercise and should be incorporated into your weekly fat burning regimen.

Number Two –Strength Training

There seems to be a lot of misunderstanding regarding strength training, even amongst people that strength train on a regular basis. When you lift weights (or engage in any other type of strength training) you pit your body against a challenging (but controllable) level of resistance. If done right muscles will adapt and grow stronger as they anticipate a progressively more difficult workout.

This muscle growth will take the form of a sculpted and more toned physique, and unless taken to an extreme, will usually not materialize into big and bulky muscles. But what about that layer of fat that floats over every inch of your otherwise sculpted body? An increase in lean muscle, if only slight, will result in an increased basal metabolic rate, or your body's requirement for fuel at rest.

If you consider that almost all burning of body fat takes place inside muscle tissue, it's logical to assume the more muscle you have, the more fat you'll burn just to exist. This translates into a 24 hour a day increase in demand for fat as fuel, and if accompanied by a steady or decrease in supply, will result in major fat loss.

Number Three –Flexibility Training and Yoga

Many would question the connection between stretching and fat burning. Flexibility training increases the effectiveness of the rest of your fitness program in many ways. It cuts down on injury and recovery time, reducing next day soreness, getting you back in the gym sooner. Stretching improves performance, balance, and speed of motion, allowing you to perform more work in less time.

Interspersing a few stretching exercises into an otherwise strength training routine keeps you moving between sets, adding to the overall caloric consumption of your workout. Yoga, with its unique blend of stretching and strengthening exercises, has gained unprecedented popularity. Many fitness enthusiasts, who at one time wouldn't be caught dead in a Cat Pose, now find themselves attending regular Yoga classes –and looking as lean and fit as ever.

Number Four –Sleep, Rest, and Recovery

Most of us won't resist this one, but you'd be surprised at how often lack of sleep and, or rest is the culprit behind a failed weight loss program. More of a good thing isn't necessarily better. When putting together a fitness and weight loss plan, be sure to include adequate recovery periods between workouts. Rest at least 48 hours between full body strength training sessions, and limit cardio to no more than 3 to 6 hours a week. If over trained, your body will break down, you'll lose precious lean muscle mass, and actually get fatter.

Do whatever it takes to ensure a good night's sleep –get a new mattress, install heavier blinds, go to bed earlier. During sleep the body's recovery processes go into high gear. Depending on activity levels and individual requirements, get 7 or 8 hours of sound, restful sleep every night.

Number Five –Meditation and Stress Reduction

Meditation has been proven to minimize the body's reaction to stress and alleviate many stress related health problems. But few realize that mediation can actually raise your body's levels of the anti-aging hormone, DHEA. Also available as an over-the-counter supplement, DHEA is a precursor to testosterone, which is necessary for muscle growth and fat loss. DHEA and testosterone levels decline with age, but tests conducted on people that meditate on a daily basis reveal that serum DHEA levels were restored to much more youthful levels.

In addition, stress has been found to generate dangerously high levels of the naturally occurring hormone cortisol, produced by the adrenal glands. Cortisol has a major role in the regulation of blood pressure and cardiovascular function as well as regulation of the body's use of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. When cortisol is secreted, it causes a breakdown of muscle protein, leading to release of amino acids into the bloodstream. This process can also raise blood sugar levels.

Meditation, or any other form of stress reduction, can balance this hormonal shift. You can use your meditative sessions to visualize how you'd like to look, or even imagine yourself engaged in activities you once enjoyed. This type of visualization technique has been found not only to relieve stress, but also increases your odds of achieving goals you've set –a nice fringe benefit.

If your goal is to burn fat, combine an exercise program that includes a moderate amount of cardio, strength and flexibility training with adequate rest and recovery. Be sure to include the more subtle, but highly effective practices of visualization and meditation, and you'll be on

the road to unprecedented fat loss, as well as a health and fitness program that you'll stay with for a lifetime.

About the Author

Michael Stefano: Author of The Firefighter's Workout Book, Not Just For Firefighters! Special Offer: Lose weight and get in the shape of your life with the FREE Train For Life Newsletter, as well as customized workouts for both men and women.

Go To: <http://www.firefightersworkout.com>

mailto: ContactUs@firefightersworkout.com

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)