



# Little ways to lose a lot of fat

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**perfect fit**

**W**EIGHT watchers go to great lengths to avoid great widths! Today's article offers various suggestions, which will help take you from here to there.

#### Work out!

In Jacob M Braude's words, "Too many people confine their exercise to jumping to conclusions, running up bills, stretching the truth, and bending over backwards."

You need to schedule your work outs and stick to them. If you have trouble juggling your work outs into your day, slot them into your diary as you would any other appointment and stick to them no matter what. Do it like your life depends on it, which, in a way, it does.

#### Be sociable

Studies have found that those who join an exercise class/gym and a diet centre lose twice as much in terms of fat and inches than those who try and take matters into their own hands. Meeting up with others on a regular basis, in class or at a centre, who have the same goals and problems, inspires people to work harder towards their weight-loss goals.

#### Work at your own pace

When joining a fitness centre, work out at your own pace. Don't be intimidated by the intensity of the session. Listen to your body and slow down whenever you need to. Mirrors are an important tool which will help you focus on technique and body alignment. Don't worry about others checking you out in the mirror. They're not. They're fixated by their own image! Remember — you are not in competition with anyone.



Calf raises for the lower legs

except for the 'you' of yesterday!

**Set yourself realistic goals**

Instead of planning on losing 15 kg in two months and doing nothing about it, plan on losing five to six inches overall and combine this with a sensible diet and exercise programme.

#### Stay Active

Do household chores as you watch TV. Climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator. Walk home from work whenever possible. Get more involved physically rather than being a couch potato.

#### Practise perfect posture

Besides the obvious health angle, perfect posture will make your body look its best. Stand straight. Avoid slouching.

#### Train your abdominals

Aside from greatly enhancing visual appeal, a strong mid-section adds to back strength and can boost your performance in just about any sport.

#### Get weights in

Weight and resistance training helps you get rid of unwanted fat, and fast. This is because muscles require more energy to sustain them than fat. Simply put, the more muscle you have, the more calories you will burn. You can raise your metabolism by as much as 15-18 per cent!

#### Mix-n-match

Rotate your activities; cross train! You'll see continuous results, feel much better, and reduce the risk of injuries.

#### Be flexible

If you can't make it to your aerobic class one day, maybe you can walk back home that day, or head out for a jog instead. Take your Walkman or a friend along for company.



#### A pilates move

##### Foods aren't 'good' or 'bad'

All foods are good, IF they are consumed in moderation. Don't banish certain foods altogether from your diet — that'll make you crave them all the more. That leads to bingeing. Control the size of the portion instead.

##### Use the RPH (rate of perceived hunger) scale

This is a very effective mental tool. Think of '0' as an indication of extreme hunger, and of '10' as indicating feeling stuffed. Now make it a point to stay between 3-8 at all times. If you're starving, chances are that you will overeat at meals, particularly so as it takes your brains about 20 minutes to realise that you are full. Begin to eat when you're at about 3 on the scales. Stop when you're at 7-8 where you are full, but not stuffed.

##### Find a good partner as a support system

Get fit with a friend or relative with a nice, admirable figure that you can use as a role model. Don't choose a leggy supermodel to work out with. You'll end up with the same figure, low self-esteem and depression.

##### Get a good overall support system

Steer clear of those who undermine your weight-loss programme. Whatever their motivation, you don't want people forcing you to have another piece of chocolate cake or some more *mithai*. If they really cared about you, they'd want you to be happy, healthy and in great shape.

##### The monsoons washed away your exercise programme?

Instead of making excuses, find yourself an indoor activity. Riding a stationary cycle, rope jumping or stair climbing are just some of the many activities you can engage in.

##### Follow a food plan

Eat on a regular basis rather than in a random, unplanned manner. Many people binge senselessly when they're upset or angry. Keep a record of what, when, how much and why you are eating. This will help you pinpoint and rectify trouble areas.

##### Eat small meals

The problem with square meals is that they make you round! Consume small meals through the day. Avoid sticking to just two or three large meals. This way the body uses up the calories from your meal rather than storing the excess in the form of fat.

##### Dieting can wreak havoc on your close personal relationships

Recent studies have found that a woman's obsession with her weight,

crash dieting and low body esteem can lead to marital problems, even divorce. A husband, close relatives and friends can lose patience and tolerance with a dieter's constant cribbing or sad, negative self-image. Keep your problems to yourself. Don't be a talker; be a doer!

##### Go vegetarian

By cutting back on all that protein and the excess fat that goes with it, you'll lose fat and inches fast. If you can't find it in yourself to do this, then try and stick to seafood and chicken. Go slow on the red meat and other animal products. Remove the skin of chicken and fish before cooking. These skins contain a high level of fat.

##### Wait for 10 minutes after the first helping

It's a fact, and a handy little trick: wait for 10 minutes after your first helping, and you won't want a second one, or a snack soon after. This is the amount of time that it takes for the hypothalamus (a section of the brain) to figure that the stomach is full and satisfied. It actually takes 20, but you've taken an average of 10 minutes already while consuming the first helping.

##### Take a break from restaurants

A good many people commit suicide with a knife and fork! Cook yourself healthy, low-fat, low-sodium meals at home. Your wallet and your waistline will thank you for it.

##### Sip your soup

Studies have shown that a bowl of soup before your meal will curtail your appetite as it is filling and takes a relatively long time to eat. As the brain takes about 20 minutes to realise that the body is full, soup sipping is particularly useful in quantity control.

##### Social events don't have to feature food

The worst part of a diet isn't watching your food — it's watching everybody else's!

Friends and fun do not have to be centred around food. Instead of meeting for lunch or dinner, join a fitness centre together or take a walk together. You'll get a thrill out of enjoying each other's company and knowing that at the same time you're improving your health and fitness levels!

##### Dump convenience foods from your diet

As a thumb-rule, non-fresh foods usually contain added chemicals, a high amount of sodium and fat. This is exactly what adds to their shelf life! They don't, however, do your body any good.

##### Keep healthy snacks close at hand

Destiny shapes our ends, but caloric intake is what shapes our middles! Keep things like fruits, vegetables, sandwiches made of whole wheat bread and no butter close at hand. When those hunger pangs burst in, you'll want to grab the first available edible item. Make sure it's low on fat and calories, while being nutritional-rich.

##### Read labels

Get into the good habit of reading food labels. If there are some ingredients you can't pronounce, leave alone identify, then the chances are high that this meal is loaded with chemicals. Avoid it.

##### Drop the salt

Add the zing to your meal by using chilli sauce, black pepper, vinegar, paprika seeds, mustard or lime juice instead of salt. Besides keeping your blood pressure in check, you'll cut down on that belly bloat you'll otherwise get from salt consumption. You'll be surprised to find that your food will taste better too!

##### It's okay to gain 1.5 to 2 kg every decade, after the age of 20

Don't fear aging. Putting on a bit of weight as we get older is good for the body and the soul. Extreme thinness can increase the risk of osteoporosis. A very thin face is also far more likely to show wrinkles at an earlier stage.

##### Eat smart on the job!

Overeating is not the way up the corporate ladder! Eat simple, sensible food. It'll keep you from feeling sleepy, lazy and sluggish all day. Keep your mind on the business at hand. Stay focussed.

##### Check on inch-loss, not weight-loss

Though you might have been working out diligently, your weight might stay the same. This is because you've probably built up on muscle tissue, which weighs more than fat. That's great. Therefore, go by the measure tape, how your clothes fit, and how you look in the mirror — not by the weighing scale.

##### Think thin!

Mind over matter. Carry yourself, walk and think like a thin person. It works wonders.

##### Credit yourself

See how far you've come with your plan and how much you've accomplished. Compare old photographs of yourself when you were at your heaviest with recent ones — huge difference! Imagine how great you'll look and feel when you do reach your eventual goals!