

The Top Ten Myths About Fat Burning

Ah, you chefs! You tempt us with your delicacies, engross us with your artistic mastery, and seduce our senses into submission. That's what you hear a lot of, isn't it? The subject of weight gain and loss seems to come up a lot whenever there's a chef in the room. But if you really want a response or two, here's some myths about weight loss that the general public just keeps hanging on to. Put them to rest, and maybe your diners will start a fitness program that works - and quit blaming it all on your raspberry truffles.

#1. It is possible to lose fat in one location on your body, often called "spot reduction". Spot reducing simply and plainly does not work. When the body burns fat, it is lost throughout every area of the body at the same time. Focusing on one area of the body for exercise may develop better muscle tone in that area, which will make that part of the body appear tighter and more fit, but it will not remove fat from that area. It is important to exercise the whole body, in a well-balanced fashion; this is the best method of reducing weight. This myth is popularized by those late-night commercials for cream that you rub on that area - which is simply ridiculous. Turn it around logically - have you ever seen someone gain weight by suddenly getting fat arms, while their legs stayed skinny?

#2. Doing aerobic exercise is the best way to burn fat. Of course doing aerobics, like doing any exercise, is a good way to stay fit and burn fat. But, there is no particular benefit of aerobics that is substantially better at fat-reducing than any other type of exercise. In fact, weight-training and resistance-training builds more muscle, which may help the body to burn fat more quickly, because it is more work.

#3. Weight training will make my muscles bulk up. Ew! Women don't want to go around looking like a muscled freak! Well, actually, normal resistance exercise tones the body and improves overall fitness. Normal weight training does not build huge, bulky muscles. The weight trainers who look like a pile of boulders are actually doing that more with steroids, anaboloids, and protein powders, plus heavy strenuous lifting which can actually damage muscles with scar tissue in the long run.

#4. There is a pill that will make you lose fat, no matter how much you exercise or what you eat. This is such complete and utter fraud, that the FDA is constantly shutting down these companies as soon as they pop up. There is no pill that will do anything to make you loose weight at all. The "best" weight loss pills will only be effective when combined with sensible eating and healthy exercise. And, surprise! Sensible eating and healthy exercise is effective without any kind of pills at all! And most diet pills are made with ephedrine. Ephedrine is a naturally occurring stimulant very similar to the illegal street drug methamphetamine, whose effects are not as strong and are spread out over a longer time. Ephedrine is in fact the chief ingredient used to make methamphetamine! In other words, it's like being hopped up on speed, with about the same short-term effects - temporary decreased appetite and increased activity - and the same long-term consequences: risk of heart attack, run-down immune system, relapse to former state as soon as the drug is no longer taken, etc.

#5. After 20 minutes of exercise, your body is burning mostly fat. The body uses both carbohydrates and fat for energy all the time; walking, jogging, sitting, sleeping. Over the course of exercise, the body will use more fat. Burning reserved fat exercises the whole purpose of why nature has mammals build up fat in the first place. But there is no specific time, whether twenty minutes or two hours, when the body starts burning only fat.

#6. Eating late at night causes you to gain more fat than eating at different times of the day. A calorie is a calorie, regardless of the time of day. However, the sense behind this one is that eating the biggest meal of the day just before bedtime, as most Westerners do, is almost guaranteed to turn more calories into fat than the same meal eaten at the start of the day just before beginning your activities. Add to this that the average dinner for a Westerner involves huge slabs of meat and piles of starch, with perhaps some high-fat dessert and snacks. Trying to sleep with a freshly full stomach is never good for the digestive system anyway. So this one isn't as much of a myth as the others - but then, a huge breakfast followed by eight hours of virtual inactivity at a desk isn't exactly the cure either.

#7. Cellulite is the hardest fat to burn. Cellulite is simply a combination of fatty tissue and fluid, closer to the upper layers of the skin. Its dimply appearance may be unsightly, but the fat in cellulite is no different from any other body fat. Reducing calories and exercising is the best method to get rid of cellulite, just like it's the best way to get rid of any other fat.

#8. If you eat no fat, you cannot get fat. Any fuel that the body takes in which does not get burned as energy gets stored as fat. Absolutely, positively, regardless of whether that came from a chocolate cake, a slice of ham, a bowl of rice, or a stalk of celery. That's right: there are no "negative calorie" foods; if you consumed enough lettuce and did nothing but eat all day, you'd get fat off of lettuce! However, we're talking about more lettuce than the average person could wolf down... but if we have the same serving of calories from two kinds of foods, the weight-gain potential from each one is the same.

#9. Genes and hormones control your fat burning ability rather than diet and exercise. While it is true that genes have some role in determining who is fat and who is thin, there is no reason that diet and exercise cannot control your weight. To this day, there has not been a single laboratory test confirming that a person had genes such that they would continue to have a weight issue in the face of a perfect balance of diet and exercise.

#10. Liposuction is one way of permanently removing excess fat cells. Well, yes, liposuction will remove fat cells. But fat cells can just as easily be made by the body, whenever it wants to! Which is to say, there is no fixed number of fat cells that you were born with.

About the Author

Freelance writer for over eleven years. [Uniforms Aprons Dickies Uniform Scrubs](#)

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