

# Chapter I

## ABS3: THE ULTIMATE EXERCISE PLAN

The Equation for a Lean, Fit, and Strong Body Lies in These Three Factors

**I**N HEALTH CIRCLES, everyone talks about the obesity epidemic. We're a fat society. We eat too much. We eat badly. We deep-fry perfectly good vegetables, for God's sake. And it's one of the main reasons we're a country with bellies the size of Jupiter. But there's something lost in all the talk about creamy sauces, grease-laced buffets, super-sized fries, and exotic coffee drinks that are the caloric equivalents of Big Macs. We're not just in an obesity epidemic. We're in an inactivity epidemic.

A recent study by the National Center for Health Statistics found that only 19 percent of the population regularly engages in "high levels of physical activity." And by "high levels", they mean only 1 hour per week. That means 4 out of 5 of us aren't getting the amount of exercise we need. (And consider this: 1 hour a week—or 1 percent of the time you're awake every week). Now, the problem isn't that we don't know what we need to do. In fact, 63 percent of Americans—about the same percentage who are

## ABS FACT

38.8

The average man's  
waist circumference

33.5

The average woman's

overweight—believe that exercise would help them live healthier and leaner. What we need is a plan that really works—without really feeling like work.

Having worked at *Men's Health* magazine for more than 10 years, I've seen more dumbbells than an *American Idol* tryout. I've seen all the trends (uh, electrodes on my abs, no thanks). I've talked to trainers. I've tried hundreds of exercises. In a lot of ways, my workout is part of my work. But I also know what it's like to be slammed with calls, meetings, writing e-mails, and all of the daily stresses and responsibilities that go into any job. So I know exactly what you want out of an exercise plan: You want a program that *fits* into your life—not one that *is* your life.

That's why I've constructed ABS3: to help you burn fat at the highest levels possible in the least amount of time. I want this plan to be flexible and convenient—an excuse-proof program that gives you the tools to work it around any schedule. My overriding philosophy: Keep the workout short and keep it simple, and you'll stay focused and motivated. Oh, you'll work up a sweat and you'll breathe heavier than a 900-number operator. That's the only way you'll see results—by challenging your body. But you won't have to claim squatter's rights at the gym to do so. Ab for ab, it's the best workout to flatten your stomach, lose fat, build muscle, and change your body forever.

### A = Abdominal Muscles

Abs are a little like distant cousins. Everybody has them, but hardly anybody ever really gets to see them—or even remembers what they look like. Typically, that's because ab muscles are smothered in a layer of belly fat called visceral fat. It's the most dangerous fat there is because of its proximity to your body's organs. So, one order of business is to remove it. That does *not* happen with abdominal exercises. That happens with diet, with training your big muscle groups (the B in ABS3), and with the speed interval training (the S).

So, can't we just skip the ab work? Uh-uh. You've still got to crunch away like a CPA in April. By working your abdominal muscles twice a week, you'll build them so that when you do burn fat, your abs will, in fact, stand out like Michael Moore at a GOP meeting. But

## LET'S GET IT STARTED

### An exercise novice? Follow these rules for an easy transition into ABS3

If you're new to strength training, the biggest mistake you can make is jumping in head first. Exercise doesn't have to be intimidating, but if you rush into it, you'll increase your chance of failing by becoming too frustrated, too tired, too sore, too overwhelmed. Instead, follow these guidelines:

- **Get the food figured out first.** If you're just starting the Abs Diet, it's not critical that you start working out immediately. Concentrate on acclimating your body to eating the Powerfoods six times a day to fuel your body. That fuel will be what gives you energy for the day, as well as for your workout. Take 2 weeks with diet only, and then add the exercise program.
- **Start light.** If you do want to start a light strength-training program immediately, do this workout three times a week: Alternate between three sets of pushups and three sets of squats with no weight. Both exercises use your body weight as resistance and will get your body accustomed to a strength-training program. Do 8 to 10 repetitions of pushups, followed by 15 to 20 repetitions of squats. When that becomes too easy, increase the repetitions of pushups and hold on to some form of weight—light dumbbells are best—while doing squats. This light workout, especially in combination with 30 minutes of brisk walking, will really fire up your fat burners.
- **Start small, grow stronger.** If the only time you've ever picked up a dumbbell was that unfortunate weekend in Vegas, don't go off and start playing Hercules right away. You can start by lifting any amount of weight that you're comfortable with—whether it's a pair of light dumbbells, a couple of cans of beans, or the lightest notch on the weight machine. Even if you start small, you'll grow stronger, begin to build muscle, and keep your metabolism revved. As you progress, you'll build and burn more. Light weights give you an opportunity to master the form before trying to do exercises with a challenging amount of resistance.

even more importantly, abdominal exercises help you build a center of strength that not only turns heads but also makes you healthier. For example, gaining strength in your core—that is, your entire trunk, not just the visible 6-pack muscles in the front—has more benefits than a CEO's annual contract. Maybe the most convincing data is this: In a recent Canadian study of more than 8,000 people, researchers found that over 13 years, those with the weakest abdominal muscles had a death rate more than twice as high as that of those with the strongest midsections. Pretty amazing, huh? Of course, there's a very strong link between smaller waist sizes and better health; in short, when you develop your abs and strip away fat, you make your entire body healthier—by reducing your risk of everything from heart disease to diabetes. (And that's not to mention that having a strong midsection

has also been shown to improve your sex life because less fat helps improve blood flow, which is important for both male and female sexual satisfaction.) But just in case improving your health, your looks, and your sex life isn't enough for you, developing your core strength with abdominal exercises has many other benefits, such as the following:

***Abs protect you.*** A U.S. Army study linked powerful abdominal muscles to injury prevention. After giving 120 artillery soldiers the standard army fitness test of situps, pushups, and a 2-mile run, researchers tracked their lower-body injuries (such as lower-

## SIZE YOURSELF UP

### The best way to keep track of your progress is by taking a few key measurements

When you're winning at the craps table, you keep rolling. And when you're winning in an exercise program, you keep rolling. Seeing results—whether it's in pounds, inches, or body fat percentage—can be one of your best motivators. I recommend taking readings of key measurements every 2 weeks. That's enough distance so you'll see some results, but not so close together that you'll be frustrated if you don't see a great change. Here's a look at the four major barometers you can use to see just how effectively the Abs Diet will work for you. But for a complete picture, do all of them. Many of the standards are misleading, so your best assessment is a complete one.

- **Weight.** The heavier you are, the more at risk you are for disease and the less fit you are. While it helps gauge how well you're progressing on your diet, it doesn't take into account the amount of muscle you're going to develop. Muscle weighs about 20 percent more than fat, so even a dramatic fat loss may not translate into a dramatic drop in body weight especially at first.
- **Body mass index (BMI).** The BMI is a formula that takes into consideration your height and your weight and gives you an indication of whether you're overweight, obese, or in good shape. To calculate your BMI, multiply your weight in pounds by 703, and divide the number by your height in inches squared. For example, let's say you are 6 feet tall (that's 72 inches) and weigh 200 pounds. So first we multiply your weight by 703.

$$200 \times 703 = 140,600$$

Next, we calculate your height in inches squared, meaning we multiply the number by itself.

$$72 \times 72 = 5,184$$

Now we divide the first number by the second.

$$140,600 \div 5,184 = 27.1$$

A BMI between 25 and 30 indicates you're overweight. Over 30 signifies obesity. This measurement, too, has flaws. It doesn't take into account muscle mass, and it also leaves out another important factor—weight distribution, that is, where most of the fat on your body resides. But BMI can give you a pretty good idea of how serious your weight problem is.

back pain and Achilles tendonitis) during a year of field training. The subjects who cranked out the most situps (73 in 2 minutes) were five times less likely to suffer lower-body injuries than those who barely notched 50. But that's not all. Those who performed well in the pushups and 2-mile run enjoyed no such protection—suggesting that upper-body strength and cardiovascular endurance had little effect on injury prevention. It was abdominal strength that did it. Unlike any other muscles in your body, a strong core affects the functioning of the entire body. Think of your midsection as your body's infra-

• **Waist-to-hip ratio.** Researchers have begun using waist size and its relationship to hip size as a more definitive way to determine your health risk. This is considered more important than BMI because it measures the amount of visceral fat—the dangerous kind of fat that pushes your waist out in front of you and most threatens your organs. Because abdominal fat is the worst fat, a lower waist-to-hip ratio means fewer health risks. To figure out your waist-to-hip ratio, measure your waist at your belly button and your hips at the widest point (around your butt). Divide your waist by your hips. For example, if your hips measure 40 inches and your waist at belly button level measures 38 inches, your waist-to-hip ratio is 0.95.

$$38 \div 40 = 0.95$$

You want a waist-to-hip ratio of 0.92 or lower. If you were to lose just 2 inches off your waist—something you can do in just 2 weeks with the Abs Diet—you'd find yourself in the fit range.

$$36 \div 40 = 0.90$$

• **Body fat percentage.** Though this is the most difficult for the average person to measure because it requires a bit of technology, it's the most useful in terms of gauging how well your diet plan is working. That's because it takes into consideration not just weight but how much of your weight is fat. Many gyms offer body fat measurements through such methods as body fat scales or calipers that measure the folds of fat at several points on your body. See your local gym for what options they offer. Or try an at-home body fat calculator. I like the Tanita BC-533 Innerscan Body Composition Monitor (\$120) because it measures your body's water and fat percentage as well as muscle mass, visceral fat (fat around your waist), and bone mass. If you want a simple low-tech test (and this isn't as accurate as the measurements the electronic versions will give you), try this simple exercise: Sit in a chair with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Using your thumb and index finger, gently pinch the skin on top of your right thigh. Measure the thickness of the pinched skin with a ruler. If it's  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch or less, you have about 14 percent body fat—ideal for a guy, quite fit for a woman. If it's 1 inch, you're probably closer to 18 percent fat, which is a tad high for a man but desirable for a woman. If you pinch more than an inch, you could be at increased risk for diabetes and heart disease. As you see your body fat percentage decrease, you'll see an increase in the amount of visible muscle. Experts say that in order for your abs to show, your body fat needs to be between 8 and 12 percent. For the average slightly overweight man, that means cutting body fat by about half.

## ABS FACT

19.7

The average man's  
body fat percentage

28

The average woman's

structure. You don't want a core made of dry, brittle wood or straw. You want one made of solid steel, one that will give you a layer of protection that belly fat never could. And that's what abdominal exercises help do—build that foundation of steel.

**Abs prevent back pain.** Most back pain is related to weak muscles in your trunk, so maintaining a strong midsection can help resolve many back issues. The muscles that crisscross your midsection don't function in isolation; they weave through your torso like a spider web, even attaching to your spine. When your abdominal muscles are weak, the muscles in your butt (your glutes) and along the backs of your legs (your hamstrings) have to compensate for the work your abs should be doing. The effect is that core weakness destabilizes the spine and eventually leads to back pain and strain—or even more serious back problems. As you'll see in the next chapter, this program provides exercises that work your entire core—your abdominal muscles—from many different angles, so that you can develop a strong and balanced midsection.

**Abs help you excel.** If you play golf, basketball, tennis, or any sport that requires movement, the essential muscle group isn't your chest, biceps, or legs. It's your core. Developing core strength gives you power. It fortifies the muscles around your whole midsection and trains them to provide the right amount of support when you need it. So if you're weak off the tee, strong abs will improve your distance. If you also play stop-and-start sports like tennis or basketball, abs can improve your game tremendously by helping you get from point A to point B faster than your opponent. In essence, your legs don't control speed; your abs do. When researchers studied which muscles were the first to engage in these types of sports movements, they found that the abs fired first. The stronger they are, the faster you'll get to the ball.

**THE PLAN:** Work your abdominals in a circuit routine two or three times a week. I recommend that you do them before your strength-training workouts.

## B = Big Muscle Groups

Muscles are what allow grooms to carry brides, football players to make tackles, and moms to carry three children, a bag of groceries, a cell phone, and car keys in one hand. But while lean muscle mass allows you to function every day and helps give your body a

strong appearance and shape, muscles are also your body's oven—they broil fat at high heat. How does it work? Your muscles feed like little piranhas. They need to scour the body for calories in order to keep themselves well-nourished and growing, so they end up

## ABS DIET SUCCESS STORY

### “OFF CAME THE INCHES”

**Name:** Brandee Bratton

**Age:** 31

**Height:** 5'1"

**Starting weight:** 113

**Six weeks later:** 106

For Brandee Bratton, it was the perfect team approach: She would plan the food and meals and her husband would plan the workouts. What started out as a diet actually became more of a hobby, as the two made the program something they could do together. Starting at 113 pounds, Bratton didn't need to lose a lot of weight, but she still wanted something out of the Abs Diet.

“It's one thing to be petite, another to be strong, fit, healthy, and petite,” she says.

So Bratton and her husband jumped on the program (he lost 10 pounds in 6 weeks), and Bratton wound up as a top-10 finalist in the initial Abs Diet Challenge—based largely on the way she transformed the shape of her body.

“For the first 2 weeks, I didn't notice much of a change in terms of weight. What started changing was the inches, and then the pounds just came off at the end—mostly in the thighs and hips area,” says Bratton, who also dropped from about 18 percent body fat to 12. “And that was when I really got excited.”

Bratton, who enjoyed the interval training and healthy eating, says that the Abs Diet is one that anyone can follow because you're always satisfied.

“This diet isn't a fad diet; it follows all the scientific rules in terms of what to eat and how to eat,” she says. “I can say that there's no food deprivation you feel through this. By eating six times a day, you feel satisfied. When it's time to eat, your body gets used to eating at that time, and your body lets you know—almost like it's talking to you, ‘Hey, it's been 2 hours, give me something to eat.’”

Now, Bratton, who feels healthier and stronger and likes the new toned look of her body, is studying to become a personal trainer.

“Women often look for solutions through pills, milk in a can, and gadgets,” she says. “I advise this program for any woman to invest in her body.”

## ABS FACT

8–12

Percentage of body fat that a man needs in order to see his abs

churning and burning the calories you're ingesting. So by adding a little more muscle mass to your body, you'll burn more calories throughout the day. In fact, each pound of muscle you have uses up to 50 calories a day just to maintain itself. So if you add just 3 pounds of muscle, you'll burn up to an extra 150 calories a day. That may not seem like much, but at that rate, you'd burn off 15 pounds of fat in a year—simply by doing *nothing*!

This program focuses on working your big muscle groups—your legs, chest, back, and shoulders—because that's where you can build the most muscle in the least amount of time. Plus, when you work your larger muscles, you fire up your metabolism by creating a longer calorie afterburn—meaning that you'll burn calories until the next time that you do a strength-training workout.

But, hey, I'm not interested in turning you into the size of a Hummer, or even an H3. I think most of us want to be lean and strong, but still muscular and toned. A Porsche of a body, perhaps? So this plan isn't about spending as much time in the gym as you spend at your keyboard. It's about spending enough time to build a solid base of lean muscle mass—enough to change your shape and enough to build some muscle that will burn fat by itself. So that's why you'll be using two primary strength-training principles that maximize muscle growth and fat-burning and minimize the time you spend exercising.

**Circuit training.** It's a simple program: Perform different exercises one right after another with no more than 30 seconds of rest (1 minute in some cases). For example, you'll do a set of leg exercises followed immediately by a set of an upper-body exercise, until you do a number of different exercises in a row (some programs will contain 8 to 10 different exercises; some only 4 or 5). There are two reasons circuit training works. First, by keeping you moving and cutting down the rest periods between exercises, circuit training keeps your heart rate elevated throughout your training session, maximizing your fat burn and providing tremendous cardiovascular fitness benefits. Second, circuit training keeps your workout short—you won't waste time resting between sets of an exercise.

**Compound exercises.** These are the exercises that call into play multiple muscle groups rather than just one. For example, with the Abs Diet workouts, I don't want you to exercise your chest on Monday and then your shoulders on Tuesday, your triceps Wednesday, and so on, the way some programs recommend. I want you to hit many different muscles at the same time and within one circuit. One study showed that you can

put on 6 pounds of muscle and lose 15 pounds of fat in 6 weeks (6 weeks!) by following an exercise program that employs the compound exercises found in the Abs Diet workout. Not only do compound exercises make your workouts more fun and more challenging, but they will also increase the demands on your muscles—even though you're not actually doing more work. For instance, the squat hits a whopping 256 muscles with just one movement. These big-muscle exercises are what will lead to big-time calorie burns.

**THE PLAN:** Do a strength-training circuit three times a week, focusing on compound exercises that work many muscle groups.

#### ABS FACT

# 5

Percentage of body fat that's too low—that's the level where you may start to damage your immune system

### S = Speed Work

Your body reacts to cardiovascular exercise the way you react to music. If you hear a long, slow piece of music, you'll get lulled into zone-out mode. But if you hear something that's high-energy, you can't help but jump, bob, and mosh. Sure, there are some wonderful benefits to long, slow music—anybody who's ever brought Marvin Gaye along on a date will testify to that—but your body reacts better in terms of fat loss when you engage in cardiovascular exercise that's high-energy and high-intensity. That is, the most effective cardiovascular workouts are ones that mix periods of high intensity (going close to all out) with periods of low intensity (think light jog). Bottom line: You want a Ludacris workout, not a Chopin one.

Time and time again, research has shown that higher-intensity workouts promote weight loss better than steady-state activities like running 3 or 4 miles at the same pace (Bo-o-oring!). In a Canadian study from Laval University, researchers measured differences in fat loss between two groups of exercisers following two different workout programs. The first group rode stationary bikes four or five times a week and burned 300 to 400 calories per 30- to 45-minute session. The second group did the same, but only one or two times a week, and they filled the rest of their sessions with short intervals of high-intensity cycling. They hopped on their stationary bikes and pedaled as quickly as they could for 30 to 90 seconds, rested, and then repeated the process several times per exercise session. As a result, they burned 225 to 250 calories while cycling, but they had burned more fat at the end of the study than the workers in the first group. In fact, even

## A RUNNING DEBATE

### The cardiovascular-exercise camp squares off against the metal heads

You're used to seeing people sweat on machines, sign up for marathons, and cycle across Iowa as a means to getting in better shape. It's true: Cardiovascular exercise—steady-state endurance exercises, like running, biking, and swimming—burns a lot of calories. In fact, it often burns more than other forms of exercise like strength training or soul-soothing workouts like yoga. And cardio helps control stress, improves your cardiovascular fitness, lowers blood pressure, and improves your cholesterol profile. I run all the time.

But when it comes to weight control, aerobic exercise builds little (if any) muscle—and muscle is the key component of a speedy metabolism. Here's the problem with low-intensity aerobic exercise: Just like a car can't run without gas or a kite can't fly without wind, a body can't function without food. Generally, during exercise, your body calls upon glycogen (the stored form of carbohydrate in muscles and the liver), fat, and, in some cases, protein. When you're doing low-intensity aerobic exercise like jogging, your body primarily uses fat and glycogen (carbohydrates) for fuel. When it continues at longer periods (20 minutes or more), your body drifts into depletion: You exhaust your first-tier energy sources (your glycogen stores), and your body hunts around for the easiest source of energy it can find—protein. Well, guess what your muscles are made of? To feed itself during a long aerobic workout, your body actually begins to eat up muscle tissue, converting the protein stored in your muscles into the energy you need to keep going. Once your body reaches that plateau, it burns up 5 to 6 grams of protein for every 30 minutes of ongoing exercise. By burning protein, you're not only missing an opportunity to burn fat but also losing all-important and powerful muscle. So aerobic exercise actually decreases muscle mass. Decreased muscle mass ultimately slows down your metabolism, making it easier for you to gain weight.

Now here's an even more shocking fact: When early studies compared cardiovascular exercise to weight training, researchers learned that those who engaged in aerobic activities burned more calories during exercise than those who weight trained. You'd assume, then, that aerobic exercise was the way to go. But that's not the end of the story.

It turns out that while lifters didn't burn as many calories during their workouts as the folks who ran or biked, they burned far more calories over the course of the next several hours. This phenomenon is known as the afterburn—the additional calories your body burns off in the hours and days after a workout. When researchers looked at the metabolic increases after exercise, they found that the increased metabolic effect of aerobics lasted only 30 to 60 minutes. The effects of weight training lasted as long as 48 hours. That's 48 hours during which the body was burning additional fat.

though they exercised less, their fat loss was nine times greater. Researchers said that the majority of the fat burning took place after the workout. (See “A Running Debate,” opposite, for more on steady-state cardiovascular exercise.) And that’s really what makes it so effective—you’ll keep your fat-burning mechanisms revved not only *during* your exercise but *after* it as well.

**THE PLAN:** Do one 20-minute interval workout per week to complement your strength training. Pick a traditional cardiovascular exercise (running, swimming, biking, cardiovascular machine), and alternate between periods of high intensity and periods of lower intensity. On your off days, I’d encourage you to do 30 minutes of brisk walking or a light workout with the cardiovascular exercise of your choice—as a way to increase your weekly calorie burn. As you advance, you can add another weekly interval workout.

#### ABS FACT

# 2

Percentage of women with a model’s body

### 3 = 3 Times per Week

Go back to the study where subjects added 6 pounds of muscle and lost 15 pounds of fat using compound exercises. Their workout? They followed an exercise plan for only 20 minutes three times a week. That’s it. In order to make this work, that’s all the time you need. Of course, you can spend more time if you want—and as you get stronger. You’ll maximize your fat burn by adding one other interval workout to your schedule, for instance, and you’ll also see a speedier weight loss by doing something light—like brisk walking—on your off days. And if you’re like the many other people who have succeeded on the Abs Diet, you’ll find that exercise is a little bit like a bag of potato chips—once you’ve dug in, you won’t want to stop. Once you start seeing results, you’ll push to accelerate them even more. But you have to be careful, because exercise is like a bag of chips in another way, too: You can OD on it, which will negate all the gains you’ve made. For instance, you don’t want to strength train any more than three times a week (your muscles grow when they’re at rest). Plus, by keeping your workout schedule balanced throughout the week, you’ll achieve one of the main goals you should have with any exercise program: Finish one workout looking forward to—not dreading—your next one.

**ABS DIET SUCCESS STORY****“FINALLY HAPPY ABOUT MY SHAPE”**

**Name:** Mike Mendoza

**Age:** 30

**Height:** 5'8"

**Starting weight:** 185

**Six weeks later:** 167

**Current weight:** 156

**Starting waist size:** 37"

**Current waist size:** 30"

Mike Mendoza struggled all his life with weight issues. He wasn't extremely overweight, but he was always the kid who was 15 or 20 pounds heavier than the rest of them.

"I always knew I carried a little extra, but people figure that's just your build. My wife would always say, 'That's just the way you're built,'" he says. "But I was flabby and I was hoping to eliminate fat in the chest area. That was really embarrassing growing up, not wanting to take my shirt off."

Mendoza used to lift really hard—up to 2 hours a day. But all he did was put on muscle *under* the fat because he wasn't watching his diet. So he was never really able to get lean.

When he read about the Abs Diet, he decided to try it because it gave him the ability to eat six meals a day—and still have things like bread and sandwiches. Ever since, he's stuck to it. He's found the recipes he really likes and stuck to them.

Now, he does the circuit routine, and he says it's helped him add muscle, because it keeps him moving through a workout. "You hit all the body parts at one time, and it works because you keep working all the different muscle groups. I love the circuit routine."

Mendoza says the key to his success is his preparation. Every Sunday, he makes smoothies and chili and packs bags of almonds—so he's well-organized and it's easy to eat right throughout the week.

He says the Abs Diet has helped identify his bad eating habits, and he realized he didn't have to make every meal a Thanksgiving dinner in order to get enjoyment out of food. He was eating for the wrong reasons—because he was tense or stressed.

"I've learned a lot about myself," he says. "I've finally been able to be happy with the shape I'm in and steer my energy into other areas of my life and not worry about how I look. And that's just been one of the great things that's come of this."

## Putting It All Together

I have the same goal with ABS3 as yogis do with Downward Dog—maximum flexibility. I want you to be able to make choices under the framework of the ABS3 guidelines—to be able to adapt workouts based on your own life. When you construct your schedule, make sure to:

- Leave at least 48 hours between weight workouts. Your muscles need time to recover and repair themselves after a workout. Walk or go for a light run instead.
- Take 1 day each week to rest, with no formal exercise.
- Before starting to exercise, warm up for 5 minutes, either through a light jog, riding on a stationary bike, jumping rope, or doing slow jumping jacks.
- On off days, you can do optional cardiovascular exercise, such as cycling, swimming, or running. Light cardiovascular exercise like brisk walking is recommended for 2 of your 3 days off.

The three components of your weekly schedule include:

### A = Abdominal Exercises

Twice a week. I recommend doing them before your strength training or interval workouts.

### B = Big Muscle Groups

Strength training three times a week. These are total-body workouts, with one workout that puts extra emphasis on your legs.

### (S) = Speed Intervals

Once a week.

For suggested weekly schedules, see the next page.

#### ABS FACT

# 20

Percentage drop in heart-disease risk by burning 1,000 to 2,500 calories a week exercising

# THE ABS DIET SUGGESTED WEEKLY SCHEDULES

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**HIS AT-A-GLANCE GUIDE** gives you suggested options for planning your training programs.

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## IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR 3X/WEEK . . .

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Monday:    | Abdominal workout (10 minutes)<br>Strength-training circuit (20 minutes) |
| Tuesday:   | Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes                                     |
| Wednesday: | Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)<br>Interval training (20 minutes) |
| Thursday:  | Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes                                     |
| Friday:    | Abdominal workout (10 minutes)<br>Strength-training circuit (20 minutes) |
| Saturday:  | Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes                                     |
| Sunday:    | Brisk walking for 1 hour   |

**IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR 4X/WEEK . . .**

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Monday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Tuesday:	Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes
Wednesday:	Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Thursday:	Interval training (20–30 minutes)
Friday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Saturday:	Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes
Sunday:	Brisk walking for 1 hour

**IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR 5X/WEEK . . .**

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Monday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Tuesday:	Interval training (20–30 minutes)
Wednesday:	Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Thursday:	Interval training (20–30 minutes)
Friday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Saturday:	Off, or brisk walking for 30 minutes
Sunday:	Brisk walking for 1 hour

**IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR 6X/WEEK . . .**

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Monday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Tuesday:	Interval training (20–30 minutes)
Wednesday:	Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Thursday:	Interval training (20–30 minutes)
Friday:	Abdominal workout (10 minutes) Strength-training circuit (20 minutes)
Saturday:	Fun day: Recreational sport/time of your choice
Sunday:	Take a day off, would ya?