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# Belly Fat Diet

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## **Learn to:**

- Identify your belly fat type and see how it impacts your health
- Safely shed and keep off unwanted belly fat
- Use belly-slimming foods and fat-melting exercises to keep your midsection healthy
- Get immediate results with a proven quick-start program

**Erin Palinski-Wade, RD, CDE**

*America's Belly Fat Fighter*

*Nationally recognized nutrition and fitness expert*



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***Belly Fat Diet***

FOR

**DUMMIES®**



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**by Erin Palinski-Wade, RD, CDE**



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# *Dedication*

This book is dedicated to all those individuals who have ever struggled with their weight and have shown through hard work, dedication, and perseverance that you can achieve your goals.

This book is also dedicated to my incredibly loving and supportive family — without your constant support and belief in me, this book would not have been possible.

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# Introduction

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**H**ow many people do you know who are 100 percent satisfied with how their stomach looks? Not many, right? Who wouldn't want a flatter stomach, defined abs, and a slim, toned appearance? In today's society, waistlines are expanding at epidemic proportions. And although folks give belly fat cutesy names like "muffin-top" or "beer-belly" or "love handles," there's nothing cute about it!

Belly fat not only looks less than desirable, but it also can have very real and very dangerous health implications. The latest research links belly fat to everything from heart disease and type 2 diabetes to certain cancers and even an increased risk of dementia. And, sadly, more individuals today are overweight than not, so something needs to change.

What if you could quickly and effectively shed this excess belly fat and keep it off for good? And what if you were able to eat delicious food while doing it? Sound too good to be true? Well, it isn't!

Throughout *Belly Fat Diet For Dummies*, I show you simple, yet incredibly effective, strategies to shrink belly fat, improve your health and dietary habits, increase your physical activity, and have you looking and feeling great in no time. I help you break through common misconceptions and myths and show you what really works in the fight against belly fat. Whether you have more than 100 pounds to lose or just need to shed that last 5 pounds, I show you what works best for you so you can be successful for life. Get ready to say bye-bye to belly fat forever!

## *About This Book*

Just as no two individuals are exactly alike, no two individuals lose weight in the exact same way either. So fad diets and cookie-cutter weight loss plans usually don't work for most people. But *Belly Fat Diet For Dummies* solves this problem! Throughout this book, I help you discover exactly what caused you to gain your belly fat and what customized plan is best for you to lose your belly fat, achieve your ideal body weight, and keep the weight off permanently! I don't include any one-size-fits-all plans here. Instead, I offer realistic, practical, and individualized advice that can have you achieving your goals in no time.

What also sets this book apart from other weight loss plans is the attention given to weight maintenance. Have you lost weight before only to regain it?

You're not alone! In fact, most dieters don't maintain the weight they have lost for more than a year. But in this book, I show you why most people regain their weight and what steps you need to take to permanently keep your weight (and belly!) off.

The cherry on top is that this book contains more than 40 delicious and easy-to-make recipes as well as individualized meal plans, detailed maintenance plans, and extensive exercise routines to blast away belly fat for everyone from the couch potato to the advanced exerciser.

My guess is that if you have tried unsuccessfully to lose belly fat in the past, you may struggle with specific areas, such as food cravings or eating out. Instead of reading this book in order page by page, you can instead skip right to the areas you need to focus on the most. That's right, you don't have to start with Chapter 1 and read straight through to get the benefits. This book is set up so you can read it in any order that appeals to you and still get all the information you need to achieve the flat belly of your dreams.

## Conventions Used in This Book

Although I hear the word repeatedly throughout the day, I really hate the word "diet." A diet is something you go on and off again. But going back to your old habits gets you nowhere. It just helps you gain back all the weight you lost, which is bad for your health (maybe even worse than being overweight in the first place). Even though the word "diet" is used in this book title and throughout the book, I want you to think of it in a different way than you normally would. The Belly Fat Diet isn't a diet to go on and off; it's a lifestyle.

Because the Belly Fat Diet is something you put into effect for life, I stress throughout this book that slip-ups and occasional splurges are fine. I even encourage them! If you don't deal with slip-ups every now and then, you won't learn how to successfully maintain your weight loss in the long term. So when you see the word "diet" throughout this book, remember that it refers to a lifestyle change, not the unrealistic goal of eating perfectly (which can't be maintained).

Here are a few other conventions that I also put to use throughout this book:

- ✔ New or technical terms appear in *italics* and are followed by a definition.
- ✔ **Bold** indicates the action part of numbered steps and highlights the key words in bulleted lists.
- ✔ Web addresses are set in `monofont` so you can easily spot them.
- 🍅 The tomato icon to the left of this paragraph appears next to the titles of vegetarian recipes in the "Recipes in This Chapter" lists at the beginning of chapters that include recipes.

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When this book was printed, some web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that I haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So when using one of these web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.

## *What You're Not to Read*

I've packed this book full of helpful information on losing belly fat, maintaining weight loss, and making healthy lifestyle changes. However, throughout the book, I include some additional reference material, fun facts, and technical info. These tidbits are highlighted as sidebars (gray shaded boxes) or are marked with the Technical Stuff icon. This information helps to enhance your overall understanding of belly fat and provide you with more background information, but you can skip over it without missing anything essential.

## *Foolish Assumptions*

I didn't want this book to be overweight, so when I sat down to write it, I made some assumptions about you, the reader, so I could narrow the focus and give you only what you need. Here are the assumptions I made:

- ✓ I assume that you have excess belly fat you want to lose.
- ✓ I assume that you're ready to get in the best shape of your life and that you're committed to making some lifestyle changes to get you there.
- ✓ I assume that, like me, you love food and want a book that provides you with recipes for great-tasting meals, snacks, and desserts that can also help you lose your gut.
- ✓ I assume that like most people you have a hectic lifestyle and, even though you're serious about wanting to lose your belly and get healthy, you don't have hours and hours every day to commit to it, so you want simple plans that are easy to implement and stick with.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

*Belly Fat Diet For Dummies* is organized into five specific parts to help make it easy for you to find the information you're looking for. Here's a brief description of what you can find in each part of the book.

## ***Part I: The 4-1-1 on Belly Fat and the Skinny on the Diet***

Part I starts by breaking down what belly fat is, what causes an excess of it, and what impact it can have on your health. In this part, I also help you identify your body type, which is vital to knowing exactly how to effectively shrink your belly. I also show you how to determine whether you have excess belly fat (even if you're at a healthy body weight!) and how to know when you've achieved a healthy waistline. I wrap up the part by outlining the principles of the Belly Fat Diet plan and whom it's appropriate for.

## ***Part II: Working Your Way to a Flatter Belly***

I start this part by helping you get prepared for your Belly Fat Diet plan so you can be as successful as possible. Next, I describe the key components of your plan and outline the various plans, including how to determine what plan is most appropriate for your needs. This part also provides you with specific meal plan guidelines and sample meal plans.

This part closes with a chapter on belly-blasting workout routines. First I explain the impact that exercise has on belly fat and provide you with simple strategies to help you get moving, regardless of your exercise history. Then I provide you with a detailed workout plan and effective exercises (complete with detailed descriptions and pictures) that blast belly fat and tone and tighten your abs.

## ***Part III: Cooking Up Some Healthy and Tasty Recipes***

What's the point in trying to lose weight and shrink your belly if you can't enjoy yourself while you do it? Right. There is no point in that. Part III starts off by helping you understand how to stock and prepare your kitchen and pantry so you can be successful while saving time, money, and energy.

The remaining chapters in the part provide you with delicious and easy-to-prepare recipes that you're sure to love. The best part is that the recipes are great for your whole family, so you won't have to prepare separate meals to be successful.



## *Part IV: Overcoming Obstacles and Managing Your Progress*

Losing weight is never easy, but keeping it off can be even more difficult. That's why Part IV addresses the most common challenges and pitfalls that can throw you off track when following your Belly Fat Diet plan. This part addresses specific dietary concerns, such as dealing with cravings and emotional eating, handling boredom with your meals, and losing belly fat while following a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle.

This part also discusses how to eat at restaurants, at social gatherings, and on food-centered holidays while still losing weight and keeping it off. The part concludes with a detailed plan for permanent weight loss and strategies on exactly what steps you need to take if you start to see yourself regaining any weight you have lost so you can keep your flat belly for life!

## *Part V: The Part of Tens*

Part V provides a quick breakdown of helpful and fun information to allow you to achieve and maintain a flat belly. You find chapters that list the ten foods that can bloat your belly. I also list the ten nutrients that pack a powerful fight against belly fat.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

As you read through this book, you see icons — small images in the margins — that are designed to call your attention to specific pieces of information. Here are the icons I use along with a description of what they mean:



When you see this icon, you know you're about to get helpful tips and practical advice to help shrink your belly and promote effective weight loss.



The text next to this icon typically contains important information that helps you stay on track with your long-term weight loss goals.



I use this icon as a red flag. It draws your attention to common weight loss obstacles that can sidetrack your progress.



This icon identifies helpful information that increases your background knowledge about belly fat; however, this information isn't essential to your basic understanding of belly fat and how to effectively lose it. You can skip these bits of text without missing any information vital to your Belly Fat Diet plan.

## *Where to Go from Here*

If you aren't quite sure what belly fat is and how to identify whether you have too much of it, I recommend starting in Chapter 2. If you already know all about belly fat, its health dangers, and your body type, skip to Chapter 4 to begin understanding the basic principles of the Belly Fat Diet. If you have already lost your belly but need help maintaining your results, head to Part IV to check out the customized maintenance plan to achieve a flat belly for life. No matter what topic you're interested in, you can flip through the table of contents or index to find what you're looking for.

**One last thing:** This book has a companion website at [www.dummies.com/go/bellyfat](http://www.dummies.com/go/bellyfat). Here, you can find additional information that I wasn't able to squeeze into the book.

# Part I

# The 4-1-1 on Belly Fat and the Skinny on the Diet

The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave

By Rich Tennant



"That sound's not indigestion, it's your belt screaming for mercy."

## *In this part . . .*

**O**besity rates are steadily climbing, and with them, so are the inches around our waistlines. In this part, I show you how to determine whether you have too much belly fat. I also explain exactly what belly fat is and why it's so dangerous to your health. Every body is different, and so is every belly. I help you gain an understanding of your unique body type so you can determine what led to your excess belly fat and figure out how to shed it for good! Finally, this part outlines the principles of the Belly Fat Diet plan, who it's appropriate for, and how it works, so you can start on your way to achieving the flat belly of your dreams (and keeping it that way!).

## Chapter 1

# Taking Control of Your Waistline and Your Health

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Identifying the risks of excess belly fat
  - ▶ Checking out your weight and waist circumference
  - ▶ Taking control of your health and waistline with the Belly Fat Diet plan
  - ▶ Cooking your way to a flatter belly
  - ▶ Working through obstacles and maintaining your efforts
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**T**he next time you're in a public place, look around. What do you see? Almost everywhere you look you can see expanding waistlines and bellies protruding over belts. In fact, it's harder to spot a person at a healthy body weight than it is to find one who isn't. The United States is in the midst of a very real and very dangerous epidemic. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 63 percent of Americans over the age of 20 are now obese, and another 127 million people are considered overweight. That's the majority of the country! And since 1980, the prevalence of obesity in children and teens has tripled! The scariest part is that so many people are now overweight that it almost appears normal and can be difficult to tell what a truly healthy body weight even is.

The excess weight that these people have is only half the battle, however. When folks are overweight and obese, they often have an increased amount of visceral fat, or belly fat, deep inside their abdominal walls. This fat is extremely dangerous to their health. In this chapter, I help you understand belly fat and get you on the right path to losing fat and weight the healthy (and permanent!) way.

## *Exploring the Dangers of Belly Fat*

The concern about being overweight or obese isn't just about looks. Sure everyone wants to look great in a bathing suit, but your health is more

important. Being just slightly overweight significantly increases your risk for disease and premature death. And where you hold your excess weight matters even more. Even if you're at a relatively healthy body weight, holding excess fat in your abdominal area causes you to have an increased waistline and thus be at a much greater risk of health complications. So much so, in fact, that a comprehensive European study found that every 2-inch increase in your waistline increased mortality by 13 percent in women and as much as 17 percent in men.

The most dangerous fat of all is visceral fat, which is often referred to as *belly fat*. This fat is different from the subcutaneous fat that you can see on your body and pinch between your fingers. Visceral fat is the layer of fat deep inside your body that forms between your organs. Even though you can't see it, you know it's there if you have an increased amount of subcutaneous fat.

The more visceral fat you have, the more toxic it is to your body. Visceral fat is so toxic that research has linked it to everything from an increased risk of heart disease, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, and gallstones to increases in certain cancers and dementia. In Chapter 2, I break down exactly what visceral, or belly, fat is, what causes it, and the health implications it can cause. And throughout this book, I explain how to make simple changes to banish belly fat from your body so you can look great and feel great as well!

The weight loss and diet industry is a billion-dollar industry. People of all ages and from all economic backgrounds shell out hundreds and thousands of dollars for "quick fixes" to lose weight and belly fat. But as obesity rates continue to skyrocket, it's clear that these quick fixes don't work.

Thankfully, a simple and effective solution to permanently lose weight and belly fat is just waiting for you. It's called the *Belly Fat Diet*. Throughout this book, I help you discover exactly what contributed to your weight gain and belly fat and provide you with an individualized program that works quickly and easily to provide you with dramatic and permanent weight loss results. If you're ready to take control of your health and waistline once and for all, the Belly Fat Diet is your answer!

## *Analyzing Your Weight and Waistline*

Belly fat is some pretty scary stuff, so you need to identify whether you're at risk. Then you have to determine what you can do to decrease your belly fat as much as possible. Your risk isn't just determined by your weight, however. It's important to keep the size of your waistline in mind, too. Even if you're at a healthy body weight, you may still have too much belly fat.

A recent study by Statistics Canada found that 21 percent of women considered to be at a normal weight were at an increased risk of health complications due to their levels of abdominal fat. So even though your weight on the scale