

KEEPING THE WAISTLINE IN TOW

Starting in your 20's, age-related changes make it easier to start adding pounds to your frame without noticing. Most muscles and organs become smaller and body parts need fewer calories to keep them going. Meanwhile, the rate at which the body burns calories slows.

1. When men undertake aerobic exercises, they lose weight first and quickest in the abdomen. Women, who tend to naturally gain weight in the hips, thighs, and buttocks, also begin to lose it there first with aerobics.
2. Any activity that boosts your heart rate above its resting pace for 30 to 60 minutes will help you burn fat.
3. Weight training was once regarded as an inefficient fat burner. Now it's known that it increases the benefits of aerobics and speeds weight loss. Each pound of muscle you add raises your daily calorie needs by 30 to 50. If you gained four pounds of muscle you would burn 250 extra calories daily just when sitting still.
4. Diets alone don't help to reduce weight unless you also exercise. It's more important to cut fat than calories. No matter how much food or how many calories you take in, research shows that reducing fat intake will help you lose weight.
5. Starches don't stick to the ribs. Carbohydrates burn fastest of all the body's energy sources and aren't easily converted into fat.
6. Drinking water can help reduce weight because water takes an edge off of food craving and if it's ice cold, actually burns calories. 226 calories of body heat are needed to warm a gallon of ice cold water up to a temperature of 98.6 degrees.
7. If you look at the scale every few days and record your weight, you have a visible reminder of your progress (or lack thereof). Watching that number decline is reinforcing.
8. Some experts advise waiting at least two weeks before starting any kind of plan to lose weight. If you plan how you're going to diet, exercise, eat differently, and maintain your commitment, buy letting it work into your mind, you're much more likely to stick with your plan.
9. Plan your changes gradually. In the first week, you could decide that you'll no longer eat in your car at any time. In the next few weeks, you'll stop eating when watching television. Thereafter, you might substitute skim milk for whole milk, stop putting butter on your potatoes, and so forth.

Doctors, weight trainers, and researchers agree that it's possible to maintain the physique you had when you were 18 well into adulthood. In fact, you should be able to wear the same size jeans you had your freshman year of college.