

# WEIGHT LOSS TIPS THAT WORK!

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# SHRINK YOUR WAIST!



Slim down after summer & discover a healthier, more energised you.

By Gemma Hurditch, CNM lecturer and Naturopath

**T**HE IMPORTANCE OF A slim waist is not simply aesthetic – in fact, keeping your waist to half your height or less is associated with health benefits such as reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and a longer life-span. It's a better predictive tool of wellness and longevity than the traditional body mass index (BMI) and much easier to work out too: measure your waist at the midpoint between the crest of your hip bone and the lowest rib - this is usually the narrowest part of the waist - relax and breathe out, resisting the urge to suck in the tummy, check if the measurement is more or less half your height. For example a person 160cm tall should have a waist of 80cm or less for maximum benefit. This can also give us a goal to work towards that is more important than the number on the scales!

## REDUCE BELLY FAT

Whilst targeted weight loss is considered a myth, some specific diet and lifestyle modifications are worth looking into. They have been shown to reduce risk of metabolic syndrome, which has excessive abdominal fat as a hallmark and is considered a



precursor to diabetes. So, if your waist needs to come down what can you do?

- **Increase daily exercise**, particularly weight training to improve muscle mass. This will have the added effect of helping you burn more calories even when not working out, as muscles use more energy at rest than fat. Ageing reduces our muscle mass, one of the major reasons why we may put on weight, even if consuming the same diet.

- **Increase protein-rich foods** such as legumes, oily fish and organic eggs. Protein-rich foods stave off sugar cravings which are linked to increased belly fat. Sugar is a particular stress on our bodies, providing empty calories and depleting vitamin and mineral reserves in its metabolism. Refined fructose and alcohol are also implicated in fatty liver and belly fat increases, so opt for a low glycemic load (GL), whole food diet.

- **Replace consumption of factory farmed meats, pasteurised dairy and trans fats** (biscuits, baked packaged goods and fried foods) with mono-unsaturated fats such as pre-soaked nuts and seeds, avocados and cold-pressed oils (extra virgin olive oil). Mono-unsaturated fat intake is reported to improve insulin sensitivity which can improve weight loss.

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