Lesson 2 – How to Lose Love Handles and Lower Ab Fat

Welcome to our second lesson!

Today we’re talking about how to get rid of love handles and that spare tire around the waist. We’re also going to talk about why it is so tough to lose lower abdominal fat.

The first concept that you need to understand is that you cannot spot reduce. Write that down and put it on your fridge if you want. You can spot train all you want and you can do millions of sit ups if you want but it’s going to have no effect on your ability to see your abdominals.

You cannot spot reduce. You can spot train, but you cannot spot reduce.

Fat loss does not occur in specific sections based on how you train your body. If you want to lose belly fat then you have got to come to terms with the fact that you’re going to lose fat on your upper body first.

We’re going to get into that in a second, but realize that if you want to lose belly fat, total body fat loss is what you’re after. It is physiologically impossible to lose fat from your abdominal area without losing fat anywhere else on your body.

To get that subcutaneous fat underneath of your skin that lies on top of your abdominal muscles to leave, you are going to have to achieve fat loss from all over your body.

Generally, fat loss starts in the neck and chin and works its way down from there. You may be wondering why it is so difficult to lose lower belly fat. There are a few things to take into consideration.

There are genetics to consider and there are hormone pathways and receptors to consider. They all tie in together. The first thing I want to suggest is that you have a look at the body shape of your parents.

Your body type most likely reflects one or a combination of both of your parents. If you have noticed that your mother is very heavy in the hips and very light up top, you may exhibit those patterns as well.

When it comes to losing weight and sculpting the body that you want, you will have to deal with your current body shape while you are losing. Genetics will play a role in your ability to lose weight in specific areas more than others as you achieve total body fat loss.
We have talked about the fact that you cannot spot reduce and the fact that genetics play a role. There are going to be differences for men and women when it comes to where you store fat and where you lose fat and there are going to be differences between different body shapes.

You may have heard of “apple” and “pear” body shapes. The apple shape generally occurs in men because it is testosterone driven.

Men tend to carry a lot of weight in the abdomen. The testosterone hormone pathways have an influence on where fat is stored in the body.

Women generally have pear shaped bodies. Pear shapes tend to carry a lot of weight below the belly button and down around the hips and thighs. The reason that happens is because women are more estrogen dominant and their hormones have an influence in the way they store fat. They store fat in and around the reproductive organs, so they store fat around the hips and thighs.

As women get into menopause and their hormone levels start to decrease, women start to exhibit more of an apple shaped body. They begin to store more fat in their abdomen.

That is one of the reasons why as women age, their risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes increases. An apple pattern of weight distribution is related to cardiovascular disease and diabetes. That is why those diseases are often found in men. This may be because abdominal fat is in and around the major organs.

Another interesting concept is that of hormone receptors. There are two main types of receptors that we’re going to look at: the good ones for fat loss, and the bad ones.

Fat cells have Beta One receptors (B1). They are the good guys. These receptors work with the transmitter noradrenalin which attaches to fat cells. When noradrenalin attaches to a fat cell, it sets in motion a cascade of events inside the cell which in turn activates an enzyme called Hormone Sensitive Lipase (HSL).

HSL mobilizes (breaks down) fat within the cell into its free fatty acid components and glycerol backbone and releases them into the blood stream. In order for the body to utilize fat, it needs to be broken down into free fatty acids.

When they get into the blood stream, they can be burned and utilized by the body as energy. B1 receptors are what we are looking to stimulate. Unfortunately, B1 receptors are usually found in areas of the body other than the abdominals and the hips and thighs.
This is where the bad guys come in: the Alpha Two receptors (A2). They are bad because they actually block HSL from breaking down fat in the cell. This means that when adrenalin or noradrenalin comes to the cell, it blocks the action of HSL whether it binds to the receptor or not. Fat will not be broken down and released into the body to be used as energy.

Here is where it all comes together. The A2 receptors are found mainly in the hips and thighs of women, and in the abdomen of men. And even more specifically, they are found in the lower abdomen of men.

This is one of the most important concepts to grasp in order to understand why it is tough to lose lower abdominal fat in general. And this is why it is difficult for women to lose fat in and around the hips and thighs. To lose the fat, you must work against those A2 receptors. You must work against your own physiology!

When you practice a restrictive diet and limit calories, those A2 receptors increase so that you have more of those bad receptors on the fat cells, making it even tougher to lose weight. Restrictive dieting does not work.

When you put on weight, fat is going to be stored in the areas that have A2 receptors, and it will come off last in those areas when you lose weight. It may help to imagine draining a pool of water. The shallow end will always drain first and the deep end will always take the longest to lose its water. That’s how it works with your fat stores.

The lower abdomen, the hips, and the thighs will always gain weight first and lose it last. A woman’s body wants to store fat in the hips and thighs first; fat in those areas acts to protect the ovaries and rest of her reproductive organs. It’s about evolution and survival.

I talked about losing weight in the chin and the neck earlier. That is where you are going to lose from first, and the last place you are going to lose is around the hips and thighs.

This is a bit of a generalization, as you have to look to your parents and their weight distribution patterns as well. Sorry to break the news to you, but that is how it occurs. For men, the abdomen gains weight first and loses it last. So if you want to lose fat it is hard work. It takes diligent time and effort to achieve.

What does this have to do with love handles? It has everything to do with love handles because they are in and around your oblique muscles and we cannot spot reduce. The abdominals and hips in general are the last places to lose fat.

Whether you need to lose lower abdominal fat or love handles, it will take time. You have to commit to train hard and eat well. You need to create a caloric deficit, and we’re going to talk about that in upcoming lessons. A caloric deficit is vital.
Hopefully you have a better idea of what is happening from a physiological perspective, why it takes so long to get that fat off. Once again, the goal is total body fat loss, not spot reduction, which doesn’t even exist!

In the next lessons, we’re going to talk about how to achieve total body fat loss and we’re going to give you more specifics on how to do so. We are going to get you that six pack and that sexy stomach in no time!

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