

THE
BELLY
OFF!

WORKOUTS

**A 6-WEEK DETOX DIET AND FITNESS PLAN
THAT STRIPS AWAY FAT—FAST!**
JEFF CSATARI and DAVID JACK WITH THE EDITORS OF *Men's Health*

TO THE BELLY OFF! CLUB MEMBERS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We at *Men's Health* firmly believe that it's never too late to get back in shape. With the right plan and a little gumption, you can change your body and improve your health—dramatically. This book will help you to succeed not only because it's a proven program but also because it was created by a team of smart and talented people—folks who've got your back. I thank them all and recognize some of them here.

David Jack for his infectious enthusiasm for fitness and skill in developing great workouts, and Belly Off! nutrition expert Chris Mohr, RD, PhD, of MohrResults.com, for his diet and weight-loss wisdom.

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My best friend, Kathy, and our daughters, Katelyn, Lydia, and Sophia. And to my Csatari cousins for loaning me that homemade wooden bench and those cement barbells when I was 10.

—Jeff Csatari

I believe it's becoming rare in life to find a career that you enjoy, can use to help others, and in turn experience great fulfillment. I have been blessed to find a path that allows me to do just that.

So many people have shaped me personally and professionally. I am sincerely grateful to them and would like to offer special thanks to:

My mom, Donna, and dad, Duff (RIP), for providing me the structure and the freedom to pursue my dreams; to my wife, Wendy, for her unconditional support and love (I am so proud of you); her mom and dad, Sharon and Rene, for theirs; and to my beautiful daughters, Ava and Ella, who make me better and fill me with love everyday.

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The editors of *Men's Health* and *Women's Health* magazines, especially Adam Campbell, Jeff Csatori, Kevin Donahue, and Bill Stump. Also to the Belly Off! community—your courage, stories, and inspiration have truly been a gift in my life.

A special professional thanks goes out to Reebok, Perform Better, and the International Youth Conditioning Association for their trust in me and for adding value to my life.

Finally to the Lord for His provision and grace in my life, for making human beings the greatest miracles in the world, and for choosing and equipping me to work with them.

—David Jack

INTRODUCTION

A lot of guys want six-pack abs. A lot of guys also want baby back ribs. (Extra barbecue sauce, please.) The problem is, one kind of six-pack never leads to the other. You know what I mean. It's not so easy to have the abs if you make a habit of beer and ribs. That's reality, friend. Need a napkin?

When you see a shirtless actor on the big screen sporting washboard abs, you can bet he hasn't been sucking down longnecks, pork barbecue, and hush puppies. How about the actress in the skimpy two-piece bouncing in the surf for the paparazzi? She probably spent the morning strapped into a Pilates reformer. Check out her ... *obliques!*

Despite what many of the diet books may promise, losing weight takes a bit of effort and acceptance of those scary concepts known as *discipline* and *sacrifice*. If there's a magic bullet to shedding belly fat—and there really isn't any magic to it—it's accepting the fact that you have to make some changes in your life if you're going to change your body. A turnaround results from doing something different. Success starts by identifying what that change needs to be.

The Belly Off! Club is filled with hundreds of thousands of people who did just that over the past 12 years. Driven by a “wake-up call” in their lives or inspired by others' success, they all did the same thing—they put their finger on exactly what was holding them back from living the life they really wanted. And then they set out to do something about it.

The change didn't come overnight, and they will be the first to tell you that. It happened gradually, in baby steps, and often with setbacks—those doses of reality that anyone embarking on a challenge should expect. But it always happened with conviction.

“I knew I had to get back in shape,” recalls Jeff Atwater, a Belly Off! Club member from Massachusetts. “But it wasn't until I recognized how good I felt about myself after losing weight and how amazing my physical self felt after every workout that I became convinced that this was the new me. Exercise is now a part of who I am.”

“Exercise is now a part of who I am.”

—Jeff Atwater, *The Belly Off! Club*, 2010

If you've read *The Belly Off! Diet* or joined our online club, you may know the story of Belly Off! For those who are new to the club, here's a brief time line of how Belly Off! came to be. Like a lot of ideas here at magazine and book publisher Rodale Inc., it grew, well, organically ...

A bunch of *Men's Health* magazine editors had just finished their regular Wednesday noontime basketball game. Shirts versus skins. And one sweaty editor

said, “Ya know, we doughboys don’t look anything like the buff dudes on the cover of our magazine.”

The lightbulbs came on—instant story idea: We’ll hire a trainer and a nutritionist to put us on a 6-week program to turn our bodies around and, we hope, help us find our abs. The story about our journey ran in the October 2000 issue. In it, you’ll read that some of us did see our abs emerge, but all of us improved our health and discovered muscles we didn’t know we had. In that same article, we invited readers to join the Belly Off! Club at menshealth.com and transform their bodies, too. And they did. In droves. That was more than 12 years ago. Since then, we’ve featured a Belly Off! success story in almost every issue of the magazine, and you’ll find many more online. All told, well over 300,000 people have used these Belly Off! stories as inspiration to lose more than 2 million pounds and, more important, dramatically improve their health.

And they continue to do so. We encourage you to join the Belly Off! Club at menshealth.com/bellyoff along with following the advice in this book. Start a member profile and use the advice, tips, and member forums to spur your own journey toward a leaner, stronger, healthier body.

ANOTHER WAKE-UP CALL

I dropped 14 pounds in 3 weeks while testing and developing the Belly Off! Diet and fitness program for the first book back in 2009. Since then, I’ve kept off most of that weight, having learned and followed the most useful (for me) Belly Off! lesson of all: Stop drinking soda and juice. Make your calories count. Those empty liquid ones aren’t worth it.

Working for a publisher of healthy living books and magazines comes with some nice lifestyle perks: We have an excellent company gym right down the street from the office, and it’s filled with all the latest fitness gear and offers terrific classes. The cafeteria serves up healthy entrées (many of them taken right out of the weight-loss cookbooks we publish), amazing salads and soups, and lots of organic options. On Friday afternoons, organic farmers sell produce, eggs, cheese, free-range beef, and wild salmon in the company dining hall. If I go for a sweaty afternoon run on the wooded trail right outside our building, my colleagues are grateful that there are employee shower facilities available to me afterward. Plus, I have access to the largest health library and medical journal database on the East Coast (it’s just one flight up—always take the stairs!), so I can keep up on the latest health and fitness research. I figure I’m healthier than a lot of guys my age, thanks to spending more than 8 hours a day in a place where you’re never far from reminders to eat right and exercise.

All of that sounds great, right? Almost *too* perfect, right?

Right.

Last month, I had a blood test, and the results freaked me out. I’m just about one sugar cookie away from a prediabetes diagnosis. In researching an article I was writing about advanced medical tests for *Men’s Health*, I filled a vial with my best red for a test called hemoglobin A1C (or HbA1c, for short). Unlike the fasting glucose test most family docs routinely use (a test that is fairly inaccurate, for the record), this test measures your average blood sugar over 3 months, giving you a far better picture of

how well your body is processing sugar over an extended period of time. The doctor described it like so: Glucose molecules adhere to your red blood cells like sugar to a doughnut. The more sugar, the worse it gets. I guess I had quite a few of these *hemogoblins*, because my numbers were pretty scary. Over time, the glucose causes damage to your heart, brain, kidneys, eyes, and nerves.

Prediabetes? My family doctor didn't seem that concerned because my HbA1c score was right on the borderline. But it genuinely scared me. I know that prediabetes is just a step away from full-blown diabetes, and most people with "pre" eventually get to "D." I remember what Florence Comite, MD, an endocrinologist I interviewed some time ago told me about HbA1c: "It's one of the best tests of longevity."

And I just failed it.

Diabetes is a horrifying disease, which often leads those who cannot manage it properly down an icy slope toward heart disease, stroke, blindness, amputation, cancer, and premature death. It is arguably the single biggest health epidemic of our time. Experts estimate that by 2020 it will affect one in two Americans. Here's another stat that may make you reconsider that croissant: Gaining 17 pounds triples your likelihood of developing diabetes. And another: Most prediabetics, upward of 33 million in the United States, like me, don't know they have it.

That's what really blew my mind: I didn't have a clue. Here I am, thinking I'm doing all right for a middle-age guy. I'm exercising at least four times a week. I still fit into my size 34 jeans. If I didn't have this blood test, I wouldn't know I'm on the verge of prediabetes (aka metabolic syndrome). I'd think everything was hunky-dory. Thank goodness I had that blood test. Now I know what I have to deal with—sugar-coated hemoglobin. It's my *new* wake-up call. And I'm going to answer it with a renewed effort to clean up my diet of pasta, rice, bread, and baked goods and tackle the *new* metabolic workouts my friend and colleague David Jack has designed for us—workouts contained right here in this book. Fortunately, prediabetes is pretty simple to make go away. Even full-blown type 2 diabetes can be reversed, sometimes without drugs, through diligent dietary changes, exercise, and weight loss.

Where do you stand? Think you're doing all right? Even if your waistline isn't bulging over your belt, I encourage you to ask your doctor about an HbA1c blood test to check your blood sugar. If your belly is big, make an appointment with your doctor today and demand this test. Diabetes is a poisonous snake at your feet that you can't see or hear; you don't even know it's there—until it strikes.

Your next step? Turn the page and make a pact with yourself to follow the Belly Off! Code of Conduct, the six simple principles that will have a dramatic impact on your belly size and your overall health. These principles are supported by the meat of this book:

- The new Belly Off! 2-Minute Drill, a morning ritual that will kick your metabolism into high gear.
- The Belly Off! 6-Week Detox, a 12-point nutrition plan that will whisk "the white stuff" from your diet, burn fat, and fuel your body for the workout program.
- The Belly Off! Walking Program with a 14-Day Kick Start, which quickly

constructs a foundation of fitness to build upon.

- New Belly Off! Recipes, which will help you make meals to resuscitate your taste buds when you tire of chicken breast.
- The Belly Off! Back-in-Shape Workouts, innovative metabolism-boosting, strength-building exercise routines designed to help you shed dangerous belly fat fast, featuring a special workout custom-made for beginners.
- Advanced workouts, including progressive programs that help you achieve the body you've always wanted.

Finally, this book is chock-full of tips, advice, and inspiration from Belly Off! Club members who've made the lifestyle changes and reaped the healthy rewards that you can earn, too, with the right plan, with the Belly Off! Workouts.

—Jeff Csatari

P.S. It starts with a commitment.

On the next page, you will find the Belly Off! Club Code of Conduct. Read it. Sign it. Date it. Follow it. Making a promise to yourself is the secret serum that will melt your Belly Off!



THE BELLY OFF! CLUB CODE OF CONDUCT

I PROMISE TO...

■ **Eat breakfast every day.**

It will be rich in protein and include some fats and slow-burning carbohydrates.

■ **Exercise daily.**

Do the Belly Off! 2-Minute Drill every morning, follow the walking program, and perform a Belly Off! strength workout three times per week.

■ **Eliminate sweet beverages.**

That includes fruit juices, sodas, teas with added sugar, and flavored coffee.

■ **Enjoy four to six small meals a day.**

Try to include some protein and fiber each time. Refueling this way will raise your metabolism, keep blood sugar levels stable, and prevent overeating.

■ **Cut out processed carbohydrates.**

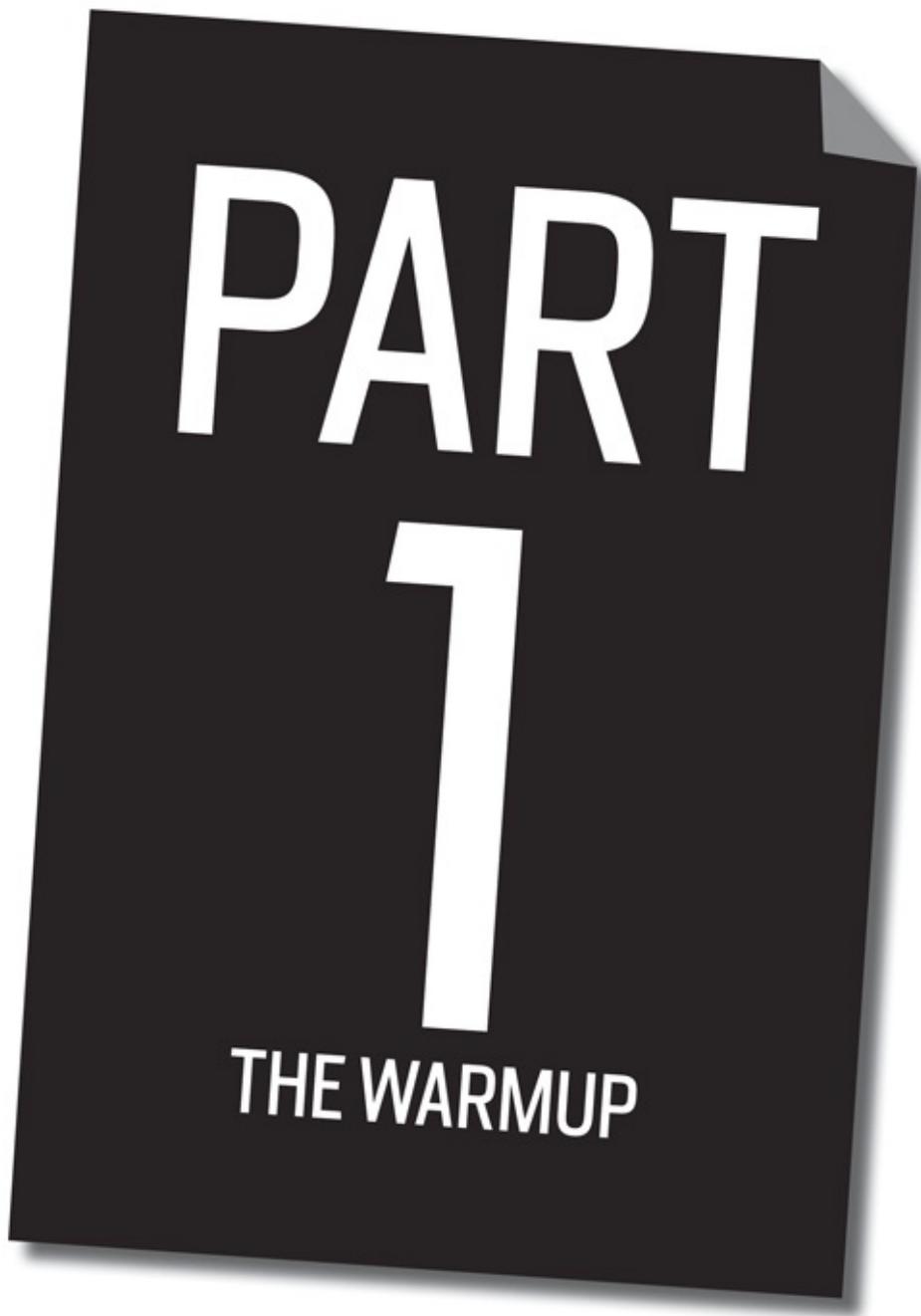
Remove cakes, cookies, chips, crackers, white bread, pasta, white rice, ice cream, and candy from your diet. Replace them with fresh vegetables and fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, lean protein, and satiating fats.

■ **Avoid alcohol for 6 weeks.**

No beer, wine, or cocktails. This is the easiest way to cut calories and burn fat fast.

Signed: _____

Date: _____



PART
1
THE WARMUP

If you are a beginner, [Part 1](#) The Warmup is custom-made for you. This kickoff to the Back-in-Shape Workouts includes lifestyle, diet, and fitness boosters to get you going, a walking interval program, including an easy, start-from-scratch 14-day walking plan, and an introduction to new Belly Off! 2-Minute Drills of low-impact bodyweight exercises. Simply by moving your body more every day, you will burn calories, increase your flexibility, and lay a foundation for fitness. The program has built-in progressions that push you a little bit more each time you work out. That way, you gradually build strength and cardiovascular endurance. The regimen is ideal for those who are significantly overweight or even obese. We've teamed it with a 6-week detox plan, detailed in [Part 3](#), that will clean up your diet and provide the nutrition needed to support your workouts. Good nutrition fuels your exercise. Regular exercise maximizes good nutrition. Both work together to speed weight loss. If you're not significantly overweight and are simply looking to get back in shape, [Part 1](#) is still a great place for you to start.



YOUR BELLY OFF! BOOSTERS

5 Steps to Start Changing Your Life Today!

Welcome to *The Belly Off! Workouts*, where the fat meets the fire. Inside this book you will find extremely effective exercise routines and nutrition advice that will help you to look, feel, and live better than ever. Begin your journey right here, right now with these life-altering boosters.

The goal of the Belly Off! Workouts is to start chipping away at your midsection. We really do want to take your belly off! It's not just an issue of appearance and comfort—sporting a big belly has real implications for your health. It is a medical fact that the bigger your middle, the higher your risk of disease.

Belly fat is called visceral fat because it collects deep underneath your abdominal muscle layer, around your internal organs. It's fat that doesn't jiggle, but presses out your middle, giving you that apple-shaped body. A waist circumference over 40 inches for men and 35 for women is a major risk factor for type 2 diabetes. In fact, most endocrinologists can guess with 90 percent accuracy whether or not you have prediabetes by simply looking at the size of your belly. That's how easy it is to spot this kind of dangerous fat. Visceral fat interferes with insulin production and blood sugar regulation, and it secretes chemicals that trigger inflammation that contributes to type 2 diabetes.

A large midsection is also implicated in high blood pressure, depression, sexual dysfunction, cancer, and—of course—heart disease. A study at the University of Alabama-Birmingham looked at several different factors that determine a person's heart disease risk. The researchers found that the biggest single predictor of a heart attack in a person's future is the amount of visceral fat in his or her abdomen.

We understand that you may be eager to look great in a bathing suit or new work clothes, and Belly Off! will get you there—but our first priority is to improve your health. Conveniently, shedding your belly using the strategies in this book will help you achieve both goals at the same time.

During the next 6 weeks, even if you're an absolute beginner, you will construct a solid base of fitness and begin to significantly transform the look and shape of your body. You'll have more energy. You'll be happier. Your friends and family will look up to you as someone who has taken charge of his life, someone who is active, healthy, and in control. If you have any doubt that you have what it takes to succeed on this program, remember this: A strong work ethic is the great equalizer. If you work consistently and follow the advice in this book, don't worry—you *will* achieve your goal of reducing your belly size and improving your health. We've made it very easy to start: Just use the boosters discussed below and remember to make a pact with yourself using [the Belly Off! Club Code of Conduct](#). Having a plan and working toward a goal has been the secret sauce for success for hundreds of thousands of Belly Off! Club members, and it will work for you.

Now, before you lace up your running shoes, we want you to grab a pen for the first step in your five-point jump start.

FITNESS

What Kind of Exercise Results in the Most Weight Loss?

Here are the top five answers of the Belly Off! Club online:

1. The kind you will do every day.
 2. Any fast-paced workout.
 3. The exercise that you find most enjoyable to stick with.
 4. Interval training.
 5. Circuit-style weight lifting with exercises that work the most muscles.
-

BOOSTER #1: START A FOOD DIARY

On [this page](#), you'll find a food diary that we recommend you fill out at the start of your get-back-in-shape program. The reason? To help convince you that your diet needs to change at the same time that your activity level does. Exercise alone won't cut it. No Belly Off! Club member lost 15 pounds or more without altering his food intake—the biggest modifiable factor in your effort to gain fitness. We want you to be conscious of what you are putting in your mouth so you'll have a clear picture of what needs to change. There is no better way of doing that than by keeping a food diary for at least 3 days. Make copies of the [sample log](#). Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind while filling it in.

- **Choose 3 consecutive days to keep track of your food intake, and make sure at least 1 of those days falls on a weekend.** Why? Because Saturday and Sunday are the days when people eat the most food. A study at Washington University School of Medicine found that the average American consumes 236 more calories on a weekend day than on a weekday. That can add up to a 9-pound weight gain over the course of a year. It's beneficial to know how much more you're eating on your days off and how that figure changes depending on how you spend your weekend.
- **Eat normally.** Don't try to be "good." You want to paint an accurate picture of your regular diet. Jot down what and roughly how much you've eaten after every

main meal. At the same time, include any snacks that you've eaten between meals. (Recording your food intake just three times a day instead of after every morsel you consume simply makes the food diary task less of a hassle and easier to keep up with.)

- **Be sure to track your beverages, too; they're a significant source of empty calories.** Tally the number of glasses of water you drink in a day, as well. You will likely be surprised by how little water you actually consume.
- **At the end of each day, figure out a rough calorie count for each meal.** (Use a calorie counter book or an online source to quickly guesstimate the calories in each meal.) Tally and record your total daily calories.

After the third day, review your log. How many calories did you consume? From which types of foods did the bulk of your calories come? How much of what you ate was lean protein and fruits and vegetables? How much was processed foods? How many foods are included in the [list of "Foods with the Most Nutrition Per Calorie"](#) versus "Foods with the Least Nutrition Per Calorie"? We guarantee this little exercise will be an eye-opener and will point out exactly what in your diet needs to change. You may find that it's so helpful that you'll want to continue keeping track of your meals.

NUTRITION

Start with a Shake

Drinking a protein shake before and during a weight-training session may speed weight loss and help build lean muscle, according to researchers at Syracuse University. They found that people who drank a combination of amino acids and carbohydrates had higher metabolic rates the next day compared with when they ate only carbs. People in the test reaped this benefit after drinking a shake containing 22 grams of protein mixed with 35 grams of carbohydrates.

IT WORKS FOR ME

"To overcome tough phases in a weight-loss program, it helps to develop a mantra. Here's mine: 'In your life up until this point, you have been one person. It is time to show the world who you can be.'"

—Andy Hayes

Weight Before: 300 pounds

Weight After: 190 pounds

The Belly Off! Club, April 2011

BOOSTER #2: START CLEANING UP YOUR DIET

Unless it happens to be a real blueberry, stay away from blue food. Blue #2 is an artificial dye used along or mixed with other dyes to color many, many processed foods. Studies involving mice that were fed rodent-appropriate doses of Blue #2 in their food suggest that the chemical can trigger the growth of tumors in the brain and elsewhere. Where do you find Blue #2? In the most heavily processed foods—cereals, candy, cake frosting, etc. But don't go hunting for it on product labels, just start reducing your consumption of food that comes in a box, bag, or can. Keep it simple.

Eat fresh.

The next easiest way to clean up your diet is to cut back on drinking soda, juice, or sugary fruit drinks. Your body can't monitor liquid calories well, so it's very easy to consume ridiculous quantities of sugar water and calories without even recognizing the load you are placing on your system. And don't think that diet soda is your savior. A University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study found that when people swapped their favorite sugary soft drink for the diet variety, they made up for the sacrifice by eating more desserts and more bread than people who drank water. It seems that artificial sweeteners increase your hunger for sweet things, the researchers say.

The solution? Water. Drink lots of it. If you are a big juice and soda drinker, this change alone will have a significant impact on your weight very quickly.

Another easy way to simplify your diet: Don't add sugar or salt to your foods. You don't need them. Hide the saltshaker and sugar bowl, if you must. Begin cutting back with tomorrow morning's coffee. If you normally use two teaspoons of sugar, use one. If you use one, use a half. Gradually wean yourself off the white stuff. Tip: When making your coffee, sprinkle a pinch of cinnamon into the grounds before you start to brew. You know that caffeine raises your resting metabolic rate. What you may not know is that cinnamon will help to regulate your blood sugar levels, helping to keep fat off your belly.



FOODS WITH THE MOST NUTRITION PER CALORIE

- Eggs
- Salmon
- Mozzarella cheese
- Almonds
- Turkey
- Avocados
- Cantaloupe
- Tomatoes
- Spinach
- Blueberries

FOODS WITH THE LEAST NUTRITION PER CALORIE

- Sugar
- Pasta
- Candy
- White rice
- Doughnuts
- Soda
- White bread
- Potato chips

BOOSTER #3: START EATING MORE PROTEIN AND FIBER

In [Part 3](#) of this book, you'll learn just how much protein and fiber you should try to swallow every day for optimum Belly Off! success. But for now, just start making an effort to eat some protein- and fiber-rich food at every meal. Both of these nutrients will fill you up and keep you satisfied longer than carbohydrates will. By eating more, you'll automatically reduce the amount of fast-burning carbs you consume.

NUTRITION

Backward Omelets

The protein in whole eggs helps you feel fuller for longer, says Belly Off! nutritionist Christopher Mohr, PhD, RD, of the weight-loss firm mohr results. But next time, flip the omelet's vegetable-to-egg ratio: Melt a little butter in a pan over medium-high heat. Add lots of fresh chopped vegetables. Sauté. Add two beaten eggs. Scramble, cook through, and serve.

Here's a no-brainer way to ensure that you use this Belly Off! booster daily:

Fill half of your breakfast or dinner plate with protein (eggs, beef, chicken, fish, turkey) and half with vegetables or fruit (especially high-fiber varieties). For fruit, focus on raspberries, blackberries, apples, and pears (with skin), which are among the highest in fiber.

If you find it difficult to get enough fiber, consider using a fiber supplement like Metamucil, a psyllium fiber powder that you mix in water or juice. Start with a small amount and increase the dosage gradually. Down a glass before a meal and you'll likely end up feeling full faster.

Another effective dietary supplement to try is PGX granules, made from glucomannan, which has a very high viscosity level. Research has shown that glucomannan can lower your insulin response after a meal by 50 percent, while also lowering bad cholesterol by 20 percent and blood sugar by 23 percent. Mix a scoop into yogurt, juice, or water. In the gut, it expands into a gelatinous mass, making you feel full very quickly. The glucomannan fiber also slows digestion. Taken before a meal, it will lower the glycemic index of any food you eat—so it's a good "appetizer" if you're having pasta. Studies suggest that glucomannan supplementation can cause weight loss even in people who don't restrict calories. In one study, obese adults who took 1 gram of glucomannan fiber an hour before every meal for 8 weeks lost an average of 5.5 pounds without making any other changes to their diet or exercise programs. An earlier study by researchers at the University of Connecticut compared two groups of overweight men and women who were given glucomannan to take 5 minutes before their two largest meals each day. Both groups were put on the same diet, but only one group was asked to do regular exercise. The study found that the exercisers and nonexercisers alike lost the same amount of weight after 8 weeks, suggesting the potential of this fiber to aid weight loss even without exercise. The American Dietetic Association recommends getting 30 grams of fiber a day. Surveys indicate that the average American consumes less than half that amount.
