

1. YOUR BODY

Your vehicle for life!

How would you treat a Ferrari if you owned one? Wouldn't you clean it meticulously, give it the best fuels and have it serviced regularly to make sure everything was in good working order? Of course you would! Now, how do you treat your body? Your body is more complex and intricate in its function than any machinery known to mankind, and it performs incredible tasks on demand and stays with us from birth to death. It does everything within its power to keep us healthy and functioning well, no matter how much abuse it receives. It can adapt, recover, reproduce, and repair itself when damaged, unlike vehicles and other machinery. But how do most people treat their bodies – not very well! It seems that whenever some people are given something that they haven't had to work hard for, they don't appreciate it.

Our body is infinitely more valuable than a Ferrari, but some people don't look after their body as well as they should. They give their body poor fuel (food), which is just like putting cheap fuel or oil into a high performance vehicle. This eventually clogs their 'fuel lines' (arteries) and stresses their engines (digestive system and other organs), thus reducing their efficiency.

Not only does the body require good nutrition but it also requires exercise to keep all systems running well and with maximum efficiency. If certain parts or systems aren't used they atrophy (waste away), and hence reduce their capacity to function. That is why we must exercise regularly to keep our muscles strong and toned, and to keep our heart and lungs in good working order, just as we must drive our car regularly to 'clean out the pipes'.

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If we don't look after our body, or don't look after our car, problems start to occur and fairly soon they stop working well before they should. Just as some people get their car fixed only when it breaks down, some people decide to change their lifestyle only when problems start to occur or when they get a 'wake up call', usually through a heart attack or stroke. However, if we look after our body as best we can, our body will look after us. It will carry us through life with the least number of 'overhauls' and with a smooth ride.

The focus of this book is on prevention. Specifically, it addresses a major cause of body 'breakdowns' and inefficient functioning, namely, excess body fat. In the following pages you will discover why fat can be a big killer, what causes us to be overweight and what our metabolism has to do with it. You will also be introduced to the four lifestyle factors from which all of the ***Fat-loss Principles*** are derived.

But first, the reasons why incorporating the ***Fat-loss Principles*** into your lifestyle and losing body fat are such good ideas.

Excess fat: The big killer!

Being overweight is a major health problem that afflicts a large and ever-growing portion of civilised society. It is becoming a global epidemic!¹ In the United States, most of their adult population is overweight (more than 60%) and almost one in three is obese (excessively overweight).² The prevalence of obesity has more than doubled in the US between 1980 and 2000; going from 15.0% to 30.9%³ and around 300,000 deaths in the US each year are attributable to obesity.⁴

These findings have serious implications, not only for the health of the population but also for the 'health' of the country's economy. In industrialised countries, the cost of health care related to excess bodyweight extends into the billions of dollars. One study estimated the total economic cost of obesity in the US as \$99.2 billion in 1995.⁵

In Australia, the incidence of obesity has also increased alarmingly. One study indicated that there has been a 2.5 fold increase in obesity over 20 years between 1980 and 2000; from 7.1% of the population to 18.4%.⁶ Another study estimated that 7.5 million Australians were overweight or obese in 1999-2000 and of these 2.6 million were obese.⁷ A very recent study has shown that obesity has reached epidemic proportions in Australia with 67.5% of men, 52.1% of women and 19%-23% of children and adolescents being overweight or obese.¹⁰

There is a definite association between obesity and the incidence of various diseases, including, heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, and arthritis^{8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18} and the incidence of these diseases appears to be increasing. For example, the prevalence of diabetes (mainly type-II) in Australia in 2000 was found to be 7.4% of the population, more than double the estimate for 1981.¹⁹ Furthermore, obesity results in a greatly reduced quality of life and diminished capacity to work.

In order to reduce your risk of heading into an early grave from one of the many diseases related to carrying excess body fat and also to maximise your quality of life, you must play an active role in preventative medicine by incorporating 'healthy' habits into your lifestyle. Throughout this book you will be introduced to a variety of habits that will not only help you lose body fat but

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also increase your life span, reduce your risk of illness, and improve your self-esteem, bodily functions, energy level and quality of life.

What has metabolism got to do with it?

Whether we are male or female, most of us have to pay special attention to our lifestyle habits if we want to maintain a lean body. However, we all know at least a few lucky individuals who seem to be able to eat whatever they like, do no exercise at all and who can still lose or maintain their weight. This is because these people have an unusually fast metabolism, which means their body's cells use (burn up) fuel (fat, carbohydrate and protein) at a faster rate than do most people's body cells.

Metabolism describes the sum of all chemical and physical changes that take place in every body cell as part of its continued growth and functioning. An individual's metabolic rate is the overall rate at which the body uses energy.

As we age our metabolism tends to slow down. This 'metabolic deceleration' results from a reduced efficiency of cellular functioning, combined with a loss of muscle mass as we age. The good news is that with the right nutrition, supplementation and exercise program, you can reverse the trend. By making slight changes to your lifestyle habits you can dramatically boost your metabolism and make your body an efficient fat-burner!

The pitfalls of many fat-loss approaches

Unfortunately, most people who want to lose fat focus on restricting their food (energy) intake instead of increasing their

body's energy expenditure. The latter approach, however, is a much more effective alternative. The reason why increasing energy expenditure is far superior to calorie (energy) restriction is that your body slows down your metabolic rate as soon as it registers any restriction in calories; therefore less fat is used as fuel. Also, when you say 'I'm going on a diet', you immediately think restriction, starvation, pain, etc. so it is psychologically stressful as well.

Increasing energy expenditure (through exercise or metabolism) means you can still eat the same amount of food, which provides your body with the nutrients it needs whilst easily creating a calorie deficit which will assist fat loss.

Everybody knows dieting to lose fat and keep it off doesn't work, so why do people try diet after diet in an effort to lose fat? The definition of insanity is trying to get a different result by using the same approach time after time! Why not approach fat loss from a different direction?

Don't choose a diet! Choose a way of life!

Instead of concerning yourself with restricting your food intake, do something 'positive' for your body, like exercising or having smaller meals more often, rather than something 'negative' like dieting. You will be amazed at how quickly your results will come. In fact, the word 'diet' itself comes from the Greek word 'diatia' and means 'way of life'. It doesn't have anything to do with restrictive eating as most people believe! If you want to achieve fat-loss results as fast as possible, but permanently and safely, all you need to do is follow the **10-step *Fat-loss Action Plan*** and incorporate most of the ***Fat-loss Principles*** into your life. The

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results will not only be relatively fast but, most importantly, you will be doing something positive for your body rather than something negative, as is the case with food restriction. Perhaps you could start an exercise program without changing your eating habits at all. It is up to you.

The most important point to remember when choosing to lose body fat is:

Energy expenditure must exceed energy intake

In order to lose fat, the total number of calories or kilojoules (*a measure of energy*) your body expends each day (from your metabolism, digestion of food and exercise) must be greater than the number of calories (from food) you consume each day. However, the source of these calories is also important, and later we will cover how to determine your required portion sizes and the proportion of macronutrients for each meal as well.

There are four 'lifestyle factors' that have the most influence on your physical appearance, and throughout this book we will examine these four factors in detail to see how they can assist your fat-loss efforts. All the ***Fat-loss Principles*** branch from these four lifestyle factors:

Nutrition There are numerous ways to alter your eating habits to increase your metabolic rate and fat burning ability even without changing what you eat! It may be as simple as increasing the number of meals you have each day or timing the consumption of the macronutrients (carbohydrates, protein and fat) throughout the day. All of the metabolism-enhancing nutritional techniques will be explained in Chapter 4.

Supplementation Certain supplements may be added to your diet to optimise your body's functional efficiency and therefore aid fat loss. Other supplements may be used to enhance cellular functions, thereby directly boosting your metabolic rate and increasing your body's fat-burning ability. These will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Cardiorespiratory (aerobic) exercise Aerobic exercise may be defined as any exercise that requires regular, rhythmical muscular contractions and can be maintained for a reasonable length of time. The aerobic exercises may include walking, swimming, cycling, jogging, aerobic classes, playing sport, etc. Any aerobic exercise will positively affect your metabolism during the exercise itself and keep it elevated for some time after the exercise session has been completed. Aerobic exercise will be covered in Chapter 6.

Resistance (weight) training This type of training includes any intense exercise that puts stress on the muscles and bones forcing them to become larger and stronger. Bodyweight exercises like callisthenics, yoga and pilates, exercises using rubber bands for resistance, or weight training are all classified as resistance training exercise and any of these are beneficial in 'toning up' your body and permanently boosting your metabolic rate by increasing your muscle mass. By slightly increasing your muscle size, your body's ability to burn fat greatly increases. Resistance training will be covered in Chapter 7.

We will cover each of these 'lifestyle factors' and the **Fat-loss Principles** that branch from them in detail throughout the book to show you exactly what to do to lose all the fat you want as quickly and as safely as possible. Not only will you have a

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better-looking body in a matter of weeks but you will also be healthier, have much more energy and feel much better about yourself. More importantly though, the fat loss will be permanent if these healthier lifestyle habits are maintained.

***YOU are the person who decides
▶ which Fat-loss Principles to use***

Always keep in mind that you are the person who decides which ***Fat-loss Principles*** to incorporate into your lifestyle – and that the changes you make resulting from these principles have to be ‘sustainable lifestyle habits’, habits that you can maintain for the rest of your life! They have to fit in with your work, family commitments and anything else you do – but you must make at least some of the principles a priority. Find the time to do the things that are necessary to achieve the desired changes in your body. Remember, it’s not difficult to get a great body so long as you do the things that are necessary on a consistent basis. You must become disciplined. A great body comes from doing the right things over a period of time. It won’t happen overnight but by being consistent it will happen! Create the habits, be consistent and be patient! If you follow the **10-step *Fat-loss Action Plan*** and use the ***Fat-loss Principles***, the results will follow.

Now, I don’t expect you to be perfect all the time, that’s totally unrealistic, but try to be as disciplined as possible. If you do you will be greatly rewarded! The rewards include: vibrant health, boundless energy and a great body. Just think for a moment what your life will be like when you receive these rewards. People will make comments on how fantastic you look and will ask for your ‘expert advice’ on how to help them get in shape (you might even recommend them to purchase this book!). You may also

find that it is much easier to get out of bed each morning and that you have more energy for taking on the challenges of the day. Just think how good it would feel to be able to keep up with your grandchildren or even outlast them during play when you're well into your twilight years? Perhaps a life free of aches and pains would be a welcomed reward for you. These are just a few of the endless benefits you will gain from making some simple changes to your lifestyle.

Losing fat can be easy!

Losing body fat is just like riding a bike. The faster you pedal (the more motivated you are), the sooner you will reach your destination (achieve your goal). However, you must make sure that you are riding on the right path (using the right principles)!

This book, ***'Look Good, Feel Great!'***, promises to put you on the right path and help you pedal faster than you ever have before! If you follow the **10-step *Fat-loss Action Plan*** and incorporate the ***Fat-loss Principles*** consistently and regularly into your lifestyle, then you are assured of achieving and maintaining a healthy, lean and good-looking body for the rest of your life.

Decide which of the *Fat-loss Principles* suit your lifestyle and then consistently and regularly apply them

You may find some of the 26 ***Fat-loss Principles*** in this book differ quite dramatically from those you have heard before or those that have been recommended to you in the past. Other ***Fat-loss Principles*** featured will be common knowledge to all, and will just reinforce what you probably already know. As you read this book, complete each step of the *Fat-loss Action Plan*. Therefore, by the

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time you finish reading it, not only will you have a greater understanding of how your body burns fat and what the most effective principles are, but you will also have created your own individualised plan for achieving your fat-loss goal.

Once you understand how each principle works, and apply them to your life, I'm sure you will be amazed at how quickly changes will start to occur in your body. Just keep in mind though that the results don't come overnight or from a few days of good eating or exercise. Results come from making slight lifestyle changes and maintaining these changes long term. That is, do a little bit every day. Most people try to lose fat the same way some people study for exams, by cramming! Rather than losing a little each day, they try to lose as much weight as possible in as short a time as possible, and they are doomed to failure right from the start. Permanent fat loss cannot be achieved through short-term dieting. It can only be achieved through permanent and sustainable lifestyle changes.

Achieving 'physical greatness' doesn't require you to spend endless hours in the gym or follow a strict, 'carrots and water' diet either. It simply requires you to be consciously aware of your eating and exercise habits so your body can burn off fat fast whilst simultaneously building or at least maintaining your muscle mass.

It seems rather ironic that there are so many diets, low-fat foods, health clubs, nutritionists and 'fat-loss experts' around, whilst the obesity problem gets worse and worse. The problem, as I see it, is that many of the techniques recommended are too difficult to maintain long term, or they don't focus on the mind-set of the individual. You must want to lose body fat and be willing to

maintain the lifestyle changes long term! This is really the key, long-term maintenance. Unless you are willing to follow any diet, nutritional plan or exercise program for the rest of your life, you will not be able to maintain the results. Therefore, you must decide which ***Fat-loss Principles*** you can realistically and permanently incorporate into your lifestyle.

The vast majority of people I have assisted in losing fat have found the principles I recommend effective, but more importantly they have found the principles easy to incorporate into their lifestyle and maintain long term. The people have varied widely in age, sex, fitness level, genetic potential, lifestyle, background and health status. I strongly believe that anyone, no matter what their age, can dramatically improve their health and physical appearance in a short period of time by using the principles covered in this book.

Why should you lose fat?

There is no doubt that when you look good, you feel good, so if you want to improve your outlook on life, your opinion about yourself and generally how your body functions, then part of your focus should be on changing your body composition (losing fat). Not only will you feel better, but you will also find that people will start treating you differently too.

Unfortunately, in our society, people are often judged by the way they look. Physical appearance can certainly influence someone's first impression of another. If you look lean, strong and toned, people certainly treat you differently than if you are overweight. Everybody's heard that people shouldn't be judged on appearance - it's what's inside that counts - but unfortunately

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this is simply not the case. I have spoken with many people who have managed to transform their bodies from being overweight to being lean and toned, and many of these people comment on how differently they are treated, even in normal, everyday situations. For example, when they go shopping, the level of service they receive seems to improve or when they are around family and friends they seem to be treated with more respect. When they apply for jobs they believe their 'new' appearance has a lot to do with their success (unfortunately people often equate obesity with laziness). Some have even said that their spouse seems to 'notice' them a lot more. Perhaps others appear to treat them better simply because the person who loses fat feel better about themselves and this radiates outward or maybe it is because people do treat others better if they look good. Whatever the reason, it certainly strengthens the argument that it is imperative that you take care of your body and do what is necessary to improve yourself physically if you really want to enjoy your life!

Some things to keep in mind

If you want to lose body fat, think realistically how long it is going to take for you to lose it. Just as it takes time to accumulate, body fat also requires time to be removed. Just consider for a moment how long it has taken to attain your current physical condition, months or perhaps years! Fat doesn't appear all of a sudden! It gradually accumulates on our body, 30-40 grams a day, a kilo or so each month or two and in a year you could be 10 kg overweight. In a matter of 3-4 years you could be 30 kg overweight! By the same token, fat can only be removed from our body at a similar rate. Trying to short cut the fat-loss process

is futile. The body is too clever! It has a variety of ‘contingency plans’ at its disposal to prevent you from losing fat too fast!

Since fat is easy to put on we must make a conscious effort to monitor our body fat level and do what is necessary to reduce it and then keep it relatively low. This means we must incorporate the necessary habits into our lifestyle, maintain them and finally monitor our body fat level regularly to make sure it stays at an acceptable level.

In order to achieve your desired results and more importantly, maintain them long term, you must apply the ***Fat-loss Principles*** covered in this book to your life. It is not necessary to apply all the principles, but the more you do the faster your results will come.

Another important point to remember is that the ***Fat-loss Principles*** themselves are flexible. There is no need to follow each principle exactly; you may adjust them to suit your own situation but make sure you understand why it works so you can still embrace the general philosophy.

I hope this section has increased your understanding of fat loss and has started you thinking about modifying your lifestyle to assist your fat-loss efforts.

Your 10-Step Fat-loss Action Plan

The following section outlines ***Your 10-Step Fat-loss Action Plan*** that will be covered throughout this book. By performing each ***Action Step*** you are certain to achieve your physical goal in a relatively short period of time.

Fat-loss Action Step 1: *Complete all the goal-setting exercises*

(Chapter 2)

Fat-loss Action Step 2: *Complete the Lifestyle Questionnaire and determine your Lifestyle Rating*

(Chapter 3)

Fat-loss Action Step 3: *Read the chapters containing all the Fat-loss Principles*

(Chapters 2-8)

Fat-loss Action Step 4: *Determine your Daily Calorie Intake (DCI) and design your own Nutritional Plan using the Macronutrient Information Table and your chosen Fat-loss Nutritional Principles*

(Chapter 4)

Fat-loss Action Step 5: *Have a 'fasting blood glucose level' test*

(Chapter 5)

Fat-loss Action Step 6: *Complete the Supplement Selection exercises* (Chapter 5)

Fat-loss Action Step 7: *Complete the Cardiorespiratory (Aerobic) Exercise Questionnaire* (Chapter 6)

Fat-loss Action Step 8: *Complete the Resistance (Weight) Training Questionnaire* (Chapter 7)

Fat-loss Action Step 9: *Plan, Design and Implement your Weekly Activity Schedule* (Chapter 10)

Fat-loss Action Step 10: *Monitor your progress* (Chapter 11)

The next chapter includes a goal-setting workshop whereby you can start to develop an enormous amount of intrinsic motivation (motivation from within) to help you take the necessary steps on a daily basis (daily disciplines) to achieve your fat-loss goal.