

Tap into the greenest “Energy Reserve” of all to get lean: Your Body Fat.

Exercise and motion is possibly the one silver bullet we have in the quest for a healthy, youthful, vibrant body and mind. It's also the key to losing weight and keeping it off. To feeling energized and glowing. If eating right is a big piece of a healthier you, an equally big piece is moving your bod. Unfortunately, my editors felt there simply wasn't enough room in the book to include this critical piece on exercise, so I am including it here.

C'mon, you knew this was coming...and you should be excited! With America in the throes of an energy crunch, burning your own fat may just be the greenest fuel of all (as over 66% of Americans overweight, we have a lot in our own reserve tanks). While lean people may have 2-3 months of stored energy reserve, obese people can be carrying around up to a years worth of stored energy or more in their fat cells^[1]. Tapping into this fuel is the key to helping you get lean faster. There's a growing list of benefits that research suggests exercise may give you, including boosting your mood and helping lift depression, easing anxiety, improving self esteem and insomnia, help with chronic fatigue and low energy, as well as improved circulation and blood flow that can enhance your sex life^[2]. If you think about it, many of these problems are parts of that giant feedback loop that can often send us right into the a pint of ice cream or a bag of potato chips looking to feel better, so exercise is actually a double plus for a lot of my clients.

Your Lean and Green Exercise Prescription^[3]:

A lean and green lifestyle includes regular daily movement through a combination of cardio, strength, and Daily Green Steps. Of course, be sure to check with your physician prior to starting any new physical fitness regimen. But once you're cleared, here are the basics.

Step 1: Start Burning your reserve energy:

Move it to lose it and awaken your inner fit. Do some sort of moderately intense cardio 30 minutes a day, five days a week (alternately, if you can't do five days a week, you can do vigorously intense cardio 20 minutes a day, 3 days a week)^o. Enlist a friend to exercise with you, join a gym, walk Fido instead of letting him out the back door, whatever it takes, get moving!

Move more to lose more. While 30-minutes a day is perfect to help beat the risk of chronic disease, if you're really serious about losing weight, kick it up to an hour. The National Weight Control Registry, the largest prospective investigation of long-term successful weight loss maintenance, found that one hour of exercise a day was one of the defining hallmarks of 90% of their participants (participants have lost, on average 66 pounds and kept it off for over 5 years)^[4].

Step 2: Strength Training: Get on the fast track to becoming Lean and Green Machine:

Strength training gets you lean by increasing your muscle tone- it will not “bulk you up” (a concern to some of my female clients, but an unfounded one), but will help you to look tighter and firmer-it will also help protect you against osteoporosis, and will keep your metabolism running higher by preserving muscle tissue (muscle is metabolically active and requires many more calories to maintain than fat).

Work Your Muscles Twice a Week . Do 1 exercise for all major muscle group (about 8- 10 strength-training exercises in all). Do 8-12 repetitions of each exercise. “Be sure to shake it up after 6 weeks (either changing the amount of weight your using, or the exercise itself) or your muscle adapts and you may find that you plateau in your results.” suggests Lisa Stevenson, a personal trainer and dietitian who runs corporate wellness exercise programs in Hartford Connecticut.

For specific step by step information on strength training you can log onto the website of the National Strength and Conditioning Association www.nscs-lift.org. They have a series of training videos for different strength training exercises that will show how to perform the exercise safely and will provide detailed info about what muscles you are working. I'd also strongly suggest that if the above paragraphs sound completely foreign to your current activity patterns (read: you're a couch potato or a computer slug), if you need a refresher course, or you're simply looking for some great inspiration and a fitness companion, that you pick up a good fitness or exercise book; two of my faves include Kim Lyon's *Your Body, Your Life* (Celebrity Trainer from NBC's hit show *The Biggest Loser*, www.kimlyons.com), and the amazing Miriam Nelson's *Strong Women Stay Slim* (one of an entire series of fantastic “Strong Women” books based in groundbreaking research from Tufts University, www.strongwomen.com).

Step 3: Add Your Daily Green Steps: Find Five New Ways to cut carbon and burn more calories

Much of our daily activity has been made easier and faster by higher carbon “conveniences”. Find five swaps you can make to cut carbon and burn more calories... over a year the potential calorie savings are below.

Try This	Instead of This	Burn This Much More
30 minutes cooking dinner, 25-30 calories	Ordering take out pizza and wait for 30 minutes. 15 calories	10-15 calories
Walk 1 minute to colleagues desk, talk for 3 minutes while standing, 2x a day. 6 calories	Emailing colleague for 4 minutes, 2-3 calories	3-4 calories
Take 3 flights of stairs, 15 calories	Take the elevator 3 times, 2 calories	13 calories
Getting up and changing TV channel 5 minutes a day. 3 calories	Using the remote for 5 minutes from your recliner. 0.6 calories	2.4 calories
Wash Fido yourself for 20 minutes. 100 calories	Call “Groom A Pet” to come and wash Fido for you. 2 calories	98 calories
Manually open and close garage door 2x/day. 3 calories	Use garage door opener .25 calories	2.75 calories

Total daily additional calories burned with Green Steps: 135
 Potential Calories burned over a year by switching each day: 49,330
 Potential pounds of fat lost: 14

Small savings add up. ..to big weight loss. Now just think of all the carbon you've shed as well-no batteries in the remote, auto miles saved for pizza and dog deliveries, and energy use in office buildings.

[1] Center for Science in the Public Interest, Nutrition Action Health Letter. “Chair Today, Gone Tomorrow”. April 2008, 3-6.

[2] The Mayo Clinic, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/exercise/HQ01676>

[3] Based on the 2007 American College of Sports Medicine Guidelines, accessible at http://www.acsm.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home_Page&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=7764

o According to the American College of Sports Medicine, moderate-intensity physical activity means working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, yet still being able to carry on a conversation.

[4] National Weight Control Registry, <http://www.nwcr.ws/Research/default.htm>.