



Learn my health and fitness
"trade secrets" –

**Volume 1, Issue 6
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**What you do
speaks so loud
that I cannot hear
what you say.**

**--Ralph Waldo
Emerson**

DEB CARUANA'S...

Vital SignsFitness!

"Insider Tips For Healthy, Wealthy & Fun Living..."

REAL PEOPLE, REAL SITUATIONS

This is a new addition to the newsletter where I can take time to address in full detail questions which current clients confront while in the process of making real changes to their body, lifestyle and well being.

TO DO OR NOT TO DO? ... ABS

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO WRITING ARTICLE:

Jeanne is a client I have worked with for a number of years, and through a couple of births with very quick recoveries. She is naturally tall and thin with wide hips and very flat abs. She has that perfect body for wearing couture as you can see from her Vogue magazine write up in October of 2003. She is the type that doesn't want muscle showing at all, just long sleek 'feminine' lines. We have stepped up her workouts of late because she is getting stronger and we do need to keep up the challenge to maintain that high metabolic burn rate for caloric expenditure, without creating muscle definition. Jeanne doesn't like doing cardio so that's not a solution.

Recently when beginning our workout Jeanne stops, pulls up her t-shirt and shows me her abs. I am very pleased with what I see, which is the definition of where the lower obliques end and the rectus abdominus (your quadrants, also known as '6 packs') begin. There was strong deliniation indicating the muscles beneath. Jeanne points to it and says " I don't want this." In my shock the only thing I can think to say is "If there were a group of women in hear watching us, they'd all groan at you."

Everyone is different and has different goals. So Jeanne now thinks that she should just not do abdominal exercises and asks "Why do I need to do them, my abs are fine the way they are? Can you write about this in your next newsletter so I better understand why I need to do abs."

I then launch into an explanation of the importance of core work(abs). About how your abs stabilize you and help prevent injury by bracing and tightening. The brain sends a message to the transverse abdominus (remember that girdle muscle we all spent time on, with the breathing exercises) before it tells any other muscle to move. For example, the mind tells the knee to lift but before the quadricep muscles initiates the lifting response the transverse abdominus recieves the message to react by tightening for balance, control and strength. So essentially you brace yourself from your abs and then you initiate the movement, braced and centered. Which is why I constantly repeat "pull your navel in and wrap it around your spine." The more this response is practiced, the more proficient, balanced, coordinated, centered and strong you are plus the flatter your abs are.

There is a highly credentialed school of thought that advocates: "Every exercise, every movement and every activity you do is an abdominal exercise if you draw your belly button in and brace your abdominal muscles. Sit-ups and crunches waste your time and do not produce results." I personally believe that there is not one formula for all bodies. For those that have no lower back problems, ever, plus perfect balance, coordination and that conditioned response to pull the navel in to the spine, I say yes, you don't need to do abs. But for us mere mortals who at times twist, bend and pull things (or children!) and forget to brace...well you still need to do your abs. Remember practice makes perfect and that bracing response at varying resistances and degrees is not innate but practiced. So based on this article I will let Jeanne be her own judge and in an informed way let her decide whether she needs to do her abs or not.

PS. If she decides to not do them I will monitor carefully her balance, strength, coordination and lower back response and if I do see any signs of weakness I will discuss with her the need to suffuse an ab workout intermittently.

TWO WEEKS LATER

Jeanne has since clarified that she doesn't want the muscle definition but most of all she doesn't want any roundness of the belly. So, we entirely omitted crunches. By eliminating the crunches and working the abs through whole body movements and engaging the twisting and bending movements her abs have flattened out entirely again. She has not lost balance, strength or coordination and her conditioned response is now to pull navel in and brace her abs. She will not have that 6 pack definition that is so sought after, but that is her personal choice. For myself personally and all clients who choose to do so I will continue to

do crunches, coming up and working only to the point where the navel can stay in towards the center of gravity(spine). If the abdominals pop out at all the belly will develop roundness, and that conditioned response to pulling in may be weakened. **But isn't it great to know that you can be working your abs all day long, in whatever you are doing, just brace them and pull in! Voila! Flat abs.**

For more detailed information about the advocacy for not doing abdominal exercises go to National College of fitness.com. Oh don't forget the nutrition part!

Are You My Client Of The Month?

Every month I choose a very special *Client Of The Month*. It's my way of acknowledging good friends and saying "thanks" to those who support me and my business with referrals, word of mouth and repeat business.

This month's *Clients Of The Month* are Susan Zimny & Lori Gottbetter. They experienced the New York mothers turmoils of child placement in the ever more competitive and non accommodating school system, with all of its politics and shenanigans. These two Moms' cool heads prevailed and they never derailed from their Fitness Lifestyle Plans. The high stress of the competition has successfully derailed many a fitness advocate but not these two. Congratulations for taking care of yourselves and staying on track in stressful trying times.

Plus they even sent a referral!

You might be my next Client Of The Month. Wait for your name here in an upcoming month!

May the forces of evil become confused on the way to your house.

--George Carlin

I never give them hell; I just tell them the truth and they think it is hell.

--Harry S. Truman

The Diet Demons

As the dieting phenomenon grows, with a new "diet guru" announcing "THE SOLUTION" almost weekly, so do the waste lines of America expand. Obesity is now a strong and gaining second to cigarettes as a preventable cause of death or disease. The term diet seems to have taken on a whole new meaning, moving from panacea, and becoming more and more a pariah.

What I'm going to do is reiterate some nutritional basics to try to demystify, some of the confusion out there.

There are two approaches to weight management. The first is the "magic theory" which is very enticing because it requires absolutely no responsibility. You simply follow the system and the system tells you what to do. There's no thinking involved (you just put up with it). If you're not successful, it's your fault because you're not a good "dieter?" This magic

Amazing Facts and Other Trivia

Alaska has the highest percentage of people who walk to work.

One quarter of the *bones* in your body, are in your feet

Canada is an Indian word meaning "Big Village".

The most common name in the world is Mohammed.

The word "samba" means "to rub navels together."

The glue on Israeli postage stamps is certified kosher.

Mel Blanc (the voice of Bugs Bunny) was allergic to carrots

The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

Every time you lick a stamp, you're consuming 1/10 of a calorie.

Money isn't made out of paper, it's made out of linen.

A 'jiffy' is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.

The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.

Certain frogs can be frozen solid then thawed, and continue living.

A hedgehog's heart beats 300 times a minute on average.

Camels have three eyelids to protect themselves from blowing sand.

Ants stretch when they wake up in the morning.

A hummingbird weighs less than a penny.

theory incorporates such tricks as restricted calories, diets, elimination of food groups, pills, hypnosis, prepackaged meals, creams and even massage. This magic theory has left millions in despair and hopelessness in their never ending quest to be thin.

*The second approach is the **Fitness Approach**.*

There is a quiet methodical fitness industry educating millions (without all the advertising dollars) to achieve long term lifestyle changes and achieving weight management for life. Long-term weight management must include productive exercise, proper nutrition and positive motivation. From a basic physiologic standpoint I will explain the interrelationship and delicate balance between food and exercise.

First we need to understand body composition (the % of body fat vs. lean mass) in relation to your body weight. Here are some general guidelines and ranges for body fat. For women, the range up to age 30 is 14 to 21%, from 30 to 50 it is 15 to 23% and from 50 up it is 16 to 25%. Again, it is desirable to be below the upper limit, and a woman near the lower limit would be lean. For men up to about age 30, 9 to 15 % is a good range. From age 30 to 50, 11 to 17% is a good range and from age 50 and up, 12 to 19%. A person should try to stay below the upper limits given and a person at the lower limit would be described as lean.

Extra fat in the abdomen is linked to high blood pressure, diabetes, early heart disease, and certain types of cancer. Smoking and too much alcohol increase abdominal fat and the risk for diseases related to obesity. That is why I prioritize the abdominal measurement. (Ask me anytime, I have my fat calipers at hand at all times.)

The healthiest and most effective way to decrease body fat is through a slight negative energy balance where caloric expenditure slightly exceeds caloric intake. In order to determine what your caloric intake should be we need to find what your Basal Metabolic Rate is. BMR is the minimum amount of calories required for vital body functions during relaxed, reclined and waking states. There are a few different calculations for this (complicated and long winded) or you can go to my web sites nutrition page

<http://www.vitalsignsfitness.com/nutrition.html>

where the calculations will be done for you.. After you determine your BMR, you must factor in your activity level. Basically you burn 100 -300 calories for every hour of exercise (depending on intensity).

The more lean muscle tissue you have the higher your BMR, which could be up to a 15% faster. Restrictive, low calorie dieting can cause your BMR to drop by as much as 20%.

People living in tropical or very cold environments generally have BMR's 5-20% higher than those living in more temperate climates. Athletes have higher BMRs than most.

When caloric intake goes below BMR, as in commercial weight loss programs, the body will 1) Store even more body fat to fend of the perceived threat of starvation. 2) Slow down metabolism to reduce energy requirements. 3) Burn muscle

to reduce energy requirements. 4) Perceive starvation and create a slower survival metabolism.

The Nutritional Insight calculator at <http://www.vitalsignsfitness.com/nutrition.html> will calculate for you, what your BMR caloric needs are then also add on your activities so you know exactly what your caloric needs for each day are. Plus if you want to make any changes in your body composition it will tell you exactly how many calories to eat and give you a break down of a balanced diet including optimal daily intake of protein, fats, and carbohydrate.

As a deeper resource you can go to www.fitday.com (when you log in with basic information they never bother you with emails.) From there you can enter the foods you eat and with each food you enter the site will give you a break down of carbs, fats, and proteins plus nutrients and caloric count. It will also give you a more detailed break down of your activities. The more you use this site the better you will understand food how it breaks down and how it supplies your daily required nutrients.

Nutritional insight will help you balance protein, fats, and carbohydrates for each meal based on your current body weight, exercise habits, and desired body weight goals. Realistically we're all just trying to stay trim and healthy which means a balanced diet, small meals, not letting yourself get too hungry or too full. The more we learn and understand about the interrelationship between food, exercise the more empowered and capable of rational decision making we will be for our permanently successful health and fitness lifestyle and ongoing weight management.

This article is part 1 of an ongoing educational series on your fitness lifestyle plan.

Do You Have A Health Or Fitness Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from all of my good friends and clients who enjoy reading my monthly newsletter. And I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have about anything related to health and fitness. If you have a question, tip or idea, please feel free to call me at 212-677-3185. Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!

Jackie Greenberg asked: **Q:** Will exercising on a cardio machine build big leg muscles or help to tone and slim your legs?

A: Any standing, cardio machine is a superb exercise modality for losing weight and improving fitness. If you're new to exercise, do not be alarmed if your legs get a little bit bigger at first. This is due, in part, to a small increase in muscle tissue, increased glycogen (stored carbohydrate) content, and perhaps some water bound to that glycogen. Remember, muscle is your metabolic furnace so more of it will help you incinerate the fat. Over time, as you continue with your regimen and reduce the amount of stored body fat on your legs, you will see a drop in their overall girth. Genetic factors also influence the size of your legs. Some people build muscle easier than others so lighten resistance.

Psychological Support Helps Kids Lose Weight

This study was conducted at a residential treatment center in Belgium. It evaluated the benefits of moderate caloric restriction, physical activity, and psychological support for severely obese children and adolescents. Twenty boys and girls completed the 10-month program and were tested at four times: baseline, 11 weeks, 24 weeks, and at 33 weeks, the end of the program. There was a mean loss of 8.9% fat mass and sub maximal aerobic performance increased. In addition, maximal performance and peak power increased as did relative VO₂ max. The authors conclude that a moderate dietary and exercise program, with psychological support, is effective in reducing body fat and improving fitness in severely obese children. Commentary: This study does not indicate enough to draw firm conclusions. For example, what is meant by "psychological support" or "moderate dietary restriction"? Nonetheless, it does support the idea that weight loss, in this case, for kids, requires a 3-pronged approach; it may not be enough to cut calories and turn off the TV.

B. DeForche et al. Changes in fat mass, fat-free mass and aerobic fitness in severely obese children and adolescents following a residential treatment programme. *European Journal of Pediatrics* 162(9):616-622, 2003

Change your thoughts and you
change your world.

---Norman Vincent Peale

I like to see you move with the
rythm; I Like to see when you're
dancin' from within.

--Bob Marley

I'd Love To Hear From YOU!

Whether your goal is to lose
weight, get in the best shape of
your life, perform even better in all
your sports or anything in between,
I can help you.

I'd love to hear from you – even if
you just want to say “Hi!”

I'm full of energy, and people tell
me – a pretty fun person to talk to.
So please don't hesitate to call me
up with any questions you have
about health and fitness related
issues. There's never any pressure
and no obligation. I'm a
resource...and a friend!

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Amusing Facts.com

American Heart Association

European Journal of Pediatrics

“Who Else Wants To Win A \$50 Transferable Gift Certificate?”

Take my Fitness Trivia Quiz and you could win too!

Okay Everyone I just found this article and had to include it
because its so helpful and I know that no one knows the
answer so its included.

The Food Allergy Test

On an empty stomach, first thing in the morning, take your
temperature. Read it accurately and keep a record. Eat the
food item which you wish to test, only one, e.g. tomato, or
milk, or wheat, or yeast, or whatever you want to test. Don't
test for composite food like cake or soup but only for the
individual ingredients. Record which food you ate. Take
your temperature again in half an hour. Record it. If your
temperature has gone up, you are allergic to that item. My
temperature always goes up 1/2° F. Yours may be a different
amount.

If your temperature remains unchanged, you are not allergic
to the test item.

This is more than \$50. Worth of Info.!

BEWARE: Home Pollution

- Bleach and other chemical cleansers. Substitute with pine oil, vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice
- Moth balls. Substitute with cedar chips
- Gas stoves. Use good ventilation
- Candles. Substitute with natural paraffin-free candles
- Perfumes. Substitute with natural oils
- Dry cleaning. Substitute with hand wash with gentle cleanser.

**Thank You! Thank You!
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Thank You!**

Thanks to *YOU* the word is spreading.
Thanks to all of my clients and friends
who graciously referred me to your
family, friends and neighbors last month!
See, rather than pester people with
unwanted calls and pushy sales
techniques (that's definitely not me), I
build my business based on the positive
comments and referrals from people just
like you. I just couldn't do it without you!

**Lori Gottbetter thanks for a
referall and Jackie Greenberg
thanks for a referall!**