

I believe all women are superheroes. I'd call you Wonder Women, but I might get sued and I don't want her to come find me in her Invisible Jet and lasso me with her rope of truth (sorry I'm kind of a superhero junky).

You've got so many things on your plate that it's tough to find time to lose weight and devote to yourself.

Weight loss is tough stuff. It's tough to know what to do, what to eat, what not to do, what not to eat, how to prepare your food, what exercises work, what doesn't work, will that stupid contraption on the TV infomercial actually work, do those weight loss supplements work, do any weight loss supplements work, why is that guy running on the Gazelle thingy yelling and why does he have such a long pony tail after the 80's, do you really have to go to a health club, do you really have to count calories...

...I could go on, but my fingers and brain started to hurt typing that out and thinking of more!

Seriously though, it is tough to lose weight and get in shape, but it's especially tough for women and even tougher for moms.

Moms have a whole bunch of 'stuff' on their plate and they're always trying to do more. They want the best for their kids; they want to take care of their family and home, yet it's tough to find time to devote to yourself and getting your body back.

So what's a mom to do? Who are you supposed to trust?

Given that I'm a new dad and train a lot of moms myself, I thought I'd cut through all the lies, myths and misinformation and give you a Top 5 list when it comes to losing fat and getting a toned, sexy body.

Losing fat can take more than what's laid out in this report, but it's a great start and if you put into action these 5 small things, you will be well on your way to losing all the weight you want and getting that sexy body.

1. EAT THESE FAT-FIGHTING FOODS

When it comes to succeeding with your weight loss goals, the most questions I receive have to do with what to eat (followed closely by exercises to get rid of the tummy fat).

My first comment is always that I'm not a chef, so I'm not going to give you a bunch of recipes - recipes you wouldn't use anyway. Plus I don't know you personally so it would be kind of stupid of me to give you a big list of meals that probably include foods you don't like or have no desire in learning to like or prepare.

Rather, the easiest thing I tell my lady clients to do is to add the following fat fighting foods.

#1 Almonds - Almonds are a powerhouse of nutrients, plus they're loaded with fiber, protein and healthy fats.

You can take them anywhere and not have to worry about making a mess. They taste good and they're a perfect afternoon pick-me-up because of the nutrient breakdown and the lack of simple sugars.

A couple precautions, though. Don't eat too many at once because they are calorie-dense. Measure out about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and stick them in a portable container. Or if you want to take some with you to work, or anytime you know you'll be gone for many hours, take a couple servings and split them up.

Also, when I say that almonds are a great fat fighting food that means in their raw 'unadulterated' state.

No smoked, salted, honey-roasted, or any other type of 'topping' should be added to almonds (or any other type of nut) because you will turn a healthy, fat fighting snack into a bad for you junk food.

It's the equivalent of eating from a veggie tray and putting spoonfuls of ranch dressing on your carrots and broccoli. Do it at your own risk, and don't say I said it was OK.

#2 Spinach - If you want to make a salad, be sure to add lots of spinach leaves to it. The same goes for a sandwich, omelet, wraps, or any other place you think it would be beneficial.

It's low in calories, but high in fiber, B vitamins and lots of other vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients.

On a side note, stay away from iceberg lettuce. It's a pretty worthless food that's largely made up of water and has virtually no nutrient profile.

#3 Apples - There's a reason they say "An apple a day keeps the doctor away". They're loaded with fiber, vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients and are one of the easiest and most portable fruits around.

Every morning before I leave the house for my training studio, I grab 2 apples and some other type of fruit, like an orange or some chopped pineapple.

I chose apples, but you could substitute pretty much any fruit in here. Fruit does not make you fat. I don't know who started saying that, but it seems like there's not a month that goes by where I hear some celebrity say they got rid of fruit and it helped them lose weight. Pure garbage.

#4 Broccoli - Ok, so this one might be tough to stomach for many ladies, but you should include a few servings of it a week in your diet.

Not only is it loaded with fiber, but it's also loaded with phytonutrients - powerful antioxidants that help prevent cancer, and other diseases.

You can chop it up and add it to a salad, or eat it raw or steamed as side dish or snack.

#5 Yogurt - Yogurt is a good source of protein and calcium, plus it's loaded with immune boosting "live cultures" called probiotics.

One word of caution with yogurt. Make sure you buy the low fat, no sugar added kinds. A lot of companies load their little yogurt containers up with sugar and high fructose corn syrup (which is bad for you, no matter what the commercials say).

More often than not, the kinds of yogurt that have added fruit to them also have added sugar.

The key is to take a couple minutes and read the ingredients. If sugar shows up, put it back and move on to a no-sugar-added variety. There are plenty of them out there.

If you can afford it, I'd also go with the organic versions.

#6 Black beans - Black beans are a food that not many ladies consider when thinking about health foods, but they are. They're loaded with protein and fiber and are low in fat.

Beans are especially good if you're not a meat eater. Just make sure they're not refried or any other type of fried. They should be as close to their natural state as possible when purchasing otherwise they can be turned from a fat fighting food to a fat gaining food.

Did you notice anything about those 6 foods?

OK, now that I've given you those 6 foods, did you notice anything from food to food?

Go back and re-read if you didn't notice any similarities.

Most are loaded with fiber. Fiber is very important when it comes to losing weight, especially from the stomach.

Not only is it good for you, but also it helps make you feel full and it helps 'clean' out your digestive system. Very beneficial things for all ladies.

I also want to give you a little bit of advice when it comes to grocery shopping. A lot of ladies ask me how they're supposed to know what foods they should buy and which ones they should stay away from.

When you go to the grocery store, what does the perimeter of the store contain? Fresh produce, dairy products, fresh juices, deli counter, meat department, frozen produce, etc.

What's in the middle of the store? Breads, processed junk foods, cereals, candy, pop, boxed 'dinners', etc.

Make sure that most of your time is spent on the perimeter of the store before heading to the center. Plus don't go shopping hungry. If you're hungry, your good habits get thrown out the window in favor of any comfort and tasty treats.

Here are more foods for your grocery list!

While at the grocery store, make sure you load up on chicken breast, salmon fillets, tilapia, turkey breast, lean meats, ALL fruits and veggies, dry beans, avocado, tuna, skim milk, no-fat cheeses (unless they're organic then get some fat), eggs (yes they're good for you), oats (the real stuff, not the instant stuff found in individual packages), walnuts, pecans, cashews, peanuts, olive oil, olives, dried fruits (without added sugars).

One more thing...

I also want to tell you one more thing when it comes to eating to lose fat, and that is to take some time to plan. I don't mean thinking about what you're going to have for dinner tonight, I mean taking a day of the

week and looking at your week ahead. Find the days and times when you know you're going to be busy and plan for those so that you won't fall prey to poor eating.

Think about the time of day when you're the hungriest and will splurge on something not so good for you.

On Sunday bake 10 chicken breasts and put them in the refrigerator so you'll have them handy to cut up and put on a salad or add some veggies to for a quick lunch.

When it comes to losing weight, you really need to plan things out and think. You can't just take things as they come; you need to know where your weak points are and where and when you might fall. Knowing these things will help ensure you succeed in getting rid of you tummy fat.

2. PARALYSIS BY ANALYSIS

I encounter this one a lot in my training studio. Ladies decide they want to lose weight and get in better shape so they decide to try a diet...

...Then they decide they don't like that one, so they try another one. Or their sister, co-worker, or friend tells them about this cool new workout and diet plan, so they abandon what they were working on and give that one a go.

Or, they know they want to do some sort of workout program, but they just don't know what to do, so they gather up all this information and sit and think...

...And think...and think, before pretty soon a couple weeks have gone by and they haven't done anything. Maybe they've bought a couple DVD's, or joined a gym, or bought some crazy gizmo off an infomercial, but they haven't acted on it.

The best thing to do is to just start something and stick with it for at least a month, hopefully 2, before you decide whether or not it's working. In all honesty, when it comes to a fitness program, you need to give it a go for a couple of months - really give it a try - before you can pass judgment. Everybody reacts differently to new programs and some people are fast learners and get fast results, while others may take a couple weeks.

You don't want to quit something that you could end up really enjoying just because you think it's too tough, or won't work for you after a couple of days or weeks.

3. DON'T BE AFRAID TO WORKOUT AND SWEAT A BIT

First, let me start off by saying you don't need to grunt, scream and make whatever noises you've heard some of the guys at the health clubs make. Those guys need to chill out a bit before they get hemorrhoids, plus they're just kind of disturbing.

All I'm saying is you need to step up the intensity if you really want to lose that fat and get your body back. You can't just go through the motions, gliding from exercise to exercise and expect to see results.

You can't go for leisurely walks a few days per week with your girlfriends and expect to get rid of the belly, thigh fat and batwing arms. It's just not enough.

Plus, you can't workout at an intensity that allows you to have a normal conversation and expect to see results. You have to step things up a notch, or two, or 10, if you really want to get that fat burning furnace of yours revved up.

In the next section, I give you my top 5 fat burning moves for moms, but before I get to those moves, I want to clear something up.

By doing these exercises, or working with weights, you will NOT get big, mannish muscles. It's pretty much impossible for women to develop that type of mass. Yes, there are exceptions, but they're not the norm.

You have to get this fear of getting huge muscles out of your head. Most women don't have the necessary amounts of testosterone to build lots of muscle, so if you think that by adding weights to your squats is somehow going to give you giant thighs like those of a football player, you're mistaken. Get that thought out of your head right now because that fear is severely hampering your results.

If you still don't believe me, believe this. I have been a trainer for nearly a decade and have trained all my lady clients by using heavy weights (relatively speaking of course) and not once have I ever had a woman complain or develop giant muscles and turn into the Hulk. I've trained female collegiate athletes and 70-year-old women, and every age in between, and this has never, ever happened.

I know there are still going to be ladies that doubt me about the intensity thing and the types of exercises I recommend, so I'm going to give you a summary of a few studies.

One study performed at Laval University in Quebec compared moderate-intensity cardio (the type normally done for 60 minutes or more) with more intense types of training, like interval training, that took about 1/3 of the time.

The researchers found that the interval-training group lost more fat than the cardio group, even though the cardio group worked out longer and did what the "experts" had been saying for years.

An Australian study from 2006 also compared moderate intensity cardio with more intense types of exercise and showed that the more intense types of exercise burned far more belly fat than the traditional type of cardio.

Again, this study had the cardio group perform their moderate-intensity cardio for 2x as long as the more intense group, yet the more intense group lost more belly fat!

I also want to clear something else up. Much of what you have been told regarding the types of exercise to do to lose fat is outdated and wasn't done scientifically. Exercise science has advanced leaps and bounds over the past decade or two and it's finally shedding light on the notion that the old standby of "cardio for 60 minutes in your 'fat burning zone'" is not the best way to lose fat.

And don't even get me started on that whole 'fat burning zone' thing. That's another conversation entirely!

Now that I've got that cleared up, let's move into the exercises shall we.

4. DO THESE 5 FAT BURNING AND BODY SCULPTING MOVES

When it comes to doing any sort of fat burning, or "sculpting" workout, the exercises you choose will determine your success. If you spend your time using only machines, or using light to moderate intensity cardio or are worried about getting big, 'mannish' muscles, you are really limiting your success and how fast that success comes.

The exercises you choose should deliver the most "bang for the buck" and get you done quickly and work your body so that you actually feel as though you've worked out.

#1 The Plank



I'm going to start off with the ultimate in stomach exercises, the Plank. Sure crunches feel nice, and you can do them seemingly forever, but when it really comes down to losing your tummy and getting a strong, sexy core, they really don't do that much for you.

Plus, no amount of 'abs exercises' will make the fat on your belly disappear. They just don't work enough muscle, which means they don't burn enough calories. Sure they're good for strengthening the abs, but you're looking to lose your belly, right?

Your 'core' is your body's pillar and foundation of strength and being pregnant and then delivering (either naturally or via C-section) really tears that stomach up and weakens the entire abdomen (as I'm sure you already know).

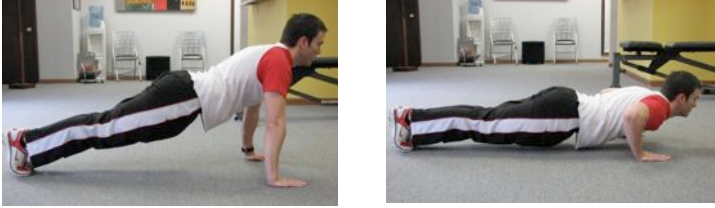
What many ladies don't know, is that your core **MUST** be strong in order for all the other exercises you do to be effective, which will deliver faster results.

That's why the plank is so great for working the abs...it's not only an abs exercise, but it's also the best core strengthener, working your entire upper body and parts of your lower body, which will increase your metabolism and burn more tummy fat!

Be sure that when you do the plank you form a straight line from your ears, through your shoulders and hips, to your heels. Your body should not arch, sag or create a pyramid with your butt sticking up in the air. If the regular version is too tough for you, start off by placing your knees on the ground, rather than your toes, then build up from there.

You can also do more advanced versions by raising one foot into the air, placing your hands on a medicine ball or stability ball, or doing side planks. This really is a limitless exercise. So when you're able to do any one variation for around 45 seconds, move on to a tougher one.

#2 The Push-Up



Next, we're going to move on to my favorite exercise, and one that I make **ALL** of my female clients do on a regular basis, the push-up.

Not only is the push-up great at working your entire body, but it's also the best way to get your arms to look toned and sexy and get rid of the "bye-bye arms" or "batwing arms"...you know the fat that seems to blow in the breeze whenever you wave good-bye to someone.

Plus it's one of the best ways to work your chest and shoulders. I have never encountered a woman, especially a mom, who hasn't wanted a nicer looking, and more toned, chest, shoulders and arms and the push-up is, by far, the best way to work that area.

Plus, they're an excellent core exercise (they kind of look like a moving plank, right?), however **you must do them correctly.**

Far too often I see ladies sticking their butts up in the air or moving their arms just a little bit while the rest of their body stays stationary. If this is you, it means your core is VERY weak and you need to do more plank variations and other core strengtheners as well as doing an easier push-up variation until you can keep that booty down.

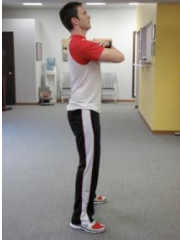
I know that this move takes a lot of upper body strength, which many women don't possess right off the bat, but that's exactly why you NEED to do push-ups on a regular basis.

If you can't do regular push-ups (from your toes), start off with an easier version by placing your knees on the floor, or placing your hands on a bench, wall or counter top until you see strength increases and can move on to more challenging versions.

If you can only do 2 to start out, that's totally fine! Just do them and add more every week.

Just be sure that your wrists are directly under your shoulders and you allow your entire body to drop down into the push-up, not just your arms. Also, make sure your body stays in a straight line - just like the plank - the entire time you're doing the push-up.

#3 The Squat



Ladies often tell me that they like to go for walks to burn calories. Did you know that walking uses around 200 muscles? But, did you know that doing a squat uses 240?! The more muscle you use, the more calories you burn (during and after the workout), the more you boost your metabolism, the more fat you burn - however you have to make sure you do them properly.

When it comes to working the booty and lower body, there is no better exercise than the squat. The lunge comes in a close second, but the squat is the king (queen?) of all booty, hip, hamstring and thigh exercises.

Far too many women are scared of doing squats because they somehow think they'll turn into a man and get giant legs - it won't happen...it won't, it won't, it won't, so stop worrying about it.

Plus, look at every woman who has an envious butt and I guarantee they do squats on a regular basis.

However, most women don't do it correctly.

In my studio, I always start ladies off with bodyweight squats until their form is perfect.

The one thing that I believe is the most important factor of doing a proper squat is keeping your weight on your heels and not allowing it to move onto your toes so your heels come off the floor.

When you allow your weight to go onto your toes and pick your heels up off the floor, not only is that hurting your knees, but you're not working more than half of the muscles involved in doing a proper squat - namely the butt and hamstrings.

How do you overcome this common problem?

First, always start the move from your hips by concentrating on sticking your butt out before you bend the knees, and then make sure you keep those heels plastered to the floor.

One easy way to do this is to practice sitting in a chair. Sound weird? It might, but it does help.

Just stand in front of a chair, bend from the hips by sticking out your booty first, make sure your weight is on your heels and slowly lower yourself until your butt lightly touches the chair, then stand back up while squeezing your butt muscles as you stand.

Once you get the hang of this, and can feel how your body is supposed to squat, remove the chair and stick to bodyweight squats until your form is perfect, then start adding in dumbbells. When you decide to add dumbbells, make sure you make the exercise difficult enough to elicit any sort of result. If you feel as though you can do lots of squats, use a heavier weight.

You also need to ensure you lower yourself until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Don't do 'dipsy-do' squats where you lower yourself a couple inches then stand up. That makes the exercise pretty much useless.

#4 Bent Over Row



Many ladies largely overlook the back in their workouts because it's not one of the glitzy and glamorous areas of the body like the arms or booty. However, you need to include some sort of a row in your workout plan. If you don't, you're leaving out half of your upper body and missing a lot of fat burning potential, not to mention getting rid of the bra fat - that stuff that hangs over the straps - and helping your posture.

Not only that, but the Bent Over Row also works your core - a lot - making it a great way to lose tummy fat as well.

However, just like every other exercise I go over, form is key. If your form is not right, you risk a back injury.

Important Note! Make sure you see a physician if you have any back issues, or other problems, before beginning any type of workout program.

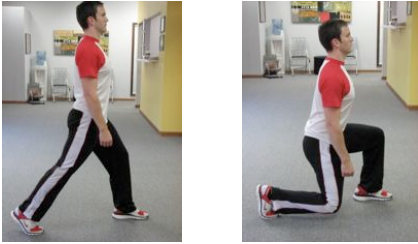
To do a proper Bent Over Row, you have to keep your back straight - not rounded like the Hunchback of Notre Dame - your chest out, head up and stomach held tight.

When you bend forward, the bend should come from the hips and not the waist. To ensure this happens, stick your butt out first - that moves your hips and it'll help keep your back straight.

You should not be looking at the floor when doing this exercise. If you are, that means your back will be rounded and you'll probably hurt yourself. Make sure you keep that chest out.

Once you're in the proper position, pull the dumbbells up toward your waist while squeezing your shoulder blades together. Pause, and then slowly lower the dumbbells and repeat. Make sure you use a heavy enough weight to actually work the muscle. If you use "pink weights" or really light dumbbells, you won't get the results you're after.

#5 The Lunge



I know I said earlier that the squat is the king of all booty exercises, but the lunge is a very close second. It is a killer butt worker as well as a great thigh worker.

I'm going to start off with a Stationary Lunge because it's the easiest to do if you're a beginner. There's less risk of falling or doing it wrong because you're not moving forward or back - just up and down.

Stand up straight and tall with your stomach held tight. Take a step forward OR a step backward.

Raise your back heel off the floor, while keeping your front foot firmly in place.

Again, make sure your stomach is tight and your upper body is straight and tall - don't round your back or hunch forward.

Slowly lower yourself until your back knee almost touches the floor and your front thigh is parallel to the floor. Pause, then squeeze the glutes and stand back up.

Make sure that front heel stays on the ground - just like with squats - and that you just go straight down and straight up with no forward movement at all.

Once you have mastered the bodyweight version, you can hold on to dumbbells. When you decide to add dumbbells, make sure you make the exercise difficult enough to elicit any sort of result. If you feel as though you can do lots of lunges, use a heavier weight.

One of the great things about the lunge is that there are a number of variations you can do so you don't let your workout get stale, boring or old.

You can step forward, backward or to the side. You can elevate your back foot onto a bench, or raise your front foot onto a step. You can also do walking lunges, where you lunge forward for 12 or 15 steps before stopping.

Now that I've given you my top 5 fat burning and body sculpting moves, how do you combine them into a workout? The easiest thing to do is to take all 5 and turn them into a circuit where you do one set of each exercise then move immediately on to the next exercise and complete as many total circuits as you can in 10-15 minutes, with very little rest - if any.

Here's an example:

- 1) Bodyweight Squat - 15 reps
- 2) Push-up - 8-10 reps
- 3) Bent Over Row - 12 reps

- 4) Lunge - 10 reps per leg
 - 5) Plank - 25 seconds
- Rest 30-45 seconds and repeat circuit until 10-15 minutes is up.*

5. SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CAMARADERIE

This is something that is true for everyone, but especially ladies, and even more so with moms.

You need to have some sort of support system in place if you are going to stick with your new program and make it through the tough times, which you WILL have.

You need someone to lean on when times get tough and you don't think you can achieve your goals. You need someone you can complain to when you think it's just too tough and you don't think you'll make it. You need someone to bounce ideas off of when it comes to foods, what's working, what's not working and someone to just make the time go by a little smoother.

A study published by the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that social networks can have an even greater effect on your chances of losing weight than your genetic make-up does.

The study showed that a person's chance of becoming obese jumped 57% if she had a spouse or friend who was obese. They also found that these numbers were especially true of friendships and siblings of the same sex (the jump was 71%).

If you take that study and flip it and think about what positive changes can happen if you're around people who have a similar goal, or people who are supportive of your goal, you can see that who you hang around with will determine your success with weight loss.

Having some sort of support system gives you a couple of things. It gives you accountability. If you have a group of people who are after the same thing as you, they'll tell you when you screwed up and they'll pick you up when you're down.

It also provides a positive environment. Bad people provide bad environments. Positive people provide you with the proper encouragement and "you can do it" attitude that you need.

Reasons like this are why running groups, Weight Watchers, and small exercise classes are so successful. They give you a sense of community and camaraderie with a group of people who are going through the same trials and tribulations that you are and they will provide the support you need to achieve success.

So there you have it, there's my Top 5 list (and beyond) ways for busy moms to lose fat and get their body back. I hope that you've learned something and that you'll put what you learned to good use. Just these 5 things I went over will give you a huge boost in your weight loss goals, but there's always more you can be doing...

WHO THE HECK IS THE DUDE THAT WROTE THIS THING ANYWAY?

My name is Ed Scow and I'm a personal trainer and massage therapist here in Lincoln. I own ELS Massage & Personal Training, a private training and massage therapy studio, and have owned it for over 6 years. You can check out my websites at www.elsBootCamp.com, www.TheFitDadSays.com, and www.FatLossToGo.com

In addition to being a busy business owner, I'm also a dad to a beautiful daughter, Maren, and husband to a gorgeous wife, Andrea. When we learned we were going to be parents for the first time, I devoted a lot of time and energy into researching and studying all I could to help ladies (especially moms) lose weight because I knew I would need to help Andrea when Maren came into the world. (That's me teaching Maren to do pull-ups in the picture)



Because of that knowledge, I began offering ladies only, weight loss & fitness loss boot camps in my training studio. I've been running them since January of 2008 and have had to add more and more class offerings in order to keep up with the demand (As of this writing I have 5 different class times). You may have read about them in the September '08 issue of L Magazine, or have read my monthly fitness and fat loss columns (also in L). I've also been featured in Women's Health and Men's Health magazines.



These boot camps focus solely on the needs and wants of women, especially moms. Not only do they focus on all the trouble spots - areas like the butt, hips, thighs, arms and tummy - but they also put a lot of emphasis on posture, flexibility and core work. Yes the ladies lose a lot of fat and burn a lot of calories while doing the boot camps, but they also become more flexible, are able to move and live pain free and are able to sit and stand without slouching (which is a big problem for many, many women).

All my boot campers have a sense of community, social support and camaraderie because I limit the number of ladies who can join any one class to 12. There's a closeness and bond built up by the ladies that is very powerful. You don't feel like you're a faceless member of a giant, sweating crowd of ladies.

This small number also allows me to give more personalized attention to each and every lady. I am able to keep a keen eye on everyone and if I see you doing something wrong, or need a little tweak to make the exercise more effective, I am able to tell you without stopping class or causing a commotion. It's like a 1-on-1 personal training session in that respect, except a lot cheaper.

If you'd like more information, or to learn how to sign-up for my ladies only fat loss boot camps, you can call me at **304-7858**, check out my website at www.elsBootCamp.com, or stop by my training studio located on the corner of 33rd & Pioneers Blvd. inside the Sky Oak Plaza.

Thanks for reading and I hope to talk to you soon!

Ed Scow

ELS Boot Camps, ELS Massage & Personal Training

Author: Fat Loss To Go - 10 Minute Fat Loss Workouts For Busy Wonder-Moms & Super-Dads

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