



Clark Chiropractic
health newsletter

Did you know...

Many everyday activities can cause bones of your spine to lose their normal position and motion? Besides the obvious trauma to the spine from automobile accidents, improper lifting, and work-related injuries, there's more. Long periods of sitting, emotional stress, alcohol, over-exertion, and even the birth process can be culprits too.



Ask the Doctor

Dr. Clark urges patients to contact him directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

Contact Dr. Clark personally via email at:
drclark6@comcast.net

Losing Bodyfat

It seems that nearly everyone would like to lose bodyfat, but very few are successful. And of those that do manage to lose some fat, how many are able to get as lean as they would really like? And how many are able to maintain that degree of leanness over the long term? The answer, as you know, is "very, very, few".

Why is this the case? Why is it apparently so hard? After all, the science of fat loss is well understood. Although there are some complexities involved, the basic concepts are quite simple.

The answer, I'm afraid, lies with human nature. Food provides a lot more than physical nourishment. People have complex emotional attachments to food, and some foods act very much like drugs, stimulating pleasure centers in our brains. So expecting people to look at the facts about fat loss and act accordingly is usually unrealistic. And even when armed with the facts and good intentions, very

few people have the self discipline to follow through with a consistent action plan, especially long term. People hate to change, and achieving a lean body is absolutely going to

involve having to change. Sorry. So having said all that, I'm going to lay out the facts about fat loss as I understand them to be. What you do with them is up to you.

Before I start, I feel compelled to address my qualifications to speak on this subject. Besides a lifelong interest in nutrition and exercise, my educational background includes extensive training in human anatomy and biochemistry. So I understand the science of fat loss very well.

In addition, I have been involved in serious weightlifting and bodybuilding training for 23 years, and have been exposed to the methodology of many successful physique athletes, both male and female. These



athletes have to achieve the lowest bodyfat levels seen in any sport, while maintaining as much lean muscle as possible, and there is much to be learned from them.

Several years ago, I entered a national-level amateur bodybuilding competition as a personal challenge, and took third place in the super heavyweight division. I achieved 3% bodyfat for that show, and have maintained my bodyfat level under 6% since then. I say this not to toot my own horn, but to make it clear that I know what I'm talking about, both on a scientific level, and on a practical, real-world level.

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Preventing Spinal Degeneration



Spinal degeneration is actually a form of osteoarthritis (the most common form of arthritis) that is affecting the spine. It goes by many

different medical terms, such as spinal arthritis, spinal osteoarthritis, degenerative joint disease, degenerative disc disease, and spondylosis. In common usage, people may describe having a "bad disc" or "bone spurs". The bottom line is that your spine is breaking down and aging prematurely.

In the U.S., significant amounts of spinal degeneration are present in over one third of the population by age 30. By age 70, it is nearly universal. It is responsible for 180,000 cases of people who are either bed or chair-ridden. However, for most people with this condition, symptoms are very mild at first, and many only find out they have this problem after many years, when it has progressed into more severe stages.

What causes spinal degeneration? It can begin following a trauma to the spine, such as a car accident or even a childhood injury, or can be the

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Losing Bodyfat continued

So I'm going to start by stating a hard fact: **Your body is only going to burn bodyfat when it has no other choice.** You can dance around that fact all you want, but its not going away. Millions of years of evolution have honed our bodies to be fat storage machines, especially women. It is a basic survival mechanism; so if you want to fool Mother Nature, you'd better have an awfully good plan.

Here's what it takes: And I need to be clear that this is how you **achieve** a lean body. Maintaining a desired degree of leanness is another story.

- **Eat small meals frequently, and include a quality protein source in every meal, and a quality oil in most.** This tells your body "Everything's OK...there's plenty of food". This keeps your metabolism humming, minimizes your insulin response, and keeps an even blood sugar level. Good proteins should come from lean meats, omega-3 eggs, and low-carb protein shakes. Dairy products are not good choices, due to the high sugar (lactose) content. Low fat cheeses are OK in moderation, as there is no sugar in most cheeses (fresh mozzarella is a very good choice).
- **Drastically reduce carbohydrate consumption.** And the carbs you do eat should be fresh greens and fibrous vegetables (broccoli, green beans, spinach, kale, squash, sweet potato). **Your body will always burn carbs (either from food or stored glycogen) for fuel if it has that option. You have to eliminate that option!** With this approach, your body's glycogen stores will be depleted within a day, and the vast majority of your energy will now come from your stored bodyfat. Most people's bodies have never done this before, and it may take up to a week before you feel normal. Once your body "switches over" however, you'll be fine, and you'll be on the fast track to fat loss. However, have a "carb party", and you're back to square 1.
- **Eliminate sugar and sugar-containing foods (including milk and fruit sugar), and all flour (yes, even whole grain) products.** This is something that most people are simply unwilling or unable to do, as most people's attachment to simple carbs is very much like a drug addiction. If you want to be successful however, you will do it.
- **Minimize consumption of grain-fed animal and fish fats.** They consist of omega-6 fatty acids (very unhealthy and inflammatory), and are loaded with pesticides, toxins, and hormones. Moderate consumption of grass-fed animals is OK, but try to get your fats from healthy oils. Wild-caught fish and fish oils, olive oil, most raw nuts and nut butters, avocados, etc. are much better sources.
- **Consume less calories than you burn.** Yes, this one's pretty obvious, but there are a couple of important points to keep in mind. Restricting your calories too greatly will cause your body to think there's a shortage of food, and it will slow your metabolism down as a survival mechanism (not good). It will also break down muscle...also as a survival mechanism (the less muscle you have, the less food you need to survive). Instead, most days you should consume slightly less calories than you need for maintenance, with random days of moderate calorie restriction thrown in approximately every 3rd or 4th day. Good days for cutting back are days when you expect sustained moderate physical activity, such as yard work, hiking, moderate biking, etc.
- **Exercise regularly.** No lame excuses about not having time please. A modest commitment of 3 to 6 hours of both aerobic and resistance exercise is all you really need. That's a paltry of 2-5% of the waking hours available to you. You have to find a time that works with your life, and then **make it a priority!** When it comes to resistance training, multi-joint exercises using the largest muscles in your body will give you the biggest bang for your buck. Examples would be squats, dead lifts, chin-ups, dips, rows, overhead presses, etc. Women will want to use higher repetition ranges (10-20), and men will want to use moderate rep ranges (6-12). Free weight nearly always trumps machines.

Aerobic exercise, besides keeping you healthy, will boost your metabolic rate, both during, and for hours after you do it. Resistance exercise will build and maintain muscle, which will help you burn more calories around the clock.

So there you have it. Its not complicated, but as stated, very few people will actually do it. Can you lose weight by simply eating less of the foods you already eat? Of course, people do it all the time; but that approach will only take you so far, and you will lose some muscle in the process.

If you think this is something you'd like to do, you can access an extensive article I've written on the subject, by emailing me at drclark6@comcast.net, and it will be forwarded to you.



Preventing Spinal Degeneration *continued*

result of repeated abnormal stress to the spine. In any case, certain areas of the spine stop moving correctly, and this sets the degenerative process in motion.

A basic fact about any joint in your body is that it needs to move regularly through a full range of motion to remain healthy. An example I use with all of my new patients is to ask them what they think would happen if one of their arms were put into a cast, and left that way for 6 months or a year. The answer, of course, is that it would lead to muscle atrophy and stiffness, as well as a dramatic loss of mobility in the elbow joint. And it would take a lot of work to recover full use of the arm again. Use it or lose it.

The spinal joints are no different. They also depend on motion to remain healthy. The spinal discs are particularly dependent on motion, as they have no blood supply; and the exchange of fluids which keeps them nourished is dependent on the pumping action of normal joint motion.

So if spinal degeneration is so widespread, and can have no symptoms for years and years, how do we prevent this from happening in our spines? The answer is to get regular spinal checkups from a chiropractor skilled in motion palpation...the art of being able to feel a joint's motion, and knowing when that motion is restricted or not.



You know a chiropractor is good at this when he/she can tell you where your problems are when he/she is feeling your spine. Spinal degeneration is not reversible, but by adjusting the restricted joints until normal motion has been restored, you can stop it in its tracks. Much as you have your teeth checked and cleaned, you should have the same attitude about taking care of your spine. You wouldn't wait until you had pain from spinal decay to see your dentist. Don't wait until you have spinal pain to have your spine checked by a chiropractor. This goes for your family members as well, particularly your kids. This is a perfect example of when "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

A healthy, flexible, pain-free spine is a vital part of staying youthful and healthy. Take care of your spine, and it will take care of you!

"The more mechanically distorted a person is, the less energy is available for thinking, metabolism, and healing."

Roger Sperry, Ph.D. 1980 Noble Prize winner for brain research.

Recommended Products

Available for Sale at Clark Chiropractic Center

Metabolic Drive Low-Carb
\$33



Premium Red Vegetarian Powder \$34



Metabolic Drive Complete
\$33



Premium Greens Vegetarian Powder \$31



Nutri-West Fish Oil (capsules or liquid)
\$30.00/\$45.00



N-Acetyl Cysteine \$14



Contact Clark Chiropractic Center to Make an Appointment at 443-637-4936 or visit us on the web at www.clarkchirocenter.com

