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## Attaining Those Elusive “Six-pack Abs”



**F**or many people, achieving a defined abdominal area seems to be a nearly impossible goal, one for which we purchase a variety of abdominal trainers with the hope that they live up to their advertised claims of attaining “six-pack abs.” Unfortunately, **achieving a slim and defined midsection is more challenging than simply using one piece of equipment.**

To really develop toned abdominal muscles, you must take into account a combination of

- genetics and body type
- diet and nutritional support
- cardiovascular training
- strength-training exercises

Your natural body shape, combined with your diet, will dictate much of the results you obtain from abdominal exercises. Some people naturally gain more midsection weight—called **visceral fat**—that can be particularly challenging to shed because it is located deep inside the abdomen where it surrounds the abdominal organs.

Evidence suggests that a diet high in refined carbohydrates can lead to increased visceral fat. While you need not eliminate carbohydrates, a focus on whole grains, fruits and vegetables, along with lean proteins, dairy and nuts, may help reduce visceral fat.

**Strength training to condition your core can result in a more defined midsection**, provided exercises and breathing patterns are performed correctly. While equipment works well for some people, others do just fine with traditional crunches, assuming they use proper form and breathing. For the results of strength training to be visible, you will need to perform cardiovascular exercise for overall fat reduction. Aim to get your heart rate up to a moderate-to-high intensity level approximately three times a week.

Not only will the aesthetic aspects of strong, defined abdominals be rewarding but **you can improve your back, posture and overall core strength**, as well. To help you accomplish this goal, we can design a program that is safe, manageable and, most importantly, effective.