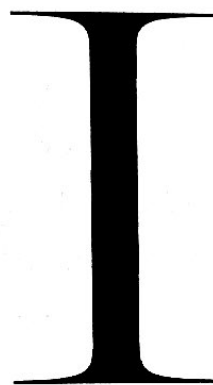


Chapter 8

THE ABS DIET POWER 12

Meet the Powerfoods That Will Shrink Your Belly
And Keep You Healthy for Life



N THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER,

I gave you the six guidelines for following the Abs Diet and touched briefly on the Abs Diet Power 12. Now I want you to meet each of these 12 superheroes up close.

These 12 foods make up a large part of your diet. The more of these foods you eat, the better your body will be able to increase lean muscle mass and avoid storing fat. Though you can base entire meals and snacks around these foods, you don't have to. But do follow these guidelines.

- ▶ Incorporate two or three of these foods into each of your three major meals and at least one of them into each of your three snacks.
- ▶ Diversify your food at every meal to get a combination of protein, carbohydrates, and fat.
- ▶ Make sure you sneak a little bit of protein into each snack.

How to read the key: For at-a-glance scanning, I've included the following icons under the descriptions of each of the Abs Diet Powerfoods. Each icon demonstrates which important roles each food can help play in maintaining optimum health.



Builds muscle: Foods rich in muscle-building plant and animal proteins qualify for this seal of approval, as do foods rich in certain minerals linked to proper muscle maintenance, such as magnesium.



Helps promote weight loss: Foods high in calcium and fiber (both of which protect against obesity) as well as foods that help build fat-busting muscle tissue earn this badge of respect.



Strengthens bone: Calcium and vitamin D are the most important bone builders, and they protect the body against osteoporosis. But beware: High levels of sodium can leach calcium out of bone tissue. Fortunately, all of the powerfoods are naturally low in sodium.



Lowers blood pressure: Any food that's not high in sodium can help lower blood pressure—and score this designation—if it has beneficial amounts of potassium, magnesium, or calcium.



Fights cancer: Research has shown that there is a lower risk of some types of cancer among those people who maintain low-fat, high-fiber diets. You can also help foil cancer by eating foods that are high in calcium,

Obesity Risks

Almost as important as what you eat is when you eat. Researchers at the University of Massachusetts analyzed the eating habits of 500 women and men and found connections between the way people eat and the risk of becoming overweight.

HABIT	CHANGES YOUR RISK OF OBESITY BY
Eating at least one midday snack	-39 percent
Eating dinner as your biggest meal of the day	+6 percent
Waiting more than 3 hours after waking up to eat breakfast	+43 percent
Eating more than a third of your meals in restaurants	+69 percent
Going to bed hungry (3 or more hours after your last meal or snack)	+101 percent
Eating breakfast away from home	+137 percent
Not eating breakfast	+450 percent

beta-carotene, or vitamin C. In addition, all cruciferous (cabbage type) and allium (onion type) vegetables get the cancer protection symbol because research has shown they help prevent certain kinds of cancer.



Improves immune function: Vitamins A, E, B6, and C; folate; and the mineral zinc help to increase the body's immunity to certain types of disease. This icon indicates a powerfood with high levels of one or more of these nutrients.



Fights heart disease: Artery-clogging cholesterol can lead to trouble if you eat foods that are predominantly saturated and trans fats, while foods that are high in monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats will actually help protect your heart by keeping your cholesterol levels in check.

#1: Almonds and Other Nuts



Superpowers: build muscle, fight cravings

Secret weapons: protein, monounsaturated fats, vitamin E, fiber, magnesium, folate (peanuts), phosphorus

Fight against: obesity, heart disease, muscle loss, wrinkles, cancer, high blood pressure

Sidekicks: pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, avocados

Imposters: salted or smoked nuts

These days, you hear about good fats and bad fats the way you hear about good cops and bad cops. One's on your side, and one's gonna beat you silly. Oreos fall into the latter category, but nuts are clearly out to help you. They contain the monounsaturated fats that clear your arteries and help you feel full.

All nuts are high in protein and monounsaturated fat. But almonds are like Jack Nicholson in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*: They're the king of the nuts. A handful of almonds provides half the amount of vitamin E you need in a day and 8 percent of the calcium. They also contain 19 percent of your daily requirement of magnesium—a key component for muscle building. In a Western Washington University study, people taking extra magnesium were able to lift 20 percent more weight and build more muscle than those who weren't.

Eat as much as two handfuls of almonds a day. A Toronto University study found that people can eat this amount daily without gaining any extra weight. A Purdue University study showed that people who ate nuts high in monounsaturated fat felt full an hour and a half longer than those who ate fat-free food (rice cakes, in this instance). If you eat 2 ounces of almonds (about 24 of them), it should be enough to suppress your appetite—especially if you wash them down with 8 ounces of water. The fluid helps expand the fiber in the nuts to help you feel fuller. Also, try to keep the nuts' nutrient-rich skins on them.

Here are ways to seamlessly introduce almonds or other nuts into your diet.

- ▶ Add chopped nuts to plain peanut butter.
- ▶ Toss a handful on cereal, yogurt, or ice cream.
- ▶ Put slivers in an omelet.
- ▶ For a quick popcorn alternative: Spray a handful of almonds with nonstick cooking spray and bake at 400°F for 5 to 10 minutes. Take them out of the oven and sprinkle with a mixture of either brown sugar and cinnamon or ground red pepper and thyme.

Eat Beans, Stay Lean

Beans, beans, so good for your heart...but new research shows they're also good for your waistline and other body parts. People who eat $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of beans daily weigh 6.6 pounds less than those who don't eat beans, even though the bean eaters consumed 199 calories more a day, according to a presentation at a recent Experimental Biology Conference. Check out this bean dream team and what it can do for you.

The antiaging agent: red kidney beans. This chili staple contains more antioxidants and omega-3s than any of its bean brethren. Kidneys are also rich in thiamine, which research shows may be protective against Alzheimer's disease.

The heart healer: navy beans. These beans pack the most fiber of any at 10.5 grams per 100-gram serving, so they are powerful weapons against cholesterol. Also, kidneys are loaded with potassium, which regulates blood pressure and normal heart contractions. Almost neutral in taste, these beans absorb flavors well, so they are especially good for adding fiber and protein to soups and stews.

One caveat, before you get all nutty: Smoked and salted nuts don't make the cut here because of their high sodium content. High sodium can mean high blood pressure.

#2: Beans and Legumes



Superpowers: build muscle, help burn fat, regulate digestion

Secret weapons: fiber, protein, iron, folate

Fight against: obesity, colon cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure

Sidekicks: lentils, peas, bean dips, hummus, edamame

Imposters: refried beans, which are high in saturated fats; baked beans, which are high in sugar

Most of us can trace our resistance to beans to some unfortunately timed intestinal upheaval (third-grade math class, a first date gone awry). But beans are, as the song says, good for your heart; the more you eat them, the more

The brain booster: black beans. No beans boost brainpower like black beans. That's because they are full of anthocyanins, compounds that have been shown to improve brain function. Toss them into breakfast burritos or cheese quesadillas.

The muscle builder: soybeans. Technically a legume, soybeans are one of the only common plant foods that contain complete protein, making them terrific muscle-building meat substitutes for vegetarians.

The cancer killer: lentils. Women who frequently eat lentils have a significantly lower risk of developing breast cancer, according to a study in the *International Journal of Cancer*. The Nurses' Health Study II, which monitors the lifestyles of 90,000 women, found that women who ate beans or lentils two or more times per week had a 34 per cent lower risk of breast cancer than women who ate them less often.

The diabetes destroyer: garbanzo beans. Also known as chickpeas, garbanzos are high in fiber, which helps stabilize blood sugar, lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes. Add them to salads and soups. Chickpeas (mashed) are the main ingredient in hummus, a garlicky bean spread that's terrific on crackers or as a healthier substitute for mayonnaise on sandwiches.

you'll be able to control your hunger. Black, lima, pinto, garbanzo—you pick the bean (as long as it's not refried—refried beans are loaded with fat). Beans are a low-calorie food packed with protein, fiber, and iron—ingredients crucial for building muscle and losing weight. Gastrointestinal disadvantages notwithstanding, they serve as one of the key members of the Abs Diet cabinet because of all their nutritional power. In fact, you can swap in a bean-heavy dish for a meat-heavy dish a couple of times per week; you'll be lopping a lot of saturated fat out of your diet and replacing it with higher amounts of fiber.

#3: Spinach and Other Green Vegetables



Superpowers: neutralize free radicals, which are molecules that accelerate the aging process

Secret weapons: vitamins including A, C, and K; folate; minerals including calcium and magnesium; fiber; beta-carotene

Fight against: cancer, heart disease, stroke, obesity, osteoporosis

Sidekicks: cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and brussels sprouts; green, yellow, red, and orange vegetables like asparagus, peppers, and yellow beans

Imposters: none, as long as you don't fry them or smother them in fatty cheeses

You know vegetables are packed with important nutrients, but they're also a critical part of your body-changing diet. I like spinach in particular because one serving supplies nearly a full day's worth of vitamin A and half of your vitamin C. It's also loaded with folate—a vitamin that protects against heart disease, stroke, and colon cancer. To incorporate it, you can take the fresh stuff and use it as lettuce on a sandwich or try stir-frying it with a little fresh garlic and olive oil.

Another potent power vegetable is broccoli. It's high in fiber and more densely packed with vitamins and minerals than almost any other food. For instance, it contains nearly 90 percent of the vitamin C of fresh orange juice and almost half as much calcium as milk. It is also a powerful defender

against diseases such as cancer because it increases the enzymes that help detoxify carcinogens. Tip: With broccoli, you can skip the stalks. The florets have three times as much beta-carotene as the stems, and they're also a great source of other antioxidants.

If you hate vegetables, you can learn to hide them but still reap the benefits. Try pureeing them and adding them to marinara sauce or chili. The more you chop and puree vegetables, the more invisible they become and the easier it is for your body to absorb them. With broccoli, sauté it in garlic and olive oil, then douse it with hot sauce.

#4: Dairy (Fat-Free or Low-Fat Milk, Yogurt, Cheese, and Cottage Cheese)



Superpowers: builds strong bones, fires up weight loss

Secret weapons: calcium, vitamins A and B12, riboflavin, phosphorus, potassium

Fights against: osteoporosis, obesity, high blood pressure, cancer

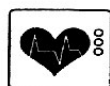
Sidekicks: none

Imposters: whole milk, frozen yogurt

Dairy is nutrition's version of a typecast actor. It gets so much attention for one thing it does well—strengthening bones—that it gets little or no attention for all the other stuff it does well. It's about time for dairy to accept a breakout role as a vehicle for weight loss. Just take a look at the mounting evidence: A University of Tennessee study found that dieters who consumed between 1,200 and 1,300 milligrams of calcium a day lost nearly twice as much weight as dieters getting less calcium. In a Purdue University study of 54 people, those who took in 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day (about 3 cups of fat-free milk) gained less weight over 2 years than those with low-calcium diets. Researchers think that calcium probably prevents weight gain by increasing the breakdown of body fat and hampering its formation. Low-fat yogurt, cheeses, and other dairy products can play an important role in your diet. But as your major source of calcium, I recommend milk for one

primary reason: volume. Liquids can take up valuable room in your stomach and send the signal to your brain that you're full. Adding in a sprinkle of chocolate protein powder can also help curb sweet cravings.

#5: Instant Oatmeal **(Unsweetened, Unflavored)**



Superpowers: boosts energy and sex drive, reduces cholesterol, maintains blood sugar levels

Secret weapons: complex carbohydrates and fiber

Fights against: heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, obesity

Sidekicks: high-fiber cereals such as All-Bran and Fiber One

Imposters: cereals with added sugar and high-fructose corn syrup

Oatmeal is like a gold-medal routine on the balance beam—a perfect 10. You can eat it at breakfast to propel you through sluggish mornings, a couple of hours before a workout to feel fully energized by the time you hit the weights, or at night to avoid a late-night binge. I recommend instant oatmeal for its convenience. But I want you to buy the unsweetened, unflavored variety and use other powerfoods such as milk and berries to enhance the taste. Preflavored oatmeal often comes loaded with sugar calories.

Oatmeal contains soluble fiber, meaning that it attracts fluid and stays in your stomach longer than insoluble fiber (like vegetables). Soluble fiber is thought to reduce blood cholesterol by binding with digestive acids made from cholesterol and sending them out of your body. When this happens, your liver has to pull cholesterol from your blood to make more digestive acids, and your bad cholesterol levels drop.

Trust me: You need more fiber, both soluble and insoluble. Doctors recommend we get between 25 and 35 grams of fiber per day, but most of us get half that. Fiber is like a bouncer for your body, kicking out troublemakers and showing them the door. It protects you from heart disease. It protects you from colon cancer by sweeping carcinogens out of the intestines quickly.

A Penn State study also showed that oatmeal sustains blood sugar levels

longer than many other foods, which keeps insulin levels stable and ensures you won't be ravenous for the few hours that follow. That's good, because spikes in the production of insulin slow metabolism and send a signal to the body that it's time to start storing fat. Because oatmeal breaks down slowly in the stomach, it causes less of a spike in insulin levels than foods like bagels. Include it in a smoothie or as your breakfast.

Another cool fact about oatmeal: Preliminary studies indicate that oatmeal raises the levels of free testosterone in your body, enhancing your body's ability to build muscle and burn fat, and boosting your sex drive.

#6: Eggs



Superpowers: build muscle, burn fat

Secret weapons: protein, vitamin B12, vitamin A

Fight against: obesity

Sidekicks: none

Imposters: none

Eggs contain the highest “biological value” of protein—a measure of how well it supports your body's protein need—of any food. In other words, the protein in eggs is more effective at building muscle than protein from other sources, even milk and beef. Eggs also contain vitamin B12, which is necessary for fat breakdown. Recent research from Louisiana State University showed that the 12 grams of protein in two eggs is enough to increase satiety by up to 50 percent and subsequently reduce the amount of calories you'll consume at lunch by about 164 calories. In the study, when 152 overweight adults ate a two-egg breakfast daily for 2 months, they lost 65 percent more weight than did another group that consumed the same number of calories for breakfast, but ate much less protein.

Don't be so concerned about eggs' effect on your cholesterol: New research shows that eating a couple of eggs a day will not raise your cholesterol levels, as once previously believed. In fact, we've learned that most blood cholesterol is made by the body from dietary fat, not dietary cholesterol.

7: Turkey and Other Lean Meats (Lean Steak, Chicken, and Fish)



Superpowers: build muscle, improve the immune system

Secret weapons: protein, iron, zinc, creatine (beef), omega-3 fatty acids (fish), vitamins B6 (chicken and fish) and B12, phosphorus, potassium

Fight against: obesity, various diseases

Sidekicks: shellfish, Canadian bacon

Imposters: sausage, bacon, cured meats, ham, fatty cuts of steak such as T-bone and rib eye

A classic muscle-building nutrient, protein is the base of any solid diet plan. You already know that it takes more energy for your body to digest the protein in meat than it does to digest carbohydrates or fat, so the more protein you eat, the more calories you burn. Many studies support the notion that high-protein diets promote weight loss. In one study, researchers in Denmark found that people who substituted protein for 20 percent of their carbs were

Smart Substitutions

INSTEAD OF . . .	HAVE . . .	CALORIES SAVED
Sweet-and-sour pork	Beef with broccoli	480
8 jalapeño poppers	8 mozzarella sticks	345
Stuffed shells	Lasagna	295
Steak sandwich	Hamburger	208
Ham-and-cheese omelet	4 slices of bacon and 2 fried eggs	130
12-oz filet mignon	12-oz New York strip	120
Chocolate cake	Pecan pie	120
Turkey club (with mayo and bacon) with chips	Turkey dinner with mashed potatoes and stuffing	115

able to increase their metabolism and increase the number of calories they burned every day by up to 5 percent.

Among meats, turkey is a rare bird. Turkey breast is one of the leanest meats you'll find, and it packs nearly one-third of your daily requirements of niacin and vitamin B6. Dark meat, if you prefer, has lots of zinc and iron. One caution, though: If you're roasting a whole turkey for a family feast, avoid self-basting birds, which have been injected with fat.

Beef is another classic muscle-building protein. It's the top food source for creatine—the substance your body uses when you lift weights. Beef does have a downside; it contains saturated fats, but some cuts have more than others. Look for rounds or loins (that's code for extra-lean); sirloins and New York strips are less fatty than prime ribs and T-bones. Wash down that steak with a glass of fat-free milk. Research shows that calcium (that magic bullet again!) may reduce the amount of saturated fat your body absorbs. Choose cuts on the left side of the chart. They contain less fat but still pack high amounts of protein.

LEAN BEEF (55 calories and 2 to 3 grams of fat per 1-ounce serving)

Flank steak
Ground beef (extra-lean or lean)

London broil
Roast beef
Tenderloin

MEDIUM-FAT BEEF (75 calories and 5 grams of fat per 1-ounce serving)

Corned beef
Ground beef (not marked as lean or extra-lean)
Prime cut

To cut down on saturated fats even more, concentrate on fish like tuna and salmon, because they contain a healthy dose of omega-3 fatty acids as well as protein. Those fatty acids lower levels of a hormone called leptin in your body. Several recent studies suggest that leptin directly influences your metabolism: The higher your leptin levels, the more readily your body stores calories as fat. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin found that mice with low leptin levels have faster metabolisms and are able to burn fat faster than animals with higher leptin levels. Mayo Clinic researchers studying the diets of two African tribes found that the tribe that ate fish frequently had leptin levels nearly five

(continued on page 104)

times lower than the tribe that primarily ate vegetables. A bonus benefit for your fathers and husbands: Researchers in Stockholm studied the diets of more than 6,000 men and found that those who ate no fish had three times the risk of prostate cancer than those who ate it regularly. It's the omega-3s that inhibit prostate cancer growth.

Whether you eat fish or not, I want you to consider adding ground flaxseed to your food. As I pointed out earlier, 1 tablespoon contains only 60 calories, but it packs in omega-3 fatty acids and has nearly 4 grams of fiber. It has a nutty flavor, so you can sprinkle it into a lot of different recipes, add some to your meat or beans, spoon it over cereal, or add a tablespoon to a smoothie.

#8: Peanut Butter (All-Natural, Sugar-Free)



Superpowers: boosts testosterone, builds muscle, burns fat

Secret weapons: protein, monounsaturated fat, vitamin E, niacin, magnesium

Fights against: obesity, muscle loss, wrinkles, cardiovascular disease

Sidekicks: cashew and almond butters

Imposters: mass-produced sugary and trans fatty peanut butters

Yes, PB has its disadvantages: It's high in calories, and it doesn't go over well when you order it in four-star restaurants. But it's packed with those heart-healthy monounsaturated fats that can increase your body's production of testosterone, which can help your muscles grow and your fat melt. In one 18-month experiment, people who integrated peanut butter into their diets maintained weight loss better than those on low-fat plans. A recent study from the University of Illinois showed that diners who had monounsaturated fats before a meal (in this case, it was olive oil) ate 25 percent fewer calories during that meal than those who didn't.

Practically speaking, PB also works because it's a quick and versatile snack, and it tastes good. Because a diet that includes an indulgence like peanut butter doesn't leave you feeling deprived, it's easier to follow and won't make you fall prey to other cravings. Use it on an apple, on the go, or to add flavor to potentially bland

smoothies. Two caveats: You can't gorge on it because of its fat content; limit yourself to just a couple tablespoons per day. And you should look for all-natural peanut butter, not the mass-produced brands that have added sugar.

#9: Olive Oil



Superpowers: lowers cholesterol, boosts the immune system

Secret weapons: monounsaturated fat, vitamin E

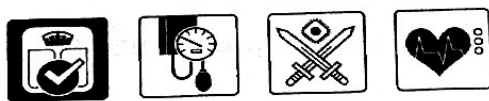
Fights against: obesity, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure

Sidekicks: canola oil, peanut oil, sesame oil

Imposters: vegetable and hydrogenated vegetable oils, trans fatty acids, margarine

Olive oil and its brethren will help you eat less by controlling your food cravings; they'll also help you burn fat and keep your cholesterol in check. Do you need any more reason to pass the bottle?

#10: Whole-Grain Breads and Cereals



Superpower: prevent your body from storing fat

Secret weapons: fiber, protein, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, pyridoxine, vitamin E, magnesium, zinc, potassium, iron, calcium

Fight against: obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, heart disease

Sidekicks: brown rice, whole-wheat pretzels, whole-wheat pastas

Imposters: processed bakery products such as white bread, bagels, and doughnuts; breads labeled wheat instead of whole wheat

There's only so long a person can survive on an all-protein diet or an all-salad diet or an all-anything diet. You will crave carbohydrates because your body needs carbohydrates. The key is to eat the ones that have been the least processed—carbs that still have all their heart-healthy, belly-busting fiber intact.

Whole-grain carbohydrates can play an important role in a healthy lifestyle. In an 11-year study of 16,000 middle-aged people, researchers at the University of Minnesota found that consuming three daily servings of whole grains can reduce a person's mortality risk over the course of a decade by 23 percent. (Tell that to your sister who's eating low-carb.) Whole-grain bread keeps insulin levels low, which keeps you from storing fat. In this diet, it's especially versatile because it'll supplement any kind of meal with little prep time. Toast for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch, with a dab of peanut butter for a snack. Don't believe the hype. Carbs—the right kind of carbs—are good for you.

Warning: Food manufacturers are very sneaky. Sometimes, after refining away all the vitamins, fiber, and minerals from wheat, they'll add molasses to the bread, turning it brown, and put it on the grocery shelf with a label that says wheat bread. It's a trick! Truly nutritious breads and other products will say "100 percent whole wheat" or "whole grain." Don't be fooled.

#11: Extra-Protein (Whey) Powder



Superpowers: builds muscle, burns fat

Secret weapons: protein, cysteine, glutathione

Fights against: obesity

Sidekick: ricotta cheese

Imposter: soy protein

Protein powder? What the heck is that? It's the only Abs Diet Power-food that you may not be able to find at the supermarket, but it's the one that's worth the trip to a health food store. I'm talking about powdered whey protein, a type of animal protein that packs a muscle-building wallop. If you add whey powder to your meal—in a smoothie, for instance—you may very well have created the most powerful fat-burning meal possible. Whey protein is a high-quality protein that contains essential amino acids that build muscle and burn fat. But it's especially effective because it has the highest amount of protein for the fewest number of calories, making it fat's

Fat Content of Meat (4 oz, raw, without skin or bone)

	TOTAL (G)	SATURATED (G)
Skinless chicken breast	1.41	0.37
Veal steak	2.45	0.74
Wild rabbit	2.63	0.78
Lean ground beef	4	1.50
Cured ham	4.68	1.56
Wild duck breast	4.82	1.50
Chicken drumstick	5.05	1.34
Lean pork tenderloin	5.06	1.79
Beef sirloin steak	5.15	2
Buffalo	5.44	2.31
Turkey leg	7.62	2.34
Turkey breast	7.96	2.17
Lean beef tenderloin	8.02	3
Lean pork chop	8.19	2.85
Porterhouse steak	8.58	3
Lean ground turkey	9.37	2.55
Veal breast meat	9.73	3.80
Rib-eye steak	18.03	7.30
T-bone steak	19.63	7.69
Ham	21.40	7.42
Pork belly	60.11	21.92
Cured pork	91.29	33.32

kryptonite. Smoothies with some whey powder can be most effective before a workout. A 2001 study at the University of Texas found that people who drank a shake containing amino acids and carbohydrates before working out increased their protein synthesis (their ability to build muscle) more than those who drank the same shake after exercising. Because exercise increases bloodflow to tissues, the theory goes that having whey protein in your system when you work out may lead to a greater uptake of amino acids—the building blocks of muscle—in your muscle.

By the way, the one great source of whey protein in your supermarket is ricotta cheese. Unlike other cheeses, which are made from milk curd, ricotta is made from the whey left over from making mozzarella and provolone cheese—a good reason to visit your local Italian eatery.

ABS DIET SUCCESS STORY

“I don’t feel restricted. I don’t have cravings. I feel satisfied and energized.”

Name: Kimberly Mayne

Age: 30

Height: 5’1”

Starting weight: 114

3 weeks later: 104

Despite being religious about her exercise routine, Kimberly Mayne didn’t lead a healthy lifestyle: Her diet was a mess. “I used to spend hours in the gym, only to come home and eat processed lunches and dinners,” she says. Poor eating habits sabotaged her efforts in the gym and she actually gained weight. Frustrated, she picked up *The Abs Diet for Women* and resolved to throw out her frozen dinners and learn to use a spatula.

“I was thrilled to find that cooking healthy wasn’t difficult or more expensive than eating prepackaged meals,” Mayne says. “I loved the fact that most recipes in the book have no restrictions. Now

#12: Raspberries and Other Berries



Superpowers: protect your heart; enhance eyesight; improve balance, coordination, and short-term memory; prevent cravings

Secret weapons: antioxidants, fiber, vitamin C, tannins (cranberries)

Fight against: heart disease, cancer, obesity

Sidekicks: most other fruits, especially apples and grapefruit

Imposters: jellies, most of which eliminate fiber and add sugar

Depending on your taste, any berry will do (except Crunch Berries). I like raspberries as much for their power as for their taste. They carry powerful levels of antioxidants, all-purpose compounds that help your body fight heart dis-

ance of protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats. I've learned that not all calories are created equal."

Mayne also changed her exercise routine, adopting the Abs Diet circuits and incorporating interval workouts into her schedule. Her new exercise mantra is "go hard and fast."

Within the first three weeks on the Abs Diet, Mayne lost 10 pounds and she has been able to maintain her weight for two years since she first picked up the book.

"I don't feel restricted with this eating plan and don't have cravings. Instead, I feel satisfied and energized."

Mayne's success on the Abs Diet inspired her mother, Christine, to try the program as well. In just three months, Christine lost

20 pounds and dropped her dress size from 12 to size 4. She was amazed to find that the diet travels well. She continued the eating and exercise plan during a month-long vacation in Europe without gaining an ounce. (That's even after succumbing to a few holiday-season indulgences!)

Others have been similarly inspired by Mayne's new energy and passion for cooking. "Friends are amazed when I tell them that the best part is I'm eating more than I ever have before," say Mayne. "I explain that the Abs Diet is a lifestyle, not a diet. You can feel satisfied, and never go hungry if you provide your body with the essential nutrients it needs. That's something I can commit to for life."

ease and cancer; the berries' flavonoids may also help your eyesight, balance, coordination, and short-term memory. One cup of raspberries packs 6 grams of fiber and more than half of your daily requirement of vitamin C.

Blueberries are also loaded with the soluble fiber that, like oatmeal, keeps you fuller longer. In fact, they're one of the most healthful foods you can eat. Blueberries beat out 39 other fruits and vegetables in the antioxidant power ratings. One study also found that rats that ate blueberries were more coordinated and smarter than rats that didn't.

Strawberries contain another valuable form of fiber called pectin (as do grapefruits, peaches, apples, and oranges). In a study from the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, subjects drank plain orange juice or juice spiked with pectin. The people who got the loaded juice felt fuller after drinking it than those who got the juice without the pectin. The difference lasted for an impressive 4 hours.

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