

Female Fat Loss Over 40 presents

50 Health Hacks

for Living Your Awesomest Fit Life

PLUS

5 Ab Workout
Hacks



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Shawna and I have put together 50 of our fave health “hacks” – some serious, and some not so serious tips for you to use with your workouts, with your relaxation, and with your nutrition.

Now that we’re in our 40’s and beyond, we all need to train and eat smart. What we could get away with in our 20’s is a thing of the past. You get one body in this life, make sure you look after it well!

That being said, the only limitations you face are the ones that you put in place. Both Shawna and I train with and out-train women in their 20’s – but we do it smart!

We eat well for energy and performance. We look after niggles and ensure we get good recovery. We’re guaranteeing that we’ll be still training hard when we’re 100. Or more!

We’re grateful for our health and we’re grateful for our fitness. And we both know that age truly is only a number. You may have to be a little more careful of your knees, you may take a little longer to recover from a busy week or tough workout – but that’s no reason to limit yourself.

Age is a state of mind.

Laugh, love, train hard and be grateful for what you have.

Enjoy these hacks,

Lisa B & Shawna K
Female Fat Loss over 40

50 Awesome Health Hacks

1. Rein in that sweet tooth

Trade your milk chocolate for 80% dark cacao, it's "chock" full of anti-oxidants and being a stronger flavour is harder to binge on. Weigh and portion out snack sizes and wrap separately. Only allow yourself the day's allocated portion. And what about a couple of dried dates with 8-10 almonds? Or go nuts for a tablespoon of natural nut butter on some slices of apple. Depriving yourself of all sweet treats just leaves you feeling deprived and more likely to abandon your healthy eating – [try these delicious fat burning treats](#).

2. Find a Workout Buddy

I know this is often hard, but you'll work to motivate each other and you'll commit to workouts that you wouldn't have done on your own.

3. Keep these staples in your pantry

Balsamic vinegar for dressings. Greek yogurt for snacks and dressings. Unroasted, unsalted nuts (watch your portion sizes).

4. Aching Muscles?

Enjoy a hot bath with a large dash of Epsom salts. The magnesium from the salts is easily absorbed into your skin. The mineral helps relax skeletal muscles by flushing lactic acid build up in the muscles, which may occur during physical exertion, such as a vigorous workout. Magnesium also plays an important role in the absorption of vitamins in the body. It also helps regulate muscle and nerve function. All of these effects significantly influence muscle soreness, which also affects muscle stiffness. Love me a hot bath!

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5. Buy Good Shoes

Buy the best training shoes you can afford and have them professionally fitted (at least the first time). A bad pair of shoes can lead quickly to injury. They're worth the investment – and if they look groovy as well, all the better! I love colourful shoes and shoelaces. What? So I'm shallow!

6. Pump up the Jam:

Nothing motivates like music so download your fave music or try one of the many fitness playlists on sites like Spotify. My on-going most motivating song of 2014/2015 is Bruno Mars and Mark Bronson with "Uptown Funk". Best. Training. Song. Ever. Any of the faster Backstreet Boys anthems are ESSENTIAL.

7. Weigh Yourself Once a Week:

Choose one day a week – NEVER Monday – and weigh yourself at the same time of day. Preferably first thing in the morning after you've been to the bathroom, with fewer clothes the better. Keep the result in perspective. It's ONE of several measuring tools – it's NOT the be-all and end-all. And no, you can't throw the scales out the window just because you don't like what they say. Take a big breath and repeat after me "It's just a number". There you go...

8. Portion Control is Key

Not sure what size portions you should be having? Here's a great graphic below. Your biggest serving should be your veggies, followed by protein. In the 1960's a typical dinner plate was 9" in diameter, nowadays some plates are bigger than 12". Consider using a smaller plate. Most people will eat what's in front of them – so give your willpower a break, and serve yourself less to start with.

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9. Alcohol is a Waistline Killer

Who doesn't like a relaxing Friday night bevvie? Consider swapping out cocktails for wine. A Long Island Iced Tea can contain nearly 800 calories! Consider swapping out wine for a spirit with club soda. A gin and tonic contains around 200 calories while a vodka with club soda comes in at a calorie efficient 64 calories. Winning!

10. Cheat meals not cheat days:

The jury is out on this from a research point of view. But sadly what we could get away with when we were 25 is no longer relevant. Even if you overeat at dinner you might add an extra 1500 calories to your days allowance. Overeat all day and you could blow out to 5000 calories or more! You've just wasted the weeks clean eating. "Never starved, and NEVER stuffed". [Here's a great guide for successful and sensible weight loss.](#)

11. Love Training Outdoors?

There is nothing like exercising in the fresh air. It's fabulous for your spirit, for your body and for your Vitamin D levels. But don't forget to apply your sunscreen if you live in an area where UV levels are high. Not just your face,

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but your chest too. (My husband calls this my “decoupage”. He gets confused between crafts and my chest? Oh well, we’ve been married a long time!)

12. Stay Hydrated

Forget sports drinks – some of them include as many calories as a candy bar. Unless you’re an endurance athlete training for over 3 hours at a time, water is all you need. Aim to consume 8-10 glasses of water a day. My tip? Every time I go to the bathroom, I chug down a small glass of water. Healthy kidneys, healthy skin, loads of energy. Drink more water – no excuses! Read more about [why you need to drink more water](#) here.

13. Battle of the Weekend

If you’ve been eating clean and staying disciplined all week, don’t blow it on the weekend. If you’re having a cheat meal – add in a tough training session that morning. Had a little fall and a few more treats accidentally fell down your throat? add some [quick bursts of intense exercise like these](#).

14. Keep it in Perspective



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15. Good food doesn't need to be boring

Get creative with spices – add a dash of lemon, a sprinkle of fresh herbs, a hint of chilli. If you're bored with the flavours of your food, then spice things up a bit. [Need more ideas? Go here.](#)

16. Mix up your workouts

The best way to lose your motivation is to keep doing the same old workouts over and over again. Too boring! If you want to change your body, you have to challenge it. Ensure you have a mix of bodyweight and resistance – high intensity and lower intensity. [Here's enough variety to keep you going.](#)

17. Invest in a good sports bra

There is nothing more uncomfortable than the “girls” bouncing around with high impact workouts. Get fitted for a good bra and if necessary pop on a crop top as well for even more support. A good sports bra can reduce movement by up to 60% sparing the support structures in your breasts. We don't need any more sagging than is necessary! On the subject of sports apparel – cool workout clothes make you train better. Fact.

18. A stitch in time

We can put a man on the moon but science can't tell us definitively what actually causes a stitch. If you suffer from side stitches or cramps when you exercise, try this simple tip. Do a slight side bend to compress the area where you're feeling the stitch, and slow down and deepen your breathing. Breathe in deeply for 4 counts and exhale strongly for 4 counts. Continue this for several repeats and you'll find that the stitch settles down rapidly.

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19. Do your homework

No-one wants to miss out when family and friends are socializing. But it can get tough going to a restaurant where you can be overwhelmed by choices. If you know which restaurant you're going to, try and check out the website and menu before you go. Plan in advance what healthier choices you can make and don't be swayed. It's always easier to stay focused when you're prepared ahead of time.

20. Eat mindfully

Take time out to taste and savour your food rather than eating at your desk or on the run. Not taking time out to consciously register what you're eating can quickly lead to mindless grazing later.

21. Bring your own nibbles

Struggle with the temptation of dips and crackers when eating out? Try preparing a platter of freshly chopped raw veggies with a healthy dip and take it with you. If you're at a friend's house, offer it up as a hostess gift (you helpful friend you!). Stack your plate with your healthy portions and move your chair away from the corn chips and pate.

22. Resist chafing

Chafing can happen to anyone. Choose fabrics that wick the moisture away and use a lubricant or balm on areas that are likely to chafe or cause a rash, for example thighs, underarms, and anywhere seams might rub.

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23. Be Prepared (see 19)

There are going to be times when you resort to fast food due to time constraints. Know which fast food outlets have healthier options and stick to those. We make poor decisions at times when we're vulnerable. Starving and exhausted? Inhale those fries in hunger and you'll just feel bad later. Instead of that scenario, lay your plans in advance and know what you can choose and STICK to it! Plan to succeed. [Here's a list of some healthier fast food choices.](#)

24. Recover to be stronger

If you're an avid exerciser, make sure you take a recovery day or two a week. Your muscles get stronger AFTER the workout. Allow your body that time to rest and recuperate and you'll come back stronger and fitter. More is not necessarily better.

25. Limit Your Rest

Now this is different from recovery days! Intensity is what burns fat and builds fitness. Don't allow your heart rate to drop too much during the workout. If the workout says take 30 seconds – try and stick to that range. You really want to be able to sip a little water, catch your breath and get back into the workout. Long rests (checking Facebook during rest breaks is a no-no!) undermine your effort. [Work hard and smart, we show you how.](#)

26. Resistance rules

Every woman needs to add a strength component to her workout week. You'll get stronger, maintain or build bone density and sculpt lean, sexy muscle. No matter your age or level of fitness, resistance training is a must. If you haven't exercised for a while, [these workouts will get you started gently and safely.](#)

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27. Fight the craving

This is a tougher one – this takes work and practice. Question yourself when a craving strikes “Am I really hungry?”, 9/10 cravings are strictly psychological. All the food in the world won’t fill that space if the need is emotional not physical. Get to know your body.

28. Get your zzzzzzz’s

Erratic sleep damages your metabolism, which in turn makes weight loss tougher. Turn off electronic devices at least half an hour before bed. Switch off your busy mind with a relaxing book, bath or warm herbal tea. Getting 8 hours sleep a night is one of your most worthwhile goals. Who doesn’t love snuggling into bed on a cold night?

29. Pack your lunch

Here’s another in the Plan to Succeed mindset. Research tells us that dieters who take their healthy lunches with them will lose over 5 pounds MORE than the dieter who buys their lunch! Save money and pounds.

30. Get committed

Write down your goals. Read over those goals every day. If you don’t know exactly where you’re going – how will you get there? This process literally flicks a switch in your brain to [make it easier to achieve what you want](#).

31. Eat your veggies

So long as you’re preparing your veggies in a healthy way (and no, deep fried okra doesn’t count) you can pretty much eat as much as you want. Fill up on

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the veggies on your plate first, protein second and then go for the starch. You won't go hungry and you'll consume fewer calories.

32. Baby steps

If you have a slip up, get straight back on the diet "horse". Don't beat yourself up and don't go into starvation mode to "punish" yourself. If the scales have crept up gradually, then don't panic (and don't throw them out the window), gradually reduce some of the extra treats that might have crept in. Skip a dessert, add in another workout, but be consistent. Never give up.

33. Don't put off living

Too many women assume that they'll be happy once they reach their goal weight. Life is short, play now. Just don't let your play revolve around food. Have adventures, travel, spend quality time with your family, try a new class, go to a Backstreet Boys concert 😊. Do things that get you excited about living. Take your focus away from your weight and you may well be surprised by what you achieve.

34. Be consistent

Researchers compared participants who basically followed the same diet every day with those who ate more on weekends and holidays than during the week. People in the first group were one and a half times more likely to maintain their weight within five pounds over a year.

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35. [Develop new habits](#)

The longer you practice a behaviour the easier it becomes. The longer you practice your new and improved exercise and eating habits, the easier they will become.

36. **When the scales become your friend**

Weighing your food is boring. Let's just put it out there. But knowing exactly how much you're eating is the foundation of successful weight loss. You won't need to weigh your food forever, but try it for a couple of weeks just till you can recognize a healthy portion size. (See, this is why you shouldn't throw the scales out the window, you need them!)

37. **Eat regularly**

Learning the natural rhythms of your appetite is one of the most important lessons you can learn in successful weight loss. Learn to recognize true hunger and eat before you become starving. Whether you eat 3 meals a day or 6 is up to you. Just don't leave it too long so that you eat everything in sight including the kitchen sink.

38. **The morality of food**

Foods are not "good" or "bad". Some are better choices than others. Forbidden "fruit" is always sweeter so don't ban all treats from your diet. Allow yourself occasional treats and enjoy them guilt free. Just don't go crazy!

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39. Move regularly

Commit to regular exercise. Make it a habit. [Choose variety and interesting exercises](#). If you hate burpees, don't force yourself to do them (unless it's Bootcamp and then you have to!). Choose exercises that you find enjoyment in and you're far more likely to stick with it. And one day you may wake up LOVING burpees. Just saying.

40. Are you a Chronic Dieter?

Then read this book, it changed my entire perspective. "Thin for Life", Anne M Fletcher. Case studies and invaluable advice from dieters who lost weight and kept it off. Absolute gold.

42. Reward yourself

Set goals and establish deadlines. Add in rewards if you feel you need it. A pamper sesh with a girlfriend, a movie night out (hold the popcorn), time out from the family just for yourself, whatever floats your boat and help you celebrate your achievements.

43. Give yourself permission to whinge (Just not too much 😊)

Yep, it's going to be uncomfortable sometimes. Suck it up buttercup. Changing your body and your mindset isn't always going to be easy – but the reward at the end is going to be worth it.

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44. Keep a food journal

Yes, I know you've read that before. Have you done it yet? Women who record their food intake whilst dieting lose 6 pounds more than women who read that tip but don't do it!

45. Don't drink your calories

I truly believe maths was invented to torture us, but it is a necessary evil occasionally. Maybe your fave beverage is only 60 calories and no, that's not much. But that may well be 60 calories per 3oz. Is your standard drinking glass 3oz? Didn't think so. Be accurate with your recording, getting off your weight loss plateau could be as simple as refining your intake of certain beverages.

46. Stand up straight

Somewhere early in puberty, we grow breasts and start to slouch. Well, we're not 13 now, so no need to hide. Celebrate your femininity and stand proud and tall. Just standing a little straighter will help you look slimmer and your tummy flatter. By the way, [here are some quality core workouts](#) to help with that!

47. Smile

Everyone looks better with a smile 😊

48. Health and fitness is NOT all or nothing

Exercise well and eat clean 80% of the time and you're doing fine. When you can accept that fitness is not an all or nothing scenario you'll be more relaxed and far more likely to stick with it.

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49. Accept that we are a work in progress

Measure your success in how far you've come. Sometimes our biggest wins are not necessarily visible. Take a moment to write down some real wins you've experienced. No one else needs to see it. Remind yourself if you're feeling down, that you are one awesome chicky babe.

50. Be grateful

Look around you and measure your blessings. They are many. Be grateful.

5 Ab "Hack" Workouts

#1. Ab Finisher 20-10

Set your interval timer to 14 rounds of 20 seconds of work with 10 seconds of rest. Cycle through the 3 exercises continuously for 7 minutes.

20 seconds Cross Body Mountain Climbers – 10 seconds rest

20 seconds Glute Bridge with 2 second glute squeeze – 10 seconds rest

20 seconds Elbow Plank – 10 seconds rest

#2. Ab Finisher Planks

This is a tough ab finisher to plug onto the end of a strength workout. Tense your body for the duration of the work time and you'll be firing up shoulders, chest, and back as well as your core. You'll be working for 30 seconds with a 15 second rest between exercises.

Elbow Plank

Straight Arm Plank

Elbow Plank with alternating side toe tap

Straight Arm Plank with alternating leg lifts

Rest 60 seconds and repeat for a total of two rounds

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#3. Full Body Ab Workout

This is a full body workout that relies on your core to stabilise and strengthen. You'll get abs, legs and upper body strength with this one. Set your clock for 45 seconds of work with 15 seconds of rest. You can repeat this circuit up to 4 times.

Spiderman Climb with alternating legs

1 leg Romanian deadlifts Left

1 leg Romanian deadlifts Right

Slow Mountain Climbers – brace abs hard as knee comes to chest

Prisoner Squats

#4. Abs & Glutes

Set your timer for 10 minutes of work and keep cycling through the exercises till the time is up. Rest if you need on the way, but keep any break short.

1 ½ Squats with overhead reach x 10

Get Ups x 10/side

Glute Bridge with 3 second glute squeeze at top x 10

Superwoman with double arm/leg lifts x 10

Rotating Elbow Plank x 10/side

#5. Abs To Make Your Heart Race

How about a little cardio with your core? If you struggle with getting up and down off the floor in a hurry, you can use an incline bench. Use the planks as your active recovery 😊 Set your timer for 30 seconds of work with 10 seconds transition. You'll be doing this finisher twice for a heart pumping finish to your main workout.

Total Body Extensions

Cross Body Mountain Climbers

Squat Jumps

Elbow Plank

Fast Mountain Climbers

Side elbow plank Left

Run in place

Side elbow plank Right