

The Secrets to Losing Stubborn Fat

Muffin top, saddlebags, trouble areas? Every woman (and even some men) know and dread these terms.

No matter how much exercise, how many diets or how many magic pills people try, certain areas have stubborn fat that always seems to prevail. That is because this fat is, in fact, biologically different.

Meet beta and alpha receptors. While there are many different substrates of these receptors, we will only focus on one. The one concerning the trouble areas contain a higher concentration of alpha-2 receptors. Simply speaking, epinephrine is the hormone that stimulates lipolysis (the breaking down of fat for use as free fatty acids). Epinephrine does this by binding to receptors on cells.

Beta-receptors are responsible for binding with epinephrine, resulting in lipolysis. However, alpha-2 receptors are responsible for inhibiting lipolysis. Typically, women have higher percentages of these receptors in their lower body region than men. Since excess estrogen can cause higher amounts of these alpha-2 receptors, getting the body's hormones under control can be an effective way of controlling those stubborn fat areas.

Let me make it clear that estrogen is not in itself bad. When functioning properly, it in fact can help with fat metabolism. For example, estrogen has been shown to enhance the production of epinephrine, which can increase the activity of HSL (hormone sensitive lipase) which is the hormone responsible for fat tissue breaking down for fuel. However, hormones are always in a delicate balance and one must remember the body is always fighting for a state of homeostasis (perfect balance).

Therefore, if one could keep the hormones in balance, there would be the healthy amount of fat storage in the needed areas. Some ways to do this are by trying to limit the amount of estrogenic substances found in food supplies, such as petroleum, a chemical-based fertilizer. Be aware of things such as birth control pills or the BPA found in some plastics that can act as estrogen. Try to locate grass-fed beef and poultry to avoid the hormones that are often fed to our livestock and found in our food supply. Of course, a balanced diet and exercise always has a healthy affect on our hormonal system, so keep practicing a healthy lifestyle as well.

In addition, poor blood flow has also been shown to make those stubborn areas harder to reach. This is basically because poor blood flow doesn't allow for the needed hormones to successfully get to the fat or to transport the mobilized fat away from the fat cell so it can be used elsewhere. Therefore, during exercise keep blood flow in the target area by working a complete muscle group before moving on to the next one.

As frustrating as stubborn fat is, know that there are some steps you can take to help eliminate it, even though it seems nature is against it. Always remember that consistency is the key to successful, long-term fat loss.

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