

Q. I've heard a lot about a new supplement that's supposed to burn fat. It's called Forskolin. Does it work?

A. Its use dates back several hundred years as a pickle or food spice in East Indian diets. However, the use of Forskolin as a fat burner has only recently been discovered.

Q. I've been going to the gym for six months, and have seen almost no results. I really want to get in shape this year. I desperately need to lose the fat from my belly, and pack on a bit of muscle? I'm confused by all the different routines and diets. What should I be doing?

A. Before we get to the diet and exercise, it's important that you know that even the best programme of diet and exercise won't work unless you are consistent. It's no good training hard for a few weeks, then throwing in the towel because you miss a workout or two.

Q. I tried eating a few low-carbohydrate bars the other day, and spent half the day farting and rushing to the toilet? Is this a problem that everyone has, or is it just me?

A. This is certainly not a problem that's unique to you! The problem is caused by the amount of sugar alcohols contained in these bars. Some of them contain over 20 grams of sugar alcohols per bar! Why?

Q. I've heard that guggulsterones increase thyroid hormone levels. Is this true? Does this help weight loss?

A. The thyroid hormones control your metabolic rate. When your metabolic rate slows down, which it does when you go on a diet, you burn fewer calories each day. This means that the rate at which you lose weight also slows down.

Q. I have a cousin who lives in Eastern Europe. He swears by a product called Tribestan, and has been using it for years. Is it a drug or a supplement?

A. Tribestan is a patented extract of the Tribulus Terrestris plant. It's not a drug, and is sold as a supplement by a Bulgarian company called Sopharma. Tribestan is used to boost testosterone levels without the side effects of anabolic drugs.

Q. I've heard that whey protein helps fat loss as well as muscle growth. Is this true?

A. The link between whey and fat loss comes from Italian researchers, who studied the effects of a gene that produces an enzyme known as ACE.

Q. I've been drinking green tea because it's supposed to help me lose weight. But, it doesn't seem to be working and I haven't lost any weight. Why?

A. All of the research showing the effect of green tea on fat loss used a green tea extract (not the drink) containing a standardised amount of EGCG.

Q. I'm trying to lose weight by skipping breakfast, but I've been told this isn't a good idea. But I just can't be bothered to eat anything in the morning. Surely if I miss breakfast, I'll lose weight faster?

A. When you skip breakfast, you end up feeling tired and cranky in the morning. Then you snack on high-sugar junk food to try and make yourself feel better.

Q. I'm on a low-carbohydrate diet to lose weight. I'd like to use meal replacement bars, but they contain something called glycerol. Is this a carbohydrate or not, and can I use it on my diet?

A. The popularity of low-carbohydrate diets means that many protein bars are now promoted as "low carb" foods. However, the debate about glycerol, one of the ingredients commonly included in protein bars, has left many people confused.

Q. What do you think of Lean System 7?

A. The version of Lean System 7 you buy in the UK is not the same as the one advertised for sale in the USA because it doesn't contain 7-Keto.

Q. I've seen Inulin listed on the ingredient label of some nutrition and protein bars. What is this stuff?

A. Inulin, also known as oligofructose, is similar to a product called Fibersol and is starting to appear in all the best designed nutrition bars.

Q. I would like to carry on gaining muscle as well as losing fat around my waist. Will dropping my calorie intake slow down or prevent my current muscle gains?

A. Losing fat and building muscle at the same time is very hard. That's because each goal requires a different approach.

Q. I've been doing 200 crunches every day for my abs, but I still can't see them properly. And my lower abs don't show at all. What's the best exercise for the abs (lower abs too)?

A. Would you train your chest, arms, or shoulders every day? Then why do the same with your abs?

Q. What are Oxy Poppers and will they help me?

A. You might have seen adverts for Oxy Poppers (also known as Oxydrene) claiming it can increase "blood and tissue oxygenation." According to the promotional literature, they've become a highly sought-after body building compound, "dwarfing Creatine, andro, and the rest!"