Dear Friend:

I'm sure you know how important a tough, rock-like mid-section is to an athlete, boxers, wrestlers, and football players spend hours working on their abdominal muscles. You see the upper abdomen houses one of the biggest, most important nerve centers of the body, the solar plexus. A hard blow to this nerve center, which is located just below the breast-bone, can easily render a man helpless if his abdomen is soft and undeveloped.

Today we're going to build up your mid-section, giving it shape, hardness, and toughness. Most important, we will make it flat, or even slightly convex, so that you won't have a "pot-belly," or "hay-window." While the muscles in this area will actually get bigger your waist will become slightly smaller and more compact. If your waist is already small, and you carry little body fat, you can expect an increase in waist girth with more definition to the muscles. This may sound like a paradox, but it is actually what happens. If you are big and bulky in the waist, this measure will get smaller. If you are thin and undeveloped in this area the measure will get larger.

Did you ever see a man with a "pot-belly" who looked good in clothes, not to even mention a bathing suit? You but you didn't. It's that trim, flat look that gives a man a zestful, youthful appearance. As a man ages it seems that the big abdominal muscles are the first to lose their shape and strength as they push outward through lack of use, and from accumulations of fat inside the abdomen. That's right, big globs of fat accumulate in the mesenteries, which are the membranes holding the intestines together. This internal fat exerts pressure on the abdominal walls, forcing them outward and causing them to become weak and flabby. Today's lesson will prevent you from developing that "middle-age spread."

Turn to today's anatomy chart and I'll show you what those big abdominal muscles look like. On the left hand side of the page you see the Rectus Abdominus muscles which line the front of the abdomen. These are the ones that give you that carved-out, finely chiseled appearance. The Rectus Abdominus is a long flat muscle which is broader, but thinner on top than it is below. There is one on either side of the front abdomen. They run from the cartilage of the 5th, 6th, and 7th rib and lower part of the breast bone, all the way down to the pubic bone. Both muscles are crossed horizontally by fibrous bands of tissue at about three different places which makes it appear like the muscle is made up of individual blocks, or sections. These fibrous bands are called "tendinous inscriptions." One crosses the muscle at about the level of the "belly-button," another just slightly below the breast bone, and a third midway between the first two.
The shape of these blocks of muscle vary considerably depending on how and where the tendinous inscriptions cross the muscle. A man may have anywhere from four to eight visible blocks. Sometimes they are evenly paired, and sometimes staggered. The best looking type of mid-section usually has eight visible, evenly matched blocks. Most men usually have six blocks (three on each side) that they can feel and see. If the blocks of your Abdominus Rectus are not visible it means that they are either underdeveloped or covered with fat. Exercises 2 and 3 will give nice and shape to these blocks. I have included at the end of this lesson special diet and "spot-reducing" techniques for those whose abdominal fat keeps the blocks from showing. Please understand that it is possible to have shapely, well-formed blocks in the Abdominus Rectus muscle without having them show. Definition results from combining muscle growth with fat reduction.

Almost every day I receive letters from enthusiastic body builders asking how they can make their abdominals show. This is the lesson that shows you how to do just that. Today's exercises increase the size of the Abdominus Rectus muscles. As the size increases, the further where the tendinous inscriptions cross get deeper and deeper. This makes the blocks stand out in bold relief. But if these furrows are filled with fat the blocks will not look so impressive, and that's where the special diet and "spot-reducing" comes in.

Let's take a look at the other muscles of the abdomen. Our anatomy chart shows that there are three big sheets of muscle along the back sides of the abdomen that lie atop each other in layers. The outermost layer which you see in Figure 3 is made up of the External Obliques. Notice how the fibers run. These muscles are the largest of the three layers, perhaps because they are used more than the others. When only one side of the External Obliques contracts it bends the spinal column sideways and rotates it so that the shoulder on the same side moves forward. Both sides acting together give the same action as the Abdominus Rectus which is to flex the trunk, or bend the spinal column forward.

Now look at the middle layer which you see in Figure 4. These are the Internal Obliques. They are thinner and smaller than the External Obliques and their fibers run in the opposite direction. Again, one side acting alone bends the spinal column sideways, but rotates the trunk so that the shoulder of the opposite side is pulled forward. Both sides acting together give the same action as the Abdominus Rectus.

The important thing about the action of these muscles is that we can develop the Abdominus Rectus and the External and Internal Obliques with the same exercises. And that's exactly what we do in Exercises 2 and 3. It is not necessary to work them separately for when you try you invariably bring them all into play. For instance, when you contract only one side of the External Obliques you almost always contract the opposite side of the Internal Obliques, and vice versa.

Now we come to the last big muscle for today, the Transversus Abdominis, which you see in Figure 2. Notice that its fibers run in a horizontal direction. This is the big constrictor muscle of the abdomen. It is the one mainly responsible for holding the abdomen flat. This muscle, alone, holds the big secret of magnificent abdominal development for the simple reason that it causes the whole abdominal wall to sweep inward toward the spinal column making the abdomen compact and V-shaping the trunk. Many body-builders fail to gain a really pleasing effect to the abdomen for the simple reason that the Transversus Abdominis is often neglected. It is a muscle that doesn't lift weights and weight-lifters therefore often eliminate it from their routines. To show you exactly how it works let's turn to Exercise 1.
The Transversus Abdominus

Exercise 1
EXERCISE 1.

This exercise develops the Transversus Abdominus muscle.

Stand in a normal erect position as shown in Figure A of Exercise 1. Take a very shallow breath (not a big one) and hold it, in order to close the small trap-door on top of your wind-pipe called the epiglottis. Now slowly start to draw the entire abdominal wall inwards in the direction shown by the arrow in Figure B. Keep pulling the abdomen in, harder, harder, and harder. In your own mind try to visualize your front abdominal wall touching your spinal column as shown in Figure C. This is impossible, but helps you put real force and power in the movement. Hold it real hard for 6 seconds and then relax. This one exercise will do wonders for you. It flushes out the whole inner wall of the abdomen with rich, nourishing blood making those undeveloped muscle fibers respond with new growth and strength.

Now repeat the exercise. This is the only lesson in the entire Body-Tone course where the exercises are done twice. In just one week's time you will start to notice your abdominal wall taking on a natural inward curvature. It is the flat, slightly convex abdomen that makes your chest look so massive.

EXERCISE 2.

This exercise develops the Rectus Abdominus and Internal and External Obliques, all at the same time.

Lie on your back, as shown in exercise 2, with your knees bent and with your hands resting on your abdomen so you can feel the pull of the muscles. This exercise I call "curl-tensing", because the object is to curl, or flex the upper trunk while at the same time tensing all the muscles of the abdomen. You lift the head off the floor as you round your back, trying to lift higher, higher, and higher. At the same time consciously tense the abdominal muscles harder, harder, and harder. Hold it for 6 seconds. Then relax. Be sure to curl the trunk. Don't try to lift it with the back straight.

To feel the tremendous pull of both the Abdominus Rectus and Oblique muscles during the peak of this deep contraction drive your finger-tips into the solid muscle mass as shown in Exercise 3. I would like to point out that this exercise is not just a bent knee sit-up. It is a deep, mentally controlled contraction of the entire abdominal wall that is held for 6 seconds. Always start the exercise slowly, gradually increasing the force of the contraction.

Repeat the exercise once.

EXERCISE 3.

This exercise, like the last one, develops the Abdominus Rectus and Internal and External Obliques, all at the same time.

This is "curl-tensing" again, only this time done in a standing position. Take a shallow breath. Hold it so that the epiglottis is closed. Bend the knees to the position shown, and curl the trunk forward slightly while tensing, or contracting the entire abdominal wall. Tense the abdomen harder, harder, and harder. Hold it for 6 seconds. Then relax. At the peak of the contraction drive your finger-tips repeatedly into the muscles so you can feel their strong, rock-like pull. I have made two drawings of this exercise so you can see both the front and side views.

Repeat the exercise once.
These three exercises will give you all the development that you can possibly get out of your abdominals. The muscles will "pop" out fast, and it will just take you a few minutes daily. Compare this, if you will, with the fellow who labors doing 80 to 100 sit-ups per day and then winds up with only meager development. If you can contract a muscle 100 times in succession then you certainly aren't delivering a maximum stimulus to that muscle. Remember this one thing. You don't build strength and muscle size by doing endurance exercises. You must tax a muscle with an all-out continuous stimulus for six seconds in order to produce the histamine which causes the muscle to become flushed with blood. Then, and only then will you cause that muscle to grow in size and strength.

Well, in about one week from now your abdominal muscles will start getting massive and stumpy. But whether or not they will show will depend upon how much fat you've got on that front abdominal wall.

So here's the way to:

**SPOT REDUCE AND DIET FOR ABDOMINAL DEFINITION**

To make those abdominals stand out with highly ridged, deeply furrowed blocks of muscle, you must rid your front abdominal wall of excess fat. This isn't hard to do, but there are several basic principles that you must understand.

First, you must realize that it is extremely difficult to get rid of fat through exercise alone. For example, if you wanted to take one pound of fat off your mid-section by doing 100 sit-ups per day it would take you about 50 days to accomplish your objective. You would have to do over 5000 sit-ups to burn up 1,300 calories, which is the equivalent of one pound of fat. On the other hand, by cutting down the amount of calories that you take in at each meal you can burn fat quite rapidly. In fact it is sometimes possible to burn as much as one pound of fat per day on a 1000 calorie diet.

On any reducing diet there are certain groups of foods that must be entirely eliminated if you wish to reach your desired weight quickly. Below I have listed those groups of foods that should be eliminated, and those you should eat more of, when working for abdominal definition.

We know that when fat is being burned for energy on a restricted calorie intake a muscle will burn that fat which is closest to it. So, while you are burning fat on a diet program you can "spot-reduce" your abdominal wall by the following procedure.

All day long, or whenever you think about it, keep drawing the Transverse Abdominus inward as we did in Exercise 1. Of course you won't draw it in nearly as far or as hard as when doing the actual exercise, but try to keep it pulled slightly inward most of the day.

In the morning when you are getting dressed pull your mid-section in, then adjust your belt to fit snugly, so that if you were to relax you would feel slightly uncomfortable because of the tightness of the belt. This will act as a constant reminder to you during the day to keep pulling that mid-section in. Hold in whether you are walking, sitting, or driving your automobile. Keep remembering that you are burning fat in this area and that the slight discomfort you may feel during the day will seem like nothing after your diet is over and your abdominals stand out with razor-sharp definition.
This little trick is easy to do and will take fat out of this area quicker than anything else you could do. Massaging, heating, or pricking the abdominal fat will not help you get rid of it any quicker. Just remember that just holding the mid-section in all day will not do the trick either, unless you are dieting at the same time. The following list will show you what you should or shouldn’t eat on your diet.

**ELIMINATE FROM DIET**

- Fried Foods... Fried and scrambled eggs
- French fried potatoes
- Fountain Products... Soda, shakes, soft drinks
- Ice Cream
- Creams........ Gravy
- Meat fat
- Butter, in excess
- Bakery Products... Pastries, breads, cakes
- Cookies, muffins, pies
- Liquor Store Products... Beer, liqueurs, wines, cocktails
- Candy Counter Products... Especially milk chocolate, cream, and nutty bars
- Condiments... Catsup, mustard, horseradish
- Salad Dressings... Mayonnaise, French Dressing, or 1000 Island Dressing
- Concession Stand Products... Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Potato Chips, Biscuit, Packaged Pies
- Italian Foods... Spaghetti, Macaroni, Pizza, etc.
- Lunch Meat Sandwiches... Baloney, Salami, Ham, Cheese, Egg Salad, etc.
- Desserts of All Types
- Breakfast Delights... Waffles, pancakes, and French toast (syrup and butter)

**EAT MORE**

- Broiled, lean meats with the fat trimmed.
- Skim milk, in preference to whole milk.
- Fresh fruits.
- Fresh vegetables.
- Cooked vegetables (go easy on butter)
- Salads (without dressing)
- Eggs (poached, boiled, or hard boiled)
- Cottage Cheese (no other cheese)
- Fruit juices.
- Vitamin supplements.
- Wheat germ, and soy bean cereals or products.
- Baked potatoes (easy on the butter)
- Mashed potatoes (No gravy and easy on the butter)
- Dried Brewer's Yeast—this is high caloric, but a potent first class protein.

Next week I'm going to show you how to V-shape your upper trunk. We will bulk up your levatorans, bust muscles, or "fats" as they are called in body building.

So until then,

Yours for a tough, well-defined mid-section,

Tom Buckley