

## Carve Your Core

Toning your abs doesn't have to be tedious. All you need is four minutes of focused intensity every other day.

To get strong, sexy abs you need two types of exercise: targeted ab training to build abdominal muscles, and cardiovascular training to burn excess fat. Crunches alone won't do the trick. "If you want to see your abs, you need cardio exercises to burn the fat off your stomach," explains Brett Hoebel, celebrity trainer and creator of the DVD "RevAbs". You also need to maintain a smart eating plan or you won't see results.

Hoebel recommends the following four-minute workout. Every other day, perform all three exercises as a circuit (without resting) followed by a one-minute rest at the end. Remember to breathe during each exercise, exhaling with force to fire your abs. Squeeze your abdominal muscles during both the upward and downward moves. Squeezing on the way down is half the work and can strengthen the abs even more than squeezing on the way up.

### **1. Plank on forearms**

*Target muscles:* Upper and lower abs

*Get ready:* Lie face down with your weight on your toes and forearms, hands together.

*Go:* Lift your body off the floor with all the weight on the balls of your feet and your forearms, keeping shoulders over elbows. Tighten arms, lats, abs and thighs, and keep hips flat and at shoulder level.

*Time:* 60 seconds – 15 seconds on, 15 seconds of rest, two reps.

*Beginner tip:* To make it easier, start on your knees with hips flat.

*Troubleshoot:* Avoid hunching your back. Keep your hips even with your shoulders.

*Bonus benefit:* Also stimulates the metabolism and heart rate to burn more calories.

### **2. Cobra**

*Target muscles:* Upper, middle and lower back

*Get ready:* Lie face down, palms down on floor under your shoulders, elbows along ribs.

*Go:* With chin tucked, contract your upper, middle and lower back, and your glutes and thighs, to pull your chest, head and hands off the floor. Keep your shoulder blades pinched and your feet on the floor.

*Time:* 60 seconds – 15 seconds on, 15 seconds of rest, two reps

*Troubleshoot:* To protect your lower back, squeeze your legs and glutes more and don't lift up as high.

*Bonus benefit:* The back muscles are an integral part of ab training because they act as stabilizers.

### **3. Seated knee tuck**

*Target muscles:* Upper and lower abs

*Get ready:* Sit on the floor, arms out to the side slightly behind you, palms on the floor, knees to chest, feet off the floor, abs contracted, chin slightly tucked.

*Time:* 60 seconds – 3 seconds down, three seconds up, 10 reps

*Beginner tip:* To make it easier, don't lower your upper and lower body down as far.

*Troubleshoot:* To protect a sensitive lower back, bend your knees more.

*Bonus benefit:* Stimulates the metabolism and heart rate to burn more calories and build more lean muscle

### **4. Rest**

*Time:* 60 seconds

Your CHB Sports Certified Personal Trainers are happy to be of assistance with any of the above exercises.