

Health Topic of the Month

December 2011

Pre-Christmas Belly Buster

We all know that over Christmas no matter how good we are, we always seem to put on at least a stone around our normally trim muffin top middles!

The Fitness Team at St Michael's have come up with the ultimate **Pre-Christmas Core Bulge Buster** so you can still enjoy your Christmas without piling on the pounds.

Let's be honest we all tend to taper off with our training on the run up to Christmas, it's easy, it's the end of the year, you can start again in January and let's face it you've got all that Christmas shopping to do – there are plenty of excuses to distract us from the gym.

What would it be like if came 3rd January you are only 2lb heavier having eaten everything you wanted to over Christmas? Well, call us mad but we think we can do this for you.

Follow our 5 step plan to beat the January belly blues...

STEP ONE: Intervals

You don't have to slug it out on the treadmill for 45 minutes. Instead keep your cardio short and sharp to kick start your metabolism. Just 10 minutes on the rower is all you need.

As you reach every minute sprint for 30 seconds and keep on going until the big TEN! A great way to reduce the calorie count low and keep those pounds at bay.



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STEP TWO: Press Ups – “old is gold” an awesome classic exercise working major muscle groups.

Complete sets to failure, ensuring correct form is essential. Great for your core, chest, arms and shoulders.



Use medicine balls and swiss balls to give your press ups some variety!

STEP THREE: Squats – One of the toughies but we can't neglect the largest muscles in our body, therefore they are the biggest calorie burners, so get squatting people!

A great compound exercise that incorporates all stabilising and secondary muscle groups. Try squatting for 30 seconds at a time with a 10 second rest.

For extra weight/resistance try grabbing hold of whatever you can get your hands on, whether it be a rucksack filled with goodies or grab hold of a Christmas pud!



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STEP FOUR: Lunges - Want to get that tight derrière for New Year, then lunges are for you!

Make sure you have a firm base of support, ensuring your legs aren't too far apart to avoid any instability.

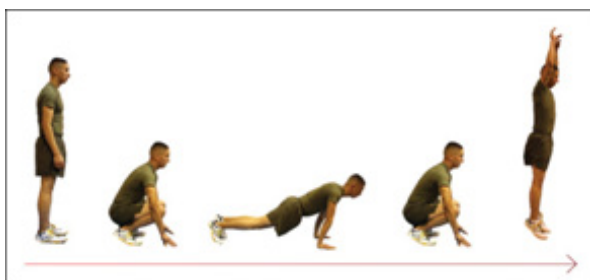
Force all your power through your leading leg and keep your trailing foot on its toes, keep your torso straight and engage that core. 3-4 seconds on the lowering phase to really engage the muscles in your hamstrings and bum then 1 second back up.



Try 12 – 15 reps on each leg

STEP FIVE: Burpee Tuck Jump – The final burn, which incorporates all the exercises you have just completed.

Start off in the press up position, bring your knees underneath your chest and jump straight up, during this phase, again, and bring your knees up so you are in a tuck position, then land back on your feet. A really intense way to finish off your workout.



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OUR TOP TIP: The longest workouts aren't necessarily the best. In just **20 minutes** you can have an effective workout, intensity is key.

This can be achieved by reducing rest periods, changing the order of the exercises or completing more reps and sets.

Treat the plan as a circuit, where you must do each exercise for 30 seconds before you move on to the next without any rest.

Rest for a minute then complete 3 more circuits following the same pattern.

Before long you'll be burning those calories, kick starting your metabolism into 2012!

