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Staying sleek in summer means finding a reasonable workout plan

Yvette Craddock
Special for The Republic
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Temperatures are rising, and whether you choose to stay cool by the pool or head to the beach for some fun in the sun, one thing is certain: swimsuit season has arrived.

Skimpy suits and unforgiving summer fashions have many of us checking out our soon-to-be-bared waists. Forget the crash diets and the fad weight loss programs. The following tips will accelerate your long-term fitness goals and move you one step closer to your ultimate beach body.

- Don't go hungry. The #1 mistake that people make when they want to squeeze into a bathing suit is to stop eating. Starving yourself and crash dieting can be dangerous. Eat five to six well-balanced, smaller meals per day and replace unhealthy snacks with healthy alternatives. Since nutrition is 80% of the summer sleek equation, opt for fresh fruits, veggies, chicken and fish to get fast, safe and effective results.

- Add weight to your workout, not your waistline. Weightlifting tones problem areas and adds definition. Because muscle burns calories, the more you build, the more you'll burn. Keep in mind that building muscle is not synonymous with building bulk. And remember that technique is more important than the amount of weight you lift.

- Amp up your cardio. Running, swimming, brisk walking, biking, spinning, dancing, jumping rope, whatever your routine, increase your cardio to at least 30-45 minutes, five days a week.

- Change it up. Varying the intensity and makeup of your workout will work different muscle groups and help generate results. Working multiple body parts at once, i.e. walking lunges with weights, will amp up your total body transformation in less time.



Yvette Craddock

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• **Stretch and Breathe.** It is vital to warm up and then stretch. Warm muscles are more pliable and are not prone to injuries. Take time to stretch before and after each workout. During your workouts, remember to breathe. Taking deep breaths will aid your body in delivering the oxygen it needs to sustain your workout.

• **Stay hydrated.** Drink half your body weight in ounces of water per day. So, if you weigh 150 pounds, drink 75 ounces of water a day to keep your metabolism up and help combat cravings. Take water with you wherever you go to prevent dehydration.

• **Bring a cheerleader.** Team up with a friend to keep you committed, or hire a personal trainer for direction and motivation. Nothing fuels a workout like a little encouragement. Go for it!

• **Reward yourself.** For each milestone you reach, treat yourself.

Yvette Craddock is the managing member of Click Marketing Solutions (www.click-marketing.net). Her column is written with professionals at Gold's Gym. Contact any of five Valley locations at 1-888-GOLDS-15 or www.goldsgym.com.

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