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AB MYTHS AND MAGIC

PHOTOS BY JEFFREY DEAN

workout » "I train my abs every day, but I don't seem to be making any progress" That's a lament personal trainer Brad Schoenfeld, C.S.C.S., has heard many times. To set the record straight, he points out that because abs work just like all other muscles, they need at least 48 hours rest between training sessions.

"Muscle tissue is actually broken down while working out," says Schoenfeld. "It's during rest when your body begins to repair this damaged tissue, fueling the acquisition of muscle tone."

So, how else can you get a fabulous, flat stomach? "Strip away the fat," he says. Schoenfeld recommends a healthy diet, regular cardio exercise and weight training for all your muscles.

For an effective, time-efficient ab routine, Schoenfeld, author of *Look Great Naked Diet* (Avery, 2003) and other books, recommends these exercises three times per week:

**SIDE JACKKNIFE**

Lie on your left side, feet together. Make a fist with your right hand and press it to your ear. Contracting your obliques, simultaneously raise your right leg and torso toward each other as far as possible. Slowly return to the starting position. Do 15 to 20 repetitions on each side.

Do 3 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions of each exercise. Exhale on the first part of each move and inhale while returning to the starting position.

REVERSE CURL

Lie on the floor, hands by your sides, legs raised at a 90-degree angle. Contracting your abs, raise your butt as high as possible, keeping your upper back pressed to the floor. Slowly return to the starting position.

**CRUNCH**

Lie on your back, knees bent, feet on the floor, hands folded on your chest. Contract your abs, raising shoulders toward your chest; return to the starting position.

**TOE TOUCH**

Lie flat on your back with arms and legs straight up. Contracting your abs, slowly curl your torso up and forward, raising your hands toward your toes; return to the starting position.



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