

# The Record HEALTH

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## ON A ROLL IN SIN CITY

Joshua "Chop" Towbin is one entertaining car dealer.

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# A bikini regimen

## Options abound to get bodies in bathing-suit-wearing shape

By CATHERINE HOLAHAN  
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The weather is warming, and your bathing suit has begun taunting you. Do you hear it?

"I am the hip-hugging, booty-clinging, body-sucking judge of how well you kept your New Year's fitness resolutions," it shouts from beneath piles of shorts and summer T-shirts. "I dare you to try me on."

But if the view in the mirror is a little more rotund than you'd hoped, don't bury the suit back in the drawer or go on that last-minute, health-wrecking starvation diet. There are several fast ways to tone up that tummy by summer.

### Shake off the salt

The recommended daily dose of salt is roughly 2.5 grams. The average American has more than twice that amount, says Susan Burke, chief nutritionist of Edicts.com. Too much salt makes the body retain excess water, causing it to look bloated. It also increases the risk of high blood pressure.

"It is very easy to eat too much sodium if you are eating fast food, or potato chips, or pretzels or even breakfast cereals," Burke explains. "A lot of flavor enhancers are full of sodium. A lot of spices have salt in them. Things that are preserved have a lot of salt."

Burke recommends cutting down on salt by consuming lots of fruits and vegetables and avoiding anything out of a can.

"If you really want to lose that excess blood, go to a natural food plan for five days," she says. "You might even lose five pounds."

### Change the carbs

Health experts disagree over whether carbs are the enemy. Some say that cutting out all the carbohydrates sacrifice too many needed nutrients. They do agree, however, that getting carbs from whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables is preferable to filling up on processed flours.

"Instead of pasta, get your carbs from broccoli and apples," says Mia St. John, a professional female boxer with her own fitness video "Million Dollar Workout." St. John says that's what boxers do when they need to

lose pounds quickly for a weigh-in.

### Hydrate, lose weight

If you don't drink enough water (remember, eight 8-ounce glasses a day) your body combats dehydration by retaining excess water — sometimes many pounds of it. So drinking water actually helps the body get rid of water.

"Water is a diuretic," Burke says, adding that several servings of H<sub>2</sub>O help to flush out harmful toxins. In addition, water is a natural appetite suppressant.

### Make sure to sweat

When people have several months to get beach-ready, St. John suggests combining calorie-burning cardio workouts

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## Bikini

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muscle building exercises that gradually increase the body's ability to burn off excess energy when not at the gym.

But to slim down quickly, St. John recommends a regimen of high-energy, sweat-inducing cardio. That way, "you are burning calories, and you are losing water weight."

To decrease water weight gain, St. John says she applies Albolene cleanser. The mineral oil-based product opens pores, causing the body to sweat more quickly and easily.

### Stand up straight

Not only does slouching make the belly protrude, Burke says, but it gives the core muscles an undesired break. Standing erect, with the stomach held in, encourages the abs to work and "can make you look slimmer naturally," Burke says.

### If all else fails ...

When long-term healthy-eating plans and regular exercise regimens have failed to ban bulge,

some doctors recommend cosmetic procedures to quickly get the body beach-ready.

Dr. Mitchell Chasin, the medical director of Reflections Centers for Skin & Body in Bridgewater and Livingston, says cells can be encouraged to release fat by mesotherapy — a procedure that micro-injects vitamins, homeopathic medicines and other chemicals into fat layers under the skin. The cost is typically between \$300 and \$500 per session, and it takes several sessions to clearly see an effect, Chasin says.

Less-invasive alternatives include the DermaWave and Vela Smooth systems, Chasin says. The former is like mesotherapy but uses electrical waveforms to deliver the chemicals; the latter employs infrared energy and radio frequencies to help break up bands of cellulite, Chasin says.

Because several treatments are often needed, costs can reach into the thousands for either procedure.

Still, the effectiveness and safety of such treatments is unproven, and even Chasin doesn't believe they're a cure-all.

"A diet low in saturated fat and unnecessary carbohydrates should always be the mainstay for being trim and losing weight," he says. "The aesthetic procedures should always be a complement to your changes in lifestyle."

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