BURN THE FAT

Transform Your Body Forever Using the Secrets of the Leanest People in the World

FEED THE MUSCLE

TOM VENUTO
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PREFACE

My Story: From Fat Boy to Fat-Loss Expert

I wasn’t always a bestselling author, personal trainer, and fat-loss expert, getting written up in *Men’s Fitness* and *O, The Oprah Magazine*. I certainly wasn’t winning bodybuilding contests or doing photo shoots. All that came much later. At first, I simply had to be honest with myself. I was getting chubby. I was never obese, but I do know what it feels like to hate my body and be paralyzed with self-consciousness.

When I was a 14-year-old freshman in high school, that’s when it hit me: I had a roll of fat around my waist and what I thought was the worst affliction a warm-blooded male teenager could have—“man boobs.” I dreaded taking my shirt off for swimming class, and when we played basketball in gym, I prayed I’d be called to play for “shirts,” not “skins,” so nobody would see my “moobs” and ab flab jiggling up and down the court.

That same year, I watched a movie called *Conan the Barbarian*, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. The moment I saw Arnold on the big screen, my whole world stopped. I stared, frozen in awe. I had seen cartoons and superhero characters with that kind of body, but I couldn’t believe a real human being could look like that: He had gladiator pecs with slabs of muscle inches thick, shoulders like cannonballs, the V-shaped back tapering down to the tiny waistline, chiseled six-pack abs, and the arms—they were the most mind-blowing of all—huge, sinewy, and rock hard, with biceps like mountain peaks. It was the most awesome physique I’d ever seen. That was the moment I knew I wanted muscles.
The next day at the newsstand, I picked up a magazine that had a cover photo of Arnold as Conan, slathered in warpaint, gripping a sword, biceps bulging. I thumbed through the pages and was blown away a second time. The magazine was filled with pictures of dozens of men who looked a lot like Arnold, and women who looked like “warrior goddesses” straight out of the fantasy novels. None of the bodies in that *Muscle and Fitness* magazine seemed to have an ounce of fat on them.

When I saw an ad for Arnold’s book *Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder*, I bought it on the spot and devoured it in a day. It was part autobiography, part training manual, and I started doing the workouts from the back of the book. The first program consisted of body weight, or what Arnold called “freehand” exercises. I did it for a month but got bored very quickly. He emphasized that these were not sissy exercises, and anyone who has tried a body weight pull-up the first time knows it’s true. But I wanted to do what Arnold did—pump iron—so I moved on to the “real workouts”—the ones with barbells and dumbbells in the chapter called “Progressive Resistance Weight Training.”

From the first workout, I was hooked. If you wanted to stop me from training, you’d have had to pry the barbell out of my cold, dead hands. I kept after it. By my senior year in high school I didn’t look anything like Arnold, but I had put on about 25 pounds of muscle. I was stronger and I did look a lot better. But I didn’t have it right yet. I had been building up the muscle, but the whole burning-fat part eluded me.

After four years of lifting weights, my abs were still hidden underneath my belly fat. I still couldn’t take my shirt off in public without feeling self-conscious. Maybe you can relate to this feeling. You’ve worked hard for a long time, maybe years, but still feel trapped inside a body that’s not doing what you want, no matter what you try. You think your frustration just can’t get any worse. Well, mine did.

It happened when I went to college... and discovered beer. Combined with late-night pizza, cheese fries, and Stromboli, plus hungover Sunday morning binges on syrup-smothered pancakes, I quickly gained the classic “freshman 15” (for me, it was more like 20). I was now 45 pounds heavier than I was when I started high school, so I was no pipsqueak, but believe me, it wasn’t all muscle. I was what you’d call “bulked up.” My college roommates even had a nickname for me: “Bob’s Big
Boy,” after the fast food restaurant’s chubby mascot. Sometimes they just called me “Fat Boy.”

I took the taunting quietly and laughed along with them, but deep down I was humiliated because I was a die-hard bodybuilding fan and self-proclaimed “muscle guy,” but I had a beer belly to go with my biceps. What made matters worse was that I’d declared my major in exercise science. I was in college, planning for a career in fitness after graduation, but my behavior and physical condition were incongruent with my goals. I felt like a hypocrite.

I knew at that point I had to do something. Fortunately, I never stopped lifting weights. Even with one foot in the college party lifestyle, I still kept the other in the gym. My friends at the gym always supported me and told me exactly what to do: Enter a bodybuilding contest for motivation. Why not? I had already built the foundation of muscle underneath the fat. I’d thought about competing before and prattled on about doing it all the time. But up until then I was all talk and no walk. The only title I had won was “Mr. Procrastinator.”

Something had to give, or I would be the laughing stock of my gym as well as the clients I would soon be training. It wasn’t until my gym buddies challenged me to stop talking and commit to training for a contest that everything started to change. I finally got serious about figuring out what these guys were doing right. They certainly were doing something to get lean and ripped that I wasn’t doing.

I read everything I could get my hands on about competition prep and picked the brain of every bodybuilder I met. My training partners and gym friends who had already competed taught me their unique “bodybuilder’s diet” that they used to strip off all the fat, right down to the six-pack abs—just like the models in the magazines. I paid attention, I listened, and I took action.

I started working out and eating in a certain way, and it quickly became clear that I was onto something. “Contest training” was by far the most effective program I had ever followed. My body was changing faster than ever and the belly fat seemed to melt away by the day.

I came to some realizations about my past mistakes. First, I knew I’d been missing a major piece of the puzzle. It’s not enough to work out; you have to get the nutrition right. That’s the most important element. The cliché “You can’t out-train a bad diet” is absolutely true. When I added the proper nutrition on top of the
right training, the magic started happening. Second, I realized the importance of having a goal and an emotional reason why you absolutely must achieve that goal.

This combination of nutrition and training with a motivating goal worked so well that I not only got second place in my first competition, I did better every time I stepped onstage. I won my weight class in my second competition and I won the overall title in my third. I captured the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York state championships and then went on to regional competition, winning the mid-Atlantic states and my weight class at the Natural Eastern Classic. I went as far as runner-up at the Natural Mr. America and Natural North America. All of these competitions were drug tested and I reached contest condition 100 percent drug-free.

Beer belly? Gone. Moobs? Nowhere in sight. I traded the six-packs of beer for six-pack abs. I was not only ripped for the first time in my life (finally!), my abs were on the front page of the sports section in our small-town newspaper! It wasn’t long before I was in the magazines.

Maybe you’ve seen that old Charles Atlas ad where the skinny kid gets sand kicked in his face by a muscle-bound bully, then gets in shape and beats up the bully? That’s kind of how it felt. It felt like redemption. It was like getting to tell the world, “Hey, remember that kid from gym class with the man boobs? Well, take a look at this!” I’m not saying any of this was easy. I’m saying it was worth it.

I’m also not telling you this story to brag or hold myself up as some kind of “poster boy.” Quite the opposite. For years I’ve been an under-the-radar kind of coach and athlete, who doesn’t care much about being in the limelight. I get more satisfaction from making fitness stars out of my clients and readers. There are literally thousands of my client’s stories that are more inspiring than mine . . . stories from ordinary men and women who have no interest in entering a bodybuilding contest, yet use this same “bodybuilder science” to achieve their own personal goals, with massive success.

I’ve always loved seeing other people succeed, so immediately after graduating, armed with a degree, two certifications, and eight years of experience training myself, I dove headfirst into my career training others. I worked with hundreds of men and women one-on-one in the gym. Even though I was a trainer, not a nutritionist, my appreciation for the nutrition element in the fat-loss equation continued to grow when I saw how two clients followed the same workout but one got
better results than the other. None of them were slackers. My clients trained their butts off. The difference was what they did when they left the gym. Some of them controlled what they ate and drank and some of them didn’t.

When I realized that my clients’ diets were making or breaking the results of our workouts, I knew I had to give them guidance about what to eat. Left to their own devices, who knows what they would have done? They might have followed one of those weird weight-loss gimmicks they saw in the tabloids or on TV. They might have resorted to diet pills. Or they might have done it right, all week long, only to undo it in one weekend binge. The first thing that popped into my mind was, “Why don’t I show them how I do it?” I was working in mainstream health clubs, so very few of my clients were bodybuilders. But I figured if I could go from a “fat boy” chugging six-packs of beer to a bodybuilder with six-pack abs, why wouldn’t the same system work for my clients?

Put simply, if you want to learn how to get really lean, who better to learn from than the leanest people in the world? So I decided to share the secrets. I wrote down my fat-burning formula and gave it to my clients. It worked like magic! For all of them! Men and women. From soccer moms to stockbrokers. From twenty-somethings to retirees.

As I kept teaching my method to my personal training clients, I also launched a coaching program for people who wanted more intensive nutrition guidance, combined with the accountability of a personal motivation coach. After 600 clients completed my 12-week coaching program, I had it down to a science. I realized that as long as the nutrition was customized for each individual, it would work for almost anyone to achieve any goal, whether that was burning the last few pounds of stubborn fat or overcoming serious obesity, from just “firming up” to “ripping up,” from brides shaping up for weddings to guys chiseling down for the beach.

By this point, I had amassed an incredible amount of real-world data from all kinds of people. I had also developed a food and nutrition manual to give to all my training clients. One day when I was printing out the manual for a client consultation, it occurred to me that if I added a few more pieces of vital information, I would have my entire coaching system transferred into book form. I went to work, and with some late nights and a lot of strong coffee, in a few months I held the first-ever copy of Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle.
BURN THE FAT, FEED THE MUSCLE

It was 2003. It had taken me nearly 14 years of trial, error, research, and experimentation to put the system together. I had already used it to help hundreds of clients transform their bodies, one person at a time. I had also written a mission statement for myself:

I will coach and inspire as many people as possible to strengthen and transform their bodies and reach all their health and fitness goals, the natural way.

To be true to my mission, I had to ask myself, “How can I help more people?” It didn’t take long to find an answer. A colleague told me that getting a publisher was “almost impossible” when you’re an unknown personal trainer. So he self-published his books and made them available on the Internet for instant downloads. I said, “Wait a minute. You mean I don’t have to print these or haul them to the post office? And people can download this in any country? And my readers don’t have to wait—they get the books instantly? And I can do it all myself?”

He said, “Yes.” I said, “Say no more.” I became an Internet publisher too. I put up a new website, started an e-mail newsletter, and made Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle available as an e-book.

Back then, most people didn’t even know what e-books were. They said no one would pay for a download; information on the Internet is free. They laughed at me. But like the critics who told me I’d never make it as a bodybuilder without taking steroids, I ignored them and did it anyway.

The original Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle became an online sensation. It debuted at number one on the fitness e-book charts and stayed there for five years straight, a record that still stands to this day. The book reached customers in 154 countries and built a huge online community. It pioneered the entire fitness e-book industry, which exploded in the next decade. Many other successful authors followed. People went from calling me a fool to calling me the father of fitness e-books.

I could have stopped there and retired or kept chugging along quietly online, but my mission statement, tacked onto my office bulletin board, kept staring me in the face every day. Again I asked, “How can I help more people?” At this point, I was no longer an unknown. Millions of people had visited my website and a quar-
ter of a million were subscribed to my newsletter. Now agents and publishers were knocking on my door. When the offer came to put *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* into a print edition, I had my answer.

This brand-new edition is revised and improved. If the original had any kinks, they’ve been straightened out. If parts fell out of date, they’ve been updated. If anything was overcomplicated, it’s been simplified. This book contains new material and new workout plans never before published. The flagship training program is called The New Body 28 (TNB-28). The original TNB was beta tested and fine-tuned for three years by my inner circle members. The schedule fits a busy lifestyle so well, and the results were so astonishing, it became the most popular and talked-about workout I ever created.

TNB-28 is the latest evolution of the plan. The new workout has been perfected and is now available to you in Chapters 16 and 17 of this book, with extra tools and exercise guides available for free on the website at www.BurnTheFatFeedTheMuscle.com.

Although *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* retains every effective core principle of the original, it has been reengineered so that even more people can now easily make the *Burn the Fat* eating principles a part of their lifestyles. In the past, the bodybuilding style of eating was acknowledged as most powerful and effective system in the world for burning fat and building muscle. But it was also known for being strict, even dogmatic. Not anymore. This is the next generation of fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition.

The new *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* is structured and flexible at the same time. You can customize it to fit your schedule, your tastes and your lifestyle. You can customize your mealtimes, number of meals, type of foods and even the amount of carbs. No foods are off-limits; you can eat anything you want, if you follow a few reasonable guidelines you’ll learn in the nutrition part of the book.

There are four elements to the plan—nutrition, cardio training, weight training, and mental training—and all four of them can be customized and fine-tuned week by week to help you reach your goals. Whether you want to burn 10 pounds, 20 pounds, or 100 pounds, whether you want to build muscle or just look “toned,” this program is for you. It’s not about becoming a bodybuilder, it’s about using the
“bodybuilder’s secrets” to reach your own personal goals. It’s about developing the leanest you, the fittest you, the best you.

Almost everyone is missing at least one piece of the puzzle, and that’s what holds them back. If you’ve never put all four elements together before, then do it with all you’ve got for the next 28 days. You’ll be in the best shape of your life and you’ll be on the road to even bigger—and permanent—changes as you make this plan a part of your long-term lifestyle.

When you look back at the origins of this program, you could say that Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle was 30 years in the making and 20 years in the perfecting. You have in your hands one of the most tested and proven fat-burning systems ever created. It’s the original bible of fat loss for hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. I hope this brand-new edition of a fat-loss classic becomes your health and fitness bible as well.
PART I

PHILOSOPHY
CHAPTER 1

Fat-Burning Secrets of the Leanest People in the World

“If you want to know about fat loss or muscle building, ask top level bodybuilders. These guys know it. In other words, quit buying fat-loss devices off of late night TV ads, quit buying fat-loss stuff that grandma tried when her cribbage partner mentioned it, and quit trying fad diets. Instead, listen to the best of the best.”

—Dan John, strength coach and author of Never Let Go: A Philosophy of Lifting, Living and Learning

Life is short, time is precious, and you are busy. You don’t have hours to waste and you want results as quickly as possible. So what’s the fastest way to burn fat and get in great shape? Simple: Model yourself after an expert. Any time you attempt something new, there’s a learning curve, but if you have the right coach, you can bypass years of trial, error, and frustration. The big question is, with all the noise in the diet and fitness world today, how do you choose your mentors? Who should you listen to? What sources can you trust?

Let me suggest the same strategy to you that I’ve put to use for my personal training and coaching clients for years: If you want to shed fat and build lean muscle, learn from the leanest, best-built people in the world—bodybuilders. Why? Again, it’s simple: Bodybuilders and other physique athletes (figure, fitness, fitness model, and bikini competitors) are the world’s greatest experts in the art and science of body transformation.
Athletes in physique sports do things differently from—sometimes the exact opposite of—everyone else. Here's just a taste of what this program will reveal about their methods.

1. **Physique athletes don’t diet—not in the conventional sense.** Diets don’t work; you’ll find out why in the next chapter. In fact, bodybuilders are well-known for how much food they eat. It doesn’t seem possible that you can “eat more and burn more,” but on this plan, you really can.

2. **Physique athletes are masters at stripping off the last 10 to 15 pounds of stubborn fat.** Most people get stuck on those final pounds, but this method can strip off all the fat—all the way to six-pack abs. You may not want to get so lean that people say, “Wow, you are ripped!” But if you do, this is how it’s done.

3. **Physique athletes don’t lose muscle.** What good is it to lose weight if half of it is lean body mass? If you want to lose 20 pounds as fast as possible, we could saw off one of your legs. That sounds ridiculous, but it’s exactly what most people are doing with crazy starvation diets: burning off their own muscle. Follow this plan and you won’t just lose weight, you’ll burn fat, keep muscle, and completely transform your body.

4. **Physique athletes know how to break plateaus.** By tracking body composition (instead of only body weight), charting progress, and using a performance feedback loop system, you can break any plateau. You’ll know when you’re stuck and what to do to get “unstuck.”

5. **Physique athletes (and fitness models) have to show up in shape on a specific date.** If you use their system, you can “dial it in” whenever you want to get in peak shape—for a vacation, a reunion, a wedding, a whole summer, a body transformation contest, or even your own photo shoot. You can get as lean as you want, *when you want*. You’ll be in complete control of the timing and speed of your results.

I could go on and on about the unique tactics that bodybuilders use: nutrient timing, carb cycling, modified low-carb diets, protein optimization, hydration
strategies, macronutrient tweaks that no one else talks about—not to mention the unique training style designed to make you stronger and healthier and look great naked at the same time. But we’ll get to these topics soon enough.

For now, it’s sufficient to know that Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is a health and fitness philosophy that has been quietly tested and proven in the bodybuilding and physique world for decades. These are the secrets of the leanest people in the world. Until now the only place you could get this kind of information is if you were one of my personal clients, if you are a member of my inner circle, or you had your own coach who was privy to the physique athlete style of nutrition and training. Now I can be your coach through this book.

It’s important to know that this book was written by a bodybuilder, but it’s not just for bodybuilders. Think of using this program as simply “stealing” some of their secrets to help you achieve your own personal goals. I do work with physique competitors, and the advanced acceleration strategies in the final chapters of this book can be used to go all the way to competition-stage or photo-shoot shape. But this book is for any man or woman who wants to shed fat, get lean, and transform their body without losing muscle and without starvation, drugs, or diet gimmicks.

Most people don’t want to be bodybuilders. But let me bounce an idea off of you. Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is not about dieting your body down as much as it’s about building your body up. When you follow this program, you’ll build strength, health, energy, discipline, and self-confidence, not to mention lean muscle. I always believed that anyone who lifts weights and feeds their body nutritionally could call themselves a “bodybuilder.”

So after you start the program, why not try that and say, “I am a bodybuilder.” Or say something similar that resonates with you more, like “I am a body sculptor,” “I am a strength athlete,” or “I am a fitness athlete.” You may not look or feel like one yet, but when you affirm it, you’ll get there faster. It’s miraculous how the words you use to describe yourself can shape your identity, change your self-image, and, in turn, change your behavior. You’ll learn more about the psychology of affirmations in Chapter 6. It really is amazing!
WHY THIS IS THE MOST UNIQUE AND EFFECTIVE FAT-LOSS AND BODY-TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM IN THE WORLD

Before you dive into the program, I want to give you a quick overview of the Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle principles. I’ll explain the ten most important ways this program is unique, and why I believe this is the most powerful fat-loss and body-transformation system ever developed. This will give you the big picture, and I hope it gets you even more excited about the journey you’re about to begin.

1. **Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is not a weight-loss program, it’s a fat-loss program.**

Weight loss and fat loss are not the same thing. The scale can be misleading if it’s the only way you measure your progress, because the scale doesn’t tell you the difference between fat weight and muscle weight. For example, a woman could weigh 110 pounds but have 33 percent body fat. That’s what you call a “skinny fat person.” On the other hand, a well-trained female athlete could weigh 150 pounds and be very lean, with 16 percent body fat. That’s what you call “solid muscle.”

What matters most is your ratio of muscle to fat—your body composition. With this distinction in mind, losing weight should not be your only goal. Your main focus should be burning the fat and keeping the muscle. As long as your body is mostly muscle, then you shouldn’t worry so much about your total body weight. Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle will teach you how to measure your body fat and use body composition to track your progress. You’ll learn how to get results as fast as possible, but you’ll also be reminded that there’s a world of difference between rapid weight loss and permanent fat loss.

2. **Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is not a diet, it’s a nutrition program.**

Crash diets are tempting because they can produce quick weight loss, at least in the beginning. The problem is, when you cut calories too much, or banish entire food groups, you may not get enough vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, or fiber. Reduce your carbohydrates too much, and your energy level takes a nose-dive. If you fall short on protein, you could lose lean body mass, which slows your
metabolism and makes you softer and weaker. You might weigh less and fit into a smaller size, but your body still looks flabby.

Even if you grit your teeth and willpower your way through an extreme diet for a few months, the consequences outweigh the benefits. Deprivation diets make you lethargic, hungry, and miserable. You can’t stay on them forever, so the weight loss rarely lasts. As you read this book, you’ll discover that if you eat the right foods, you can actually eat more and nourish your body with all the nutrients it needs. You’ll not only burn fat faster and keep it off, you’ll also get healthier and feel more energized at the same time.

3. *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* is not about nutrition or training; it’s about both.

You’ll lose weight on any diet with a calorie deficit, but when you add training, you’ll burn more fat without slowing down your metabolism or losing muscle. Putting training and nutrition together is the difference between transforming your body and simply losing weight. Research has also proven that exercise is critical for long-term weight maintenance. You might take the fat off with dieting alone, but you’ll have a hard time keeping it off.

When you make training a part of your lifestyle, you can eat more and still have the caloric deficit you need to burn fat. And when your training includes lifting weights, not just cardio, more of what you eat is partitioned into muscle. Don’t starve the fat with diets: *Burn the fat* with training and *feed the muscle* with nutrition.

4. *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* is not only about looking better but also about becoming healthier.

The nutrition and training guidelines I give for transforming your body are the same simple lifestyle changes I recommend for good health. If you want to look like a fitness model, get ripped, or peak for a photo shoot, a stricter and more sophisticated plan may be necessary. I explain how to ramp up your training and tighten up your nutrition to accelerate fat loss in the last part of the book. But after a special peaking event is over, you return to the same balanced lifestyle plan.
BURN THE FAT, FEED THE MUSCLE

There’s nothing wrong with training harder and using stricter diets to pursue extreme leanness at times. And there’s nothing wrong with setting purely cosmetic (“vanity”) goals. But there’s more to *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* than getting super lean. You’re going to be setting a lot of goals in this program. To keep yourself in balance, make sure you set goals for looking great and getting healthier. This means following sensible nutrition and training practices, as well as avoiding drugs or potentially harmful diet pills. It means 100 percent natural!

5. *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is a lifestyle, not a quick fix.*

The word “diet” comes from the Latin *diaeta*, meaning “way of life.” Today, however, I think the word “diet” carries too much negative baggage to use so loosely. The way I define it, a diet is any temporary change in your eating behavior to try to lose weight. When you say you’re going on a diet, you’re implying that at some point you’re going off it.

*Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* is not something you go on and off; it’s a lifestyle. The only way you’ll get lean and stay lean is to choose new behaviors, develop new habits, and maintain them for life. You’ll need a calorie deficit during your fat-loss phase, but the rest of your nutrition will be similar all year round, regardless of whether your goal is burning, building, or maintaining.

This program is not a quick fix. But you will get results quickly. If you’ve never used a program like this before—one that covers all bases—and if you diligently put into action all four elements of the plan at the same time, you will see incredible results in the first 28 days. You will lose pure fat, not just weight, you will transform your body shape and you will already have new habits established that will keep you lean for life.

6. *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is based on science and experience, not one or the other.*

Most scientists live by the credo “Prove all things.” That’s good advice for the rest of us, too, especially when we’re evaluating claims that seem too good to be true. Science and critical thinking are important tools for helping us design our fitness
programs, sort through information overload, and avoid being taken by charlatans and con artists.

However, being so scientific and skeptical that you trust studies over your own experience can be hazardous to your progress. That’s why this book is based on both science and real-world results. We should never deny or ignore the results of well-performed research. We should never dismiss the results of our own experience, either, when results are the one thing that counts the most. At some point in your journey, you have to start experimenting, measuring progress, and drawing conclusions based on your own results.

Some of the nutrition and training methods used by bodybuilders are controversial, and throughout this book I’ll be sure to point that out wherever that’s the case. Research results may be conflicting or there’s not much evidence either way. But if you wait for enough studies to validate every nutrition and training technique that has already been proven effective out in the trenches, you could be waiting a long time. When it comes to body transformation, physique athletes are often ahead of the science, and the results they’ve achieved prove it.

7. Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is simple, but it’s not easy.

Burning fat is simple, but that doesn’t mean it’s easy. “Simple” means uncomplicated. “Easy” implies little or no effort. Losing weight is a simple matter of achieving a calorie deficit. There’s nothing complicated about that. But balancing energy in and energy out in a modern, sedentary, temptation-filled environment is easier said than done.

Fat loss isn’t always easy. Most diet experts won’t admit it, because “effortless and overnight” is marketable. “Hard work” scares people away. But hard work is the only way anyone accomplishes great things. Everything worth having in life has a price attached to it. Legendary Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi put it best when he said, “The dictionary is the only place success comes before work. Hard work is the price we must all pay for success.”
8. *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* pursues the truth, not the fads.

I launched my first website in 1999. Since then I’ve shared my hard work and no-gimmicks philosophy with millions of visitors. To this day, my *Burn the Fat* websites and social communities are still growing. That kind of longevity not only requires results, it also requires honesty. I make my living from the health-and-fitness business, but I will go broke and starve to death before I “sell out” or compromise my values. Believe me, I’ve had no shortage of opportunity. Let me tell you a quick story.

Years ago, the editor of a major fitness magazine contacted me with a proposition. He was so impressed with my online articles that he wanted to hire me. He offered me $1,000 to interview some of the top supplement gurus, including the CEO of one of the largest nutrition companies in the world. My assignment was to write a two-page article about the latest developments with a popular but controversial product. A thousand bucks is temptingly good pay for one short article, but then he threw in the catch: Because of his magazine’s relationship with the supplement company, he told me I couldn’t write anything bad about the product. In fact, I had to put a “positive spin” on it. I turned it down. It went against everything I believed in about truth and objectivity.

By selectively quoting research, magazines can promote a new diet pill or exercise fad every month and make it look like a breakthrough every time. By putting product information into articles, the claims sound more legitimate, and the advertisements feed off the articles. That makes magazines—online or in print—the perfect vehicles for selling supplements. Publishers see it as the ultimate business model. I see it as a conflict of interest. That’s why, years ago, I made a public pledge that I would never go into the supplement business or use my books or websites to sell them.

As you read *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle*, you can rest assured that there’s no hidden agenda. I’m not here to sell you magic weight-loss potions or the latest training trend; I’m here to sell you on getting strong, healthy, and fit.
9. **Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is about real food, not supplements.**

It’s tempting to think that all you need to solve a body fat problem is a fat-burning pill or diet drink. The supplement companies certainly want you to believe that. The truth is that training and good nutrition from whole foods are all you’ll ever need. Protein shakes and meal replacement products are sometimes helpful, but they have no magical fat-reducing properties. They’re essentially just powdered food.

The majority of so-called fat-burning products available over-the-counter are worthless and have no scientific evidence validating their use. Pills that rely on stimulants, thermogenics, or appetite suppressants might help a little, but they aren’t as effective as many advertisements claim, and there are potential dangers if they’re abused.

Most people want overnight health cures and fat-loss miracles. But those are fantasies. If there really were a magic pill that burned off fat without work, there wouldn’t be millions of overweight people in the world today. If you want to see a real miracle, try training hard and eating real food consistently for a few months. The sooner you accept this reality, the sooner you’ll be the proud owner of a lean body.

10. **Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is custom-tailored, not one-size-fits-all.**

Some nutrition laws are universal: They apply to everyone. But after you’ve mastered the fundamentals, you’ll need to customize your plan to fit your goals and your body type. No two people are exactly alike. Each person has a metabolism, digestive system, hormonal profile, sugar tolerance, and body structure as unique as their fingerprint. That’s why one-size-fits-all diet or exercise plans almost always fail.

*Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* identifies all these differences and accommodates them. You’ll also have enough flexibility to adjust your nutrition and training to fit your schedule and satisfy your personal tastes. Customizing your program enables you to do the very best you can with what Mother Nature gave you.
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is an amazingly thorough and detailed program. It covers all four elements of the fat-burning equation:

1. Learn: Mental training
2. Eat: Nutrition
3. Activate: Cardio training
4. New Body: Weight training

It’s a simple formula, but don’t underestimate its power. Almost everyone is missing at least one of these crucial elements, and many are missing two or even three. Only when all four are in place will you fully maximize your potential.

This book was designed to be the definitive guide to body transformation. Thousands of readers already call this their “fat-loss bible” and come back to it over and over again as a reference manual. The information came from thousands of academic and real-world sources. I’ve updated this book based on the latest research, but the core concepts are principle-based, so they’ll never go out of date. Popular trends always change, but fundamentals never do.

Some of this information may be new or surprising to you, depending on your current level of knowledge. Most of it, however, is so simple and straightforward, you’ll wonder why it didn’t “click” for you sooner. What’s different about Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle is the way all the isolated bits and pieces you may have heard before are pulled together into a single comprehensive and organized system.

Throughout the rest of the book, I’ll take you through all the nutrition and training principles you need to know to get the results you want. I’ll show you what to do and give you just enough science so you know why you’re doing it. You’ll get all the essentials first. We’ll finish with advanced strategies to break plateaus and accelerate your results. You’ll be able to customize everything to match your goals, suit your tastes, and fit your lifestyle.

At first, it may seem like a lot to take in, but it all comes together in the end, and the payoff is extraordinary. By the time you reach the final chapters, you’ll
experience a sort of “nutritional enlightenment.” But you can’t reach that state of knowledge and understanding without first passing through the initial learning curve. My goal is to shorten that curve for you, inspire you, and help you reach your goals as fast as possible.

If you want to get started quickly, you can. Chapter 14 contains the *Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle* eating plan, sample meal plans, and food lists, making that an excellent “nutrition quick start guide.” Chapters 15, 16, and 17 contain the workout, including the 28-day training plan. Jump in!

It’s especially important however, that you begin with the first element: mental training. If you’ve ever sabotaged yourself or fallen off the fitness wagon before, the reason always comes back to lack of focus and an untrained mind. Do the goal-setting exercises in Chapter 6 before going on to the other three elements. Hundreds if not thousands of readers have told me over the years that what they learned in that chapter about mental training made a bigger difference in their results than anything they’d ever read in a diet or fitness book before.

**NOW GET STARTED!**

As you read, remember that knowledge unused is worthless; only knowledge applied is power, so begin using what you learn immediately. Don’t obsess over getting the whole program perfect from day one. As you learn new tips on each page, put them to use. Start today! Start with your very next meal! I like the way the late, great motivational speaker Jim Rohn said it: “Don’t let your learning lead to knowledge, let your learning lead to action.”

One more thing: You don’t have to do this alone. Support is a major key to motivation and long-term success. You can connect with me and hundreds of thousands of Burn the Fat fans on our social media sites including www.facebook.com/burnthefat and twitter.com/tomvenuto. You can get the free tools and resources that go with this book at www.BurnTheFatFeedTheMuscle.com. And if you want to join thousands of fellow “burners” at our private, members-only support community, visit the Burn the Fat Inner Circle at www.BurnTheFatInnerCircle.com.
Purchase a copy of

BURN THE FAT, FEED THE MUSCLE

at one of these retailers: