

“The most important thing we can do for ourselves is take care of our health and well-being”

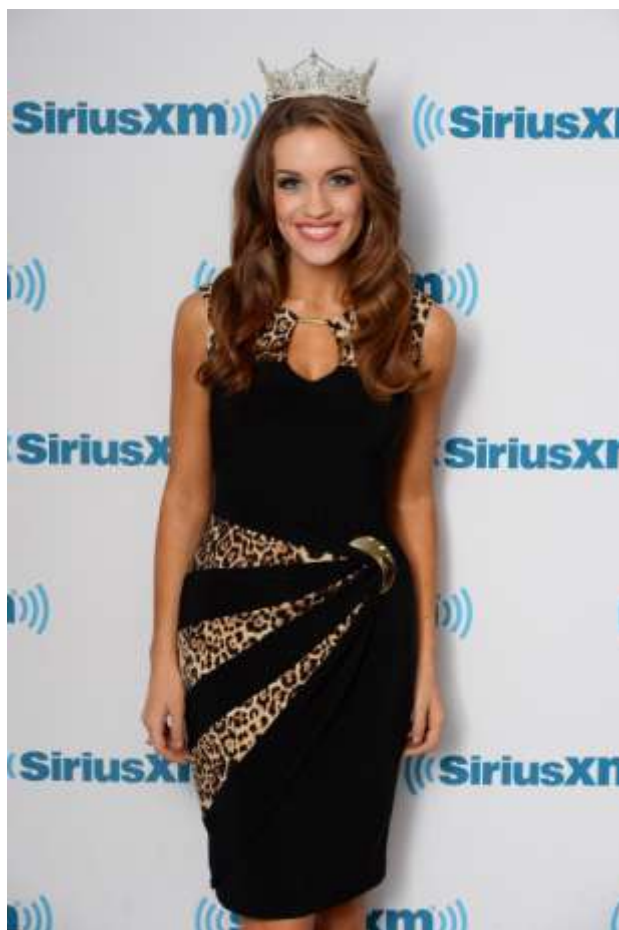
– Nina Davaluri, Miss America 2013



7 Body-Changing Tips From Miss America's Trainer

September 22, 2015 by [LETA SHY](#)

Competing in a pageant isn't for the faint of heart — walking in heels in front of millions, speaking about big political issues with only seconds to form an opinion, and being judged on a stage wearing a tiny bikini takes courage, poise, and hard work. How do they do it? We asked [Viva Fitness](#) founder Stephen P. Smith, trainer for [newly crowned Miss America Betty Cantrell](#) as well as several other pageant winners, to let us in on the tricks he uses to help contestants look long, lean, and confident on the stage. Check out his tips ahead.



1. **For leaner-looking legs, focus on your hamstrings:** Stephen has his clients do exercises like [deadlifts](#), box step-ups, and hamstring curls. "[For] a lot of the young ladies, the backs of the legs are a little flat, so we work on the hamstring, which helps develop the glutes and just makes the leg look leaner from the front," he explains.
2. **Lunges are a beauty queen's best friend:** For even more lower-body sculpting, Stephen teaches his pageant clients several types of lunges that they can do anywhere — even backstage! "I like a lunge; it's a great front-of-the-leg-back-of-the-leg exercise and it's great for the glutes," Stephen says. "You can vary it up in a number of ways to get different results." His favorite: alternating front and [reverse lunges](#), 16 to 20 per leg, holding weights if you can.
3. **Posture does make perfect:** Standing tall, looking confident, and smiling nonstop for hours on end takes practice. Besides working on balance with one-

legged bicep curls, Stephen also has his clients focus on ab work, like planks, in order to stand tall and look thinner on stage. The secret: learning to engage from the lower abs instead of trying to suck in your stomach. "You can always tell when someone is sucking their abs in," he says. "You have that top rib sticking out because they're holding their breath instead of learning to engage from the core and under their rib cage. That will help keep your abs flat."

4. **Cardio is key:** Building and sculpting muscle is important, but for keeping weight in check leading up to a competition, Stephen tells his clients to hop on a treadmill. He recommends [treadmill intervals](#) at least two to three times a week for 30 to 45 minutes, ramping up to two hours (broken up into morning and afternoon sessions) as the pageant nears.
5. **The type of cardio matters:** Stephen says he doesn't usually recommend his clients take regular indoor cycling classes in case they overdevelop their quads. "You see people who do a lot of cycling, they have small upper bodies and big lower bodies," he says. "We don't really want big quads, we want fit quads." Stephen adds, however, that like everything, the type of cardio that works for you depends on your body and other factors like injuries and

abilities, so he says to not take this as a hard and fast rule.



6. **Healthy habits win pageants:** Stephen's biggest advice for his clients is to start healthy habits that are sustainable rather than resorting to dangerous and ineffective crash dieting. "That's what [some of] these girls do — they starve themselves to get ready for these pageants, and then after the pageant they go back to their old ways of eating," Stephen says. "What we try to do is change the style of eating; don't look at food as bad. You have to eat." To do this, Stephen teaches his clients the importance of [meal prep](#), drinking lots of water, having protein with each meal, avoiding white foods as much as possible, and eating every three hours.
7. **Deprivation doesn't work:** While Stephen works with contestants to clean up their diets, he is adamant that they not go on one. "A diet is a bad word; it

gives you restrictions," he says. "Are you really never going to a restaurant again and eat a piece of bread? But if you make changes now when you go to a nice restaurant, you can have a piece of bread. Live your life, enjoy your life, enjoy things as they come. If you go out for dinner, have some bread or some dessert, but know what you have to do at the gym next week." For Stephen, success with his beauty queen clients means he's taught them how to "practice a healthy lifestyle that they can do without me."

Some Nutrition Guidelines From Professionals

Day 1 the meal plan **help bikini BODY guide**

BREAKFAST: BOWL OF OATS

- 1/2 cup oats
- 1/2 cup of low fat milk
- 10-15g WPC (protein powder - optional)
- 1 cup berry mix

SNACK

- 1/2 tbsp peanut butter
- 2 cups celery & carrot

LUNCH: CHICKEN AND RICE SALAD

- 1/2 cup brown rice
- 80g cooked chicken
- 40g low fat cheese
- 1 cup fresh salad mix

SNACK

- 1 banana

DINNER:

- 100g cooked lean beef
- 1/2 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 cup green vegetables
- 1 1/2 tsp olive oil
- 40g low fat tofu



7 STEPS TO ELIMINATE REFINED & PROCESSED SOURCES OF SUGAR

- 1. THROW OUT ALL THE PROCESSED FORMS OF SUGAR IN YOUR PANTRY.**
No more white/brown/raw pockets of sugar, cereal bars, cereals, biscuits, cakes, crackers, dips etc. Read every single ingredients list – and everything that contains some form of refined sugar (included glucose, fructose, maltose, dextrose, invert sugar, lactose, agave nectar, malt syrup, syrup etc.) discard.
- 2. PLAY SWAPSIES.**
Swap those bad sources of sugar for natural ones. Honey, maple and coconut sugar, fresh dates and fresh fruit will become your best friend.
- 3. EXPERIMENT WITH MAKING YOUR OWN TREATS USING NATURAL FORMS OF SUGAR.**
Put a healthy spin on your favourite sweet treats, and substitute the sugar for natural alternatives.
- 4. HAVE REGULAR MEALS PACKED FULL WITH PROTEIN, HEALTHY FATS AND VEGGIES.**
These meals will sustain you, maintain stable blood glucose levels, keep you feeling satisfied for longer, and prevent you from reaching for the cookie jar.
- 5. BE PREPARED.**
Plan your meals, particularly your lunches, so you are not forced to eat out or choose unhealthy, sugary choices.
- 6. BE ORGANISED.**
Always have fresh fruit and nuts handy for when you get peckish between meals.
- 7. SPICE THINGS UP.**
Use spices to give the 'illusion' that a food is sweeter than it really is – vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and cardamom.

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1. Eat at least 1 gram of protein per pound of bodyweight, daily. If your protein intake is too low on a restricted-calorie diet, you'll lose a lot of muscle in addition to any fat you're lucky enough to shed. A high protein intake will help you preserve lean mass during your dieting phase. Choose lean high-quality proteins like egg whites, poultry, lean red meat and protein supplements. The diet provided here contains about 220–250 grams of protein daily, fine for a male weighing 200-250 pounds. Up your protein only if you're heavier than 250 pounds, or you're very hungry and need to add food during the day. Juge suggests an additional protein shake for an easy quick fix. (If you're under 180 pounds, cut out 3 ounces of meat or chicken per day from the diet.)
2. Keep your carbohydrates low to moderate when trying to lose weight. "“ On a low day you'll have closer to 100 grams of carbs,"" he says. "“ A moderate day is about 150 grams of carbs." Juge prefers to rotate low and moderate days in order to keep energy high and provide a change of pace. Good, clean, fiber-rich carbs include oats, potatoes, rice and whole-grain bread.

3. Drink at least a gallon of water per day. It'll keep you hydrated and healthy. Water should be your primary beverage during dieting. Though many rely on diet sodas, Crystal Light and other low-calorie sweetened drinks, plain old water is really your best bet.

From Kym Johnson (Dancing With the Stars) What is The 5678 Diet? It's simple, 5 servings of protein, 6 servings of fruits and vegetables, 7 servings of anti-inflammatory foods, and 8 glasses of water.

“Anti Inflammatory Foods:”

Anti-inflammatory Food List

This article provides a list of anti-inflammatory foods and allows you to learn how to not let inflammation stall your weight loss.

What is inflammation?

Inflammation is the first response of the immune system to infection or irritation. We are all familiar with the classic signs of inflammation (swelling, redness and pain) that occur when we hurt ourselves or have some kind of infection. However recent research¹ has shown that eating the wrong foods can cause inflammation within our bodies. In fact being overweight can itself be the cause of inflammation.

Body fat causes inflammation

The fatty tissues of the body secrete hormones that regulate the immune system and inflammation, but in the case of an overweight individual this can become out of control. Three of the hormones that play a role in metabolism are leptin, resistin and adiponectin.

- Leptin is involved in appetite control.
- Resistin is a hormone that increases insulin resistance.
- Adiponectin lowers the blood sugar by making your body more insulin sensitive.

The fact that it is the fatty tissue that produces these hormones makes the fat self regulating, as the hormones should act to bring the increased fat under control. Bodies with more fat will produce more leptin bringing the appetite under control. However in cases where the body is inflamed there is often a problem with leptin resistance, and the self regulation of fat does not occur. Leptin resistance is where the body stops responding to the appetite controlling effects of the hormone.

In addition to these metabolism regulating hormones your fatty tissue also produces chemicals that cause inflammation and this can make the problem of leptin resistance worse. This is why obesity can cause an increase of these inflammatory chemicals which in turn inhibit the correct balancing function of the weight controlling hormones. This results in a vicious circle of weight gain causing inflammation which inhibits hormone function thereby causing further weight gain.

Food and inflammation

Another major cause of inflammation in our bodies is the food we eat. Inflammation can be aggravated by diets high in refined or hydrogenated vegetable oils such as those found in margarines, potato chips and baked goods and by diets high in sugars. But food can also be part of the solution to the problem of inflammation.

Anti-inflammatory foods, if eaten regularly, can reduce inflammation in the body and bring the problem under control. This page contains a list of anti-inflammatory foods that if incorporated into your regular diet will help bring a balance to inflammation in your body. Try and feature some kind of anti-inflammatory food into every meal that you eat, and eliminate pro-inflammatory foods from your diet all together. People who have done this often describe noticable relief from previous discomforts and a greater ability to control their weight.

Please also remember that exercise is one of the greatest ways to counter inflammation. Check out our article on the best way to burn fat [here](#).

 Vegetables	 Fruits
Bell Peppers	Acerola (West Indian) Cherries
Bok Choy	Apples
Broccoli	Avocados
Broccoli Sprouts	Black Currants
Brussels Sprouts	Blueberries
Cabbage	Fresh Pineapple
Cauliflower	Guavas
Chard	Kiwifruit
Collards	Kumquats
Fennel Bulb	Lemons
Garlic	Limes
Green Beans	Mulberries
Green Onions/Spring Onions	Oranges
Kale	Papaya
Leeks	Raspberries
Olives	Rhubarb
Spinach	Strawberries
Sweet potatoes	Tomatoes
Turnip Greens	
 Herbs &	 Nuts & Seeds

Basil
Cayenne Peppers/Chilli Peppers
Cinnamon
Cloves
Cocoa (at least 70% cocoa chocolate)
Licorice
Mint
Oregano
Parsley
Rosemary
Thyme
Turmeric

Almonds
Flaxseed/Linseed
Hazelnuts
Sunflower Seeds
Walnuts

 Oils
Avocado Oil
Extra Virgin Olive Oil

 Drinks
Green Tea

Other meal plans could include:

Atkins – High protein meal plans, no breads/carbs

Weight Watchers – Eat what you like, but maintain a point system.

Portion Control – Eating what you like, but control portions.

Paleo – Eating natural foods

Fitness Tips

You do not have to have a gym membership to become fit and healthy. There are some free resources, as well as some excellent work-out dvd's to put you on the right track for preparing for the pageant. Here are some of my favorites:

BeachBody DVD's: These include P90X, PiYo, 21-Day Fix, Brazilian Butt Lift.

Dance Exercise: Zumba! Find a class or group, or find a youtube class.

Jillian Michaels: 30-Day Shred, 6 Week Boost Metabolism, Power Yoga

Kayla Itsines – Instagram Account with positive and motivating exercises.

Other forms of exercise:

Cardio – riding a bike, running, speed-walking. A good starting point is 3 times a week, 20-30 minutes a session.

Weight/Strength Training - Strength training helps you lose weight (and body fat) in a few different ways. First, it helps you retain the muscle you have while eating a calorie deficit and losing weight.

Second, strength training has a much greater level of excess post-exercise oxygen consumption than aerobic exercise. What does this mean? When you finish a workout, your body needs to do a lot of work to replenish itself in order to bring itself back to a normal state (the way it was before you worked out). This takes a lot of energy, and some studies have shown that it can boost your metabolism for up to 38 hours after you finish your workout.

Not only that, but strength training can help increase your metabolism by speeding up your Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR). This is because it takes your body more calories to maintain muscle than it does to maintain fat. Estimates are that for every 1 lb of muscle you gain, your RMR goes up 30-50 calories!

arm WORKOUT		free week workouts		leg WORKOUT		free week workouts		ab WORKOUT		free week workouts	
Burpees Push ups Tricep dips Plank		Weighted squat clean & press Mountain climbers Commandos Split push ups		Jump squats Weighted walking lunges Sumo squats Weighted step ups		Scissor jumps Bench jumps Knee ups Double bench squats		Ab bikes Weighted bent leg jackknifes Raised leg sit ups with twist Sit ups		Mountain climbers Leg raises on bench Toe touches Plank	
CIRCUIT ONE		CIRCUIT TWO		CIRCUIT ONE		CIRCUIT TWO		CIRCUIT ONE		CIRCUIT TWO	
10 reps	Burpees	12 reps	Weighted squat clean & press	15 reps	Jump squats	24 reps	Scissor kicks (12 per leg)	40 reps	Ab bikes (20 each side)	40 reps	Mountain climbers (20 each side)
15 reps	Push ups	50 reps	Mountain climbers (20 each side)	24 reps	Weighted walking lunges (12 per leg)	12 reps	Bench jumps	15 reps	Weighted bent leg jackknifes	30 reps	Leg raises on bench
20 reps	Tricep dips (with or without feet raised)	24 reps	Commandos (12 each arm)	15 reps	Sumo squats	24 reps	Knee ups (12 per leg)	30 reps	Raised leg sit ups with twist (15 each)	20 reps	Toe touches
30 reps	Plank	12 reps	Split push ups	24 reps	Weighted step ups (12 per leg)	15 reps	Double bench squats	20 reps	Sit ups	30 reps	Plank

**ab
WORKOUT**

free week
of
workouts

Ab bikes

Weighted bent leg jackknives

Raised leg sit ups with twist

Sit ups

Mountain climbers

Leg raises on bench

Toe touches

Plank

CIRCUIT ONE

40
reps Ab bikes (20 each side)



15
reps Weighted bent leg jackknives



30
reps Raised leg sit ups with twist (15 each)



20
reps Sit ups



CIRCUIT TWO

40
reps Mountain climbers (20 each side)



30
reps Leg raises on bench



20
reps Toe touches



30
sec Plank

