

When Bella Hadid shared a photo from a new Victoria's Secret campaign, her body seemed to spark a debate. The image elicited mixed reactions online, with many criticising the brand for being non inclusive and commenting that her ribs were visible.

THE NO FAT BODY

Is it even possible to have a fat-free body? "Gone are the days when people wanted to have a well-sculpted body with the perfect balance of fat and muscle," says Kiran MD, Skincare expert, author, and founder of Isya Aesthetics. "The infamous heroin chic look is back in with her weight loss and Bella Hadid's ultra-skinny look, and it needs to go. Ultra-thin is neither sexy nor healthy, and it can lead to unneeded body goals. It is a façade to have a completely fat-free body. Though it is physically impossible to have a fat-free body, people incorporate aggressive and progressive resistance training, most commonly weightlifting or bodyweight training, as well as a calorie deficit. Not only that, but many people use appetite suppressants, artificial diarrhoea, and energy supplements as a substitute for food," she adds.

BUSTING MYTHS

It is critical to understand that body fat serves as an energy storage facility for the body. It protects our organs, joint cushions, and bones, regulates body temperature, and is in charge of hormone secretion.

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In a nutshell, it keeps you alive. While it is theoretically possible to have a very low body fat percentage, too little body fat can be just as dangerous as too much. The two main types of bodily fat are "essential fat" and "storage fat." "The essential fat found in the heart, lungs, liver, spleen, kidneys, intestines, muscles, lipid-rich central nervous system tissue, and bone marrow is the bare minimum of fat required for normal physiological function and is critical to overall health and cellular processes. Essential fat, as a source of metabolic fuel, assists the body in retaining heat when needed and ensuring adequate energy reserves. It acts as a chemical messenger, ensuring that body processes such as metabolism, development, and immunological responses go as planned. It also acts as a soft, fluffy cushion to protect joints and internal organs. "Storage fat" is fat that accumulates as storage or non-essential fat for energy reserves, and this is the fat we see in our bodies," explains Dr. Malini Saba, psychologist, and human rights activist.

DEDICATION AND DISCIPLINE

Consistency and progression in training, as well as an adequate recovery period, are essential. Individuals may also benefit from seeking advice from fitness professionals or nutritionists who can provide personalised advice and support tailored to their specific goals and needs. Sangita Tiwari, Clinical Nutritionist, Artemis Lite, New Delhi says, "Individuals must make consistent and disciplined efforts to achieve a body with low body fat. This usually entails following a well-planned and balanced diet that promotes a calorie deficit in order to reduce overall body fat. Consuming lean proteins, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy fats while limiting processed foods and excessive calorie intake is one example. Regular physical activity, combining cardiovascular exercises like running or cycling with strength training to build and maintain muscle mass, is also essential."

THE FLIP SIDE

Trying to achieve a no-fat body can be dangerous. Weight loss should be balanced and managed in a healthy manner by real doctors so that you can lose weight while remaining healthy. Apoorv Mathur, Fitness Coach & Co Founder, The Space Fitness avers, "A body with 'no



Kiran MD, Skincare expert, author & founder, Isya Aesthetics

‘PERPETUATING BODY DYSMORPHIA’

# ‘Skinny’ is Unhealthy

Victoria's Secret re-teams with model Bella Hadid in its latest campaign, after her recent Instagram post sparked a slew of comments about body shape



fat' is most likely dead. Even though Bella appears to be very thin, she is carrying some body fat because a small amount of essential fat is required to support hormonal and metabolic function. For a short time, you can safely reduce your body fat to 10% for women and 3% for men. The keyword here is 'temporary,' because such levels cannot be sustained due to the irreversible damage they can cause, such as decreased brain function, hormonal imbalances, compromised immune function, and organ damage."

Constipation, fatigue, mood swings, low blood pressure, poor concentration, poor skin elasticity, hair loss, dental and gum problems, bradycardia (too slow heart rate), hypogonadism (poorly functioning ovarian activity), and other symptoms of extreme low body fat can result. Having too low blood sugar can result in hypoglycemia, which can cause cramping in the muscles, bone loss, and other symptoms.

GET IN SHAPE THE RIGHT WAY

Exercise and proper nutrition are essential for enhancing body composition:

- Keeping your protein, fibre, and calorie intake under control is a good starting point.
- Consume a lot of nutrient-rich foods.
- Try to limit your intake of sugar and focus on getting enough protein and healthy fats.

Professional bodybuilder Chitharesh Kongaram-pilly Natesan from India says that it takes focused and disciplined efforts to achieve a shape with extremely low body fat and visible ribs. "Hard work typically entails a variety of elements, including regular exercise, targeted training, and strict dietary restrictions. People must follow rigorous exercise regimens that include targeted core exercises, high-intensity cardio exercises, and strength training to develop muscle tone. Additionally, they must adhere to a carefully planned and monitored diet that frequently involves calorie restriction and manipulating macronutrients. Maintaining a routine that supports achieving and maintaining this physique requires consistency, commitment, and perseverance. While it's okay to want to change how you look, you need to do it in a way that makes sense to you, is doable, manageable, and will make you happy in the long run."



“A BODY WITH ‘NO FAT’ IS MOST LIKELY DEAD. EVEN THOUGH BELLA APPEARS TO BE VERY THIN, SHE IS CARRYING SOME BODY FAT BECAUSE A SMALL AMOUNT OF ESSENTIAL FAT IS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT HORMONAL AND METABOLIC FUNCTION.”

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“THE ESSENTIAL FAT FOUND IN THE HEART, LUNGS, LIVER, SPLEEN, KIDNEYS, INTESTINES, MUSCLES, LIPID-RICH CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM TISSUE, AND BONE MARROW IS THE BARE MINIMUM OF FAT REQUIRED FOR NORMAL PHYSIOLOGICAL FUNCTION AND IS CRITICAL TO OVERALL HEALTH AND CELLULAR PROCESSES.”

– DR MALINI SABA, psychologist, and human rights activist

Bella Hadid's post expressed excitement about the campaign, some slammed the brand for "perpetuating body dysmorphia to young women"