



This plan gives you a clear, step-by-step way to lose weight and specifically shrink dangerous visceral fat, using your DEXA scan as a roadmap instead of guessing.

1. Understand your key DEXA numbers

Focus on just three numbers from your scan.

- **Total body fat %**
 - What it means: How much of your weight is fat versus everything else.
 - Aim: Over the next 3–6 months, a realistic goal is to bring body fat down by a few percentage points (for example, from mid-30s to high-20s or low-30s).
- **Visceral fat (VAT)**
 - What it means: Fat deep around your organs (not the pinchable fat under your skin). High VAT is strongly linked to insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.
 - Aim: If your VAT area is above about 100–110 cm², work toward getting it below that range over 3–6 months.
- **Lean mass (muscle)**
 - What it means: Your active tissue that burns calories, supports joints, and keeps you strong and independent.
 - Aim: Lose fat while keeping muscle the same or slightly higher; avoid crash dieting that makes this number drop.

2. Set a simple 3–6 month target

Use your DEXA to turn “I need to lose weight” into a clear, realistic target.

- Aim to lose about **5–10% of your body weight** over 3–6 months (for many people this is 10–20 pounds).
 - Focus on three outcomes:
 - o Body weight slowly trending down (about 0.5–1.0 lb per week on average).
 - o Body fat % moving downward.
 - o VAT number dropping toward or below 100 cm² over time.
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3. Create a calorie plan that protects muscle

You do not need to count every calorie forever, but you do need a consistent energy deficit.

- **Calorie deficit:**
 - o Aim for a **moderate deficit** of about 300–600 calories per day below what you burn. This is usually enough to lose fat without feeling destroyed or losing a lot of muscle.
- **Safety rule:**
 - o Avoid extreme low-calorie diets; they often cause muscle loss and rebound weight gain. It is better to eat a bit more and move more.

A practical way to start:

- Reduce obvious extras: sugary drinks, desserts, large evening snacks, and second portions.
 - Use the same simple breakfasts and lunches on weekdays so your intake is more predictable.
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4. Eat to burn visceral fat and protect muscle

You can't choose exactly where fat comes off first, but the way you eat can strongly influence visceral fat and muscle.

Prioritize protein

- Target: About **0.7–1.0 grams of protein per pound of your goal body weight** (or per pound of lean mass if you know it and like numbers).
- Why: Protein helps you feel full, keeps your metabolism higher, and makes it more likely that what you lose is fat, not muscle.

Increase fiber and whole foods

- Add vegetables or fruit to **at least two meals per day**.
- Use a simple plate:
 - o ½ plate vegetables/fruit
 - o ¼ plate lean protein (chicken, fish, Greek yogurt, tofu, eggs, etc.)
 - o ¼ plate whole grains or starchy vegetables (oats, brown rice, beans, sweet potatoes)
 - o Small amount of healthy fats (olive oil, nuts, avocado).

Cut back on foods that drive VAT

- Minimize:
 - o Sugary drinks (soda, juice, sweet coffee drinks)
 - o Sweets and pastries
 - o Highly processed snack foods and fast food.
 - Limit alcohol; it strongly favors belly and visceral fat when overused.
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5. Train in a way that specifically helps visceral fat

You do not need to live in the gym. You do need consistency: strength training + cardio + daily movement.

Strength training (protect muscle, raise metabolism)

- Goal: **2–3 sessions per week**.
- Focus on big movements: squats, leg press, rows, chest press, deadlifts, push-ups, etc. Machines are fine.
- Aim: Over time, lift a little more weight or do a few more reps—this signals your body to keep muscle while fat comes off.

Cardio (targets visceral fat and heart health)

- Aim for **150–200 minutes per week of moderate cardio** (fast walking, cycling) or **75–150 minutes of more vigorous cardio** (jogging, intervals) or a mix.
- Optionally, add **1–2 short HIIT sessions per week** (for example, intervals of faster effort and recovery) if your joints and heart are healthy enough and you feel comfortable.

Move more throughout the day

- Aim for regular steps, especially **short walks after meals**, and break up long sitting periods. Every bit helps.

6. Use sleep and stress to your advantage

Visceral fat is very sensitive to hormones like insulin and cortisol. Your lifestyle can help or hurt here.

- **Sleep:**
 - Aim for **7–9 hours of quality sleep** most nights. Poor sleep increases hunger, cravings, and belly fat storage.
- **Stress:**
 - Use simple tools: daily walks, breathing exercises, meditation, journaling, or talking with someone you trust. High stress without relief tends to push fat toward the belly.
- **Routine:**
 - Keep fairly consistent times for sleep, meals, and training. Wild swings in schedule often lead to overeating and skipped workouts.

7. Follow a simple 12-week structure

You do not have to be perfect. You do need to be consistent most days.

Weeks 1–2: Baseline and setup

- Record: weight, waist measurement, and DEXA VAT number if you have it.
- Start:
 - Strength training 2× week
 - Daily 20–30 minute walks
 - Remove sugary drinks and obvious sweets on most days.

Weeks 3–4: Build momentum

- Keep strength training 2× week.
- Add 2 cardio sessions of 30–40 minutes per week.
- Introduce **one** slightly harder cardio session by week 4 (e.g., a few short intervals).
- Increase protein at meals and add vegetables to two meals per day.

Weeks 5–8: Turn up the effectiveness

- Strength training 3× week if possible.
- Cardio: 2–3 moderate sessions + 1–2 interval sessions (if tolerated).
- Tighten nutrition:
 - Track food more closely for a few weeks.
 - Adjust portions if weight has stalled for 2+ weeks.

Weeks 9–12: Push and assess

- Slightly increase cardio time or intensity if you feel recovered.
 - Review your habits: are you still hitting protein, mostly whole foods, and a reasonable calorie range?
 - If possible, repeat DEXA around week 8–12 to measure changes in: body fat %, VAT, and lean mass.
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8. Track progress and adjust when needed

Use data to guide your changes instead of emotions.

Check weekly or every 2 weeks:

- Body weight trend
- Waist measurement
- Energy, sleep quality, and how clothes fit.

Check every 8–12 weeks (if available):

- DEXA body fat %
- DEXA VAT
- DEXA lean mass.

If after 4–6 solid weeks you see **no progress**:

- Reduce average intake by about **150–250 calories per day**, or
- Add one more brisk walk or cardio session per week, or increase daily steps by 2,000–3,000.

If you are losing weight but also losing a lot of muscle:

- Increase protein
- Take strength training seriously (2–3× per week)
- Avoid pushing calories too low.

9. Bottom line: how to win

- You don't need perfection; you need **steady habits** in food, movement, and sleep.
- Even a **5–10% drop in body weight** can cause a **big** drop in visceral fat and health risks.
- Every DEXA scan becomes a progress report, not a judgment: a way to see how your choices have changed your body on the inside.

If you focus on consistent steps in these three areas—nutrition, training, and recovery—your weight will move in the right direction, and your visceral fat will follow.